



OLIVE PERCIVAL

Collected Poems

BOOK POEMS, ANTHOLOGY VERSE, AND ARCHIVAL RECORD

EXTREMES AND MODERATIONS:
EARLY SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA POETRY

A TEXT-TECH PAPERS PROJECT

Extremes and Moderations

Early Southern California Poetry

Extremes and Moderations is a Text-Tech Papers project devoted to recovering poetry written, published, and circulated in Los Angeles and Southern California. Each volume brings neglected books and poems back into view through carefully prepared texts, archival images, biographical context, and a clear record of the surviving sources.

Edited by Brian Kim Stefans

The Text-Tech Papers | Los Angeles, 2026

CONTENTS

Archival Images	6
Introduction	13
Editorial Note and Sources	20
Anthology Verse	21
<i>San Pedro</i>	21
Book One <i>Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift</i>	22
<i>The Disturbers</i>	22
<i>Southern California</i>	23
<i>Star-Rise</i>	24
<i>In Possession</i>	25
<i>The Cherokee</i>	26
<i>Rehearsal</i>	27
<i>April</i>	28
<i>Baby Blue-Eyes</i>	29
<i>The New Moon</i>	30
<i>The Beauty of Glazenwood</i>	31
<i>Alien Spring</i>	32
<i>Broken Tryst</i>	33
<i>Outside</i>	34
<i>In the Foothills</i>	35
<i>Her Symbols</i>	36
<i>Sunset Skies</i>	37
<i>Embers</i>	38
<i>Lilacs</i>	39

<i>Garden Magic</i>	40
<i>The Charm Giver</i>	41
<i>The Favorites</i>	42
<i>The Miracle</i>	43
<i>You</i>	44
<i>Release</i>	45
<i>The Rose-Arbor</i>	46
<i>May Noon</i>	47
<i>Under the Trees</i>	48
<i>June</i>	49
<i>The Plumbago Hedge</i>	50
<i>Trees after Dark</i>	51
<i>The Humming-Bird</i>	52
<i>Lost</i>	53
<i>Magnolias</i>	54
<i>My Hill</i>	55
<i>Silenced</i>	56
<i>Disillusioned</i>	57
<i>Envy</i>	58
<i>July</i>	59
<i>Handicapped</i>	60
<i>Under the Jacaranda Tree</i>	61
<i>Disloyalty</i>	62
<i>The Pioneer</i>	63
<i>A Country Rose-Hedge</i>	64
<i>Escape</i>	65
<i>Favoritism</i>	66
<i>Life</i>	67
<i>Forest Fires</i>	68
<i>Amaryllis</i>	69
<i>A Chopin Nocturne</i>	70
<i>Clowns</i>	71
<i>The Lily-Pool</i>	72
<i>Convalescence</i>	73

<i>Breath of the West</i>	74
<i>August Nights</i>	75
<i>Retrospect</i>	76
<i>Moonrise</i>	77
<i>Sabbath</i>	78
<i>Defeated</i>	79
<i>Summer Vigil</i>	80
<i>Winter's Approach</i>	81
<i>September Afterglow</i>	82
<i>Autumn Victories</i>	83
<i>Do You Remember</i>	84
<i>Life's Patchwork</i>	85
<i>The Poet and the Philosopher</i>	86
<i>October Afternoon</i>	87
<i>The Secret</i>	88
<i>November</i>	89
<i>Disciplined</i>	90
<i>Myrtle</i>	91
<i>Unforgetting</i>	92
<i>The Last Rose</i>	93
<i>The Meadow-Lark</i>	94
<i>Resignation</i>	95
<i>Sunset Clouds</i>	96
<i>Outlived</i>	97
<i>November's Rose-Drift</i>	98
<i>The First Rain</i>	99
<i>Winter Twilight</i>	100
<i>The Remembrancer</i>	101
<i>A Winter Morning</i>	102
<i>The Past</i>	103
<i>Transmutation</i>	104
<i>In the Rainy Season</i>	105
<i>Values</i>	106
<i>Ashes of Roses</i>	107

<i>A Rainy Sunday</i>	108
<i>In Winter</i>	109
<i>Clear Skies</i>	110
<i>Prejudice</i>	111
<i>Reading in the Garden</i>	112
<i>A Christmas Dawn</i>	113
<i>Duality</i>	114
<i>The Scheme Entire</i>	115
<i>The Reader</i>	116
<i>Points of View</i>	117
<i>To a Yeizan Color-Print</i>	118
<i>Old Books</i>	119
<i>Destiny</i>	120
<i>February</i>	121
<i>Mona Lisa</i>	122
<i>Paganism</i>	123
<i>After the Rain</i>	124
<i>Yellow Tanagers</i>	125
<i>Gray Days</i>	126
<i>A Los Angeles Sunset</i>	127
<i>Adequate</i>	128
<i>The End</i>	129

Book Two | *Yellowing Ivy* 130

<i>Yellowing Ivy</i>	130
<i>Again It Is Spring</i>	131
<i>Countryside</i>	132
<i>Garden Magic</i>	133
<i>Yucca Bloom</i>	134
<i>Starlight</i>	135
<i>Daphnes</i>	136
<i>Valentine Roses</i>	137
<i>May Night</i>	138
<i>Forest-Quiet</i>	139

<i>Flower Arrangement in White</i>	140
<i>Valentine Impromptu</i>	141
<i>No Career</i>	142
<i>Like a White, White Flower</i>	143
<i>Loneliness</i>	144
<i>At Tea</i>	145
<i>All Passes</i>	146
<i>Honeysuckle</i>	147
<i>Midsummer</i>	148
<i>Jasmine Drift</i>	149
<i>Shadow of Roses</i>	150
<i>July</i>	151
<i>Make Me Forget</i>	152
<i>Leaf-Drift</i>	153
<i>White Beauty</i>	154
<i>August</i>	155
<i>After the Theater</i>	156
<i>Afternoon in Autumn</i>	157
<i>Who Can Say</i>	158
<i>Unvanquished</i>	159
<i>Wine Grapes</i>	160
<i>No More Dreams</i>	161
<i>Home Again</i>	162
<i>Christmas Tree Market</i>	163
<i>Anodyne</i>	164
<i>Rainy Day</i>	165
<i>Absence</i>	166
<i>Alien</i>	167

Afterword	168
-----------	-----

Colophon	170
----------	-----

ARCHIVAL IMAGES

Portraits, Down-hyl Claim, travel, handwriting, and book art



Photograph of Olive Percival.
(Courtesy of Mildred Bryant Brooks.)

Olive Percival. Photograph reproduced in Jane Apostol's biography; courtesy of Mildred Bryant Brooks.



14. Olive Percival and her mother photographed by Charles Francis Saunders in his Pasadena garden in 1927. (Courtesy of Huntington Library.)

Olive Percival and her mother, photographed by Charles Francis Saunders in Pasadena in 1927; courtesy of the Huntington Library.



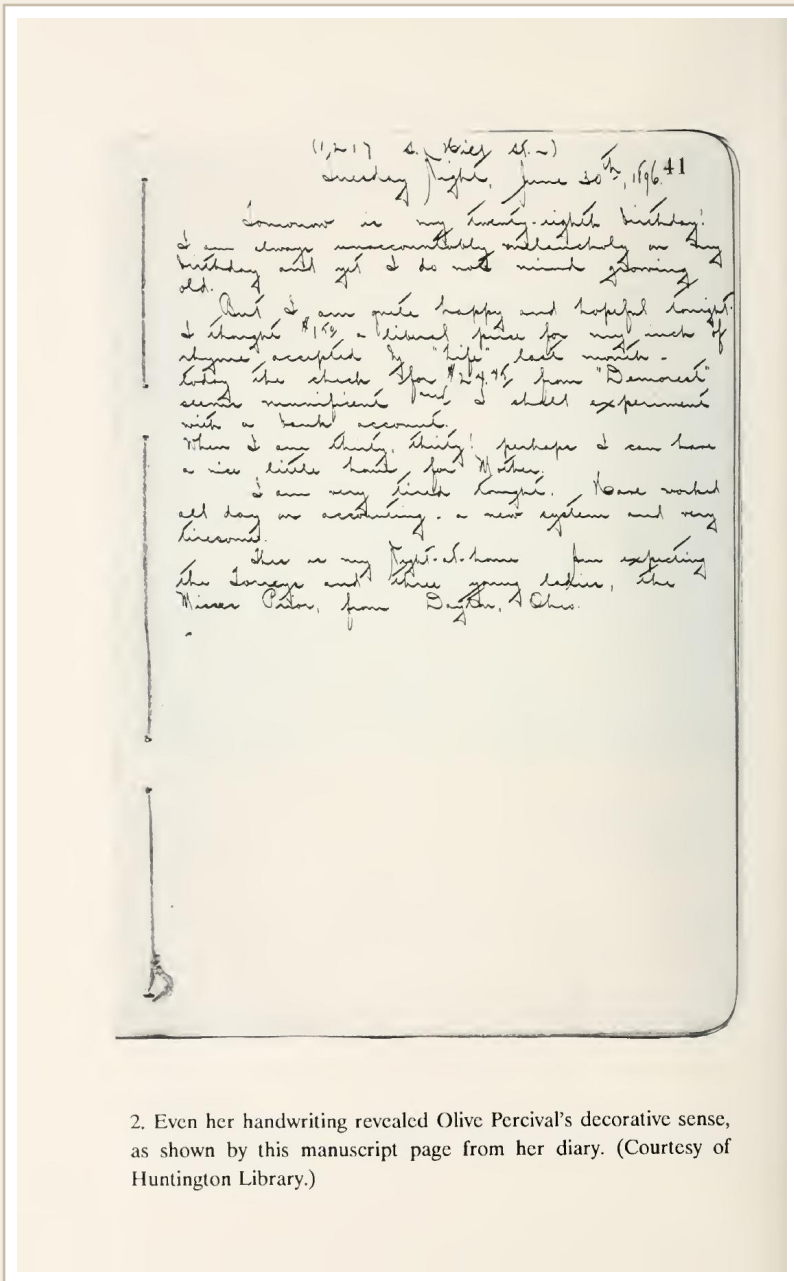
4. A photograph taken by Olive Percival shows her Arroyo Seco cottage, the Down-hyl Claim, around 1900. (Courtesy of Huntington Library.)

Down-hyl Claim in the Arroyo Seco, photographed by Percival about 1900; courtesy of the Huntington Library.



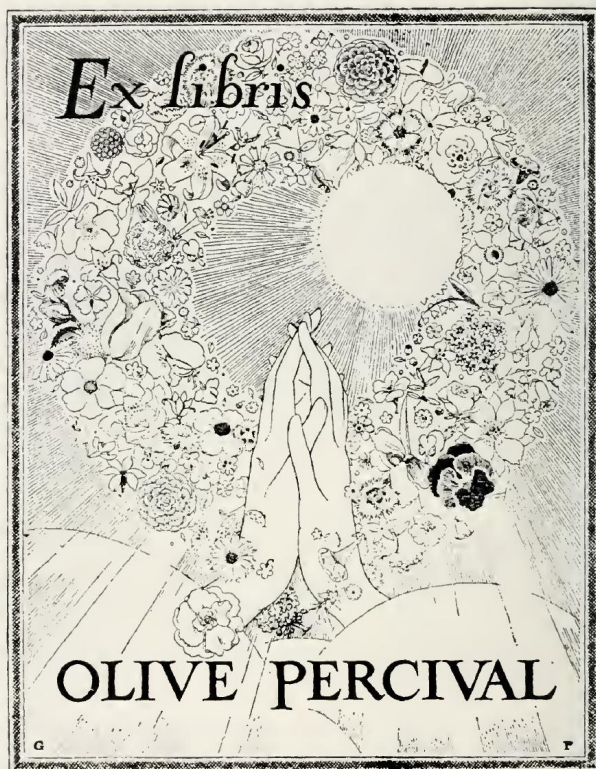
6. "Is there anywhere a more uniquely picturesque 'street' of sea-side cottages than the Breakwater?" Olive Percival asked when she took this San Pedro photograph in 1906. (Courtesy of Huntington Library.)

San Pedro, photographed by Percival in 1906; courtesy of the Huntington Library.



2. Even her handwriting revealed Olive Percival's decorative sense, as shown by this manuscript page from her diary. (Courtesy of Huntington Library.)

A page from Percival's travel diary, preserving her hand and page design; courtesy of the Huntington Library.



George Plank

10. George Wolfe Plank designed this bookplate for Olive Percival's garden books. He also designed a music marker for her. Plank illustrated several books, including one by Vita Sackville-West, and he drew covers for *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair*. (UCLA Special Collections.)

Percival's bookplate, designed by Florence Lundborg and engraved by W. F. Hopson; courtesy of Denison Library.

INTRODUCTION

The garden as lyric form, archive, and chosen life

Illinois childhood and the move west

Olive May Graves Percival was born on July 1, 1869, in a log cabin on a debt-burdened farm near Sheffield, Illinois. Her father died when she was ten. Her closest lifelong companion became her strong-willed mother, Helen Mason Percival; the early death of her younger sister Edna in 1893 was one of the family's defining losses. In May 1887 the three women moved to Los Angeles. Percival remembered taking a mule car from the depot into a small, dusty city whose unpaved streets and honeysuckle seemed equally vivid. California gave her neither inherited wealth nor leisure. It gave her a place in which a wage-earning woman could, with formidable discipline, construct an independent cultural life.

The office woman

Percival first worked as a saleswoman at the People's Store, the business that became A. Hamburger & Sons, and then at the insurance firm McLellan & Golsh. In 1895 she became a sub-agency clerk for the Home Insurance Company, where she remained for more than thirty years. She disliked the 'soul-benumbing' routine, and her salary never exceeded \$150 a month, yet the work financed her house, garden, books, travel, camera, and collections. She regarded herself as a pioneer office woman and argued for women's economic independence and equal pay. The tension between repetitive employment and an intensely self-authored private life is central to her writing: the poems make attention, beauty, and domestic creation forms of freedom rather than genteel retreat.

Diary, clubs, and first publications

Soon after reaching Los Angeles, Percival began the diary she would keep, with gaps and deliberate destructions, for the rest of her life; twenty-three volumes survive from 1889 through 1944. They record an active young woman who served as secretary of the Ladies' Athletic Club and represented the Woman's Press Club at a national convention. She began writing for publication in 1896. Shortly before her twenty-eighth birthday she sold a poem to *Life* for \$1.50 and an article on Indian baskets to *Demorest's Family Magazine* for \$24.45. The difference in payment was instructive, but she continued to send out poems, stories, reviews, and essays while attempting longer fiction that publishers repeatedly declined.

Making Down-hyl Claim

Percival chose a steep Arroyo Seco site in 1899 and built a small two-story, half-timbered house on San Pascual Avenue in Garvanza, later Highland Park. She called it Down-hyl Claim. Initially without heat or running water, and a hilly walk from the streetcar, it became a carefully composed world of garden rooms, balconies, furnishings, books, and art. Percival did much of the gardening and repair work herself. Roses, pepper trees, camphors, jacarandas, moonlight, dust, rain, birds, and household objects are therefore not decorative backgrounds to the poems. They are the materials through which she tests solitude, pleasure, grief, endurance, and self-possession. The lyric garden was grounded in labor.

Mexico, San Pedro, and the camera

A journey to Mexico in 1899 supplied *Mexico City: An Idler's Note-Book* (1901), her first book, published by Herbert S. Stone and favorably reviewed. It included two of her photographs. Photography remained part of her authorship: she made images of the Los Angeles and San Francisco Chinatowns, illustrated Jane Torrey Connor's 'A Red Parasol in Mexico' in *Out West*, and took particular pride in her harbor and breakwater views at San Pedro. With Amanda Mathews she visited the San Pedro artist colony, and both women appeared in *From the Old Pueblo, and Other Tales* (1902). In 1903 Percival met Jack London at a San Francisco dinner; her amused recollection was that she wished to discuss Chinese bowls while he wished to discuss Socialism.

The Arroyo circle

Down-hill Claim became a gathering place for at-homes, garden teas, and moon-viewing parties. Percival's circle connected the literary, artistic, and Arts and Crafts communities of Southern California: Idah Meacham Strobidge, Alice Millard, Charles Francis Saunders, Julia and William Wendt, Hildegard Flanner, Irving Way, Carl Oscar Borg, Elmer Wachtel, and Ernest Batchelder appear in her social or documentary record. Visitors from farther away included the photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn, the poet William Vaughan Moody, and Vita Sackville-West. Her guest books, enriched with drawings and inscriptions, turned hospitality itself into an archive. This social life complicates the solitary speaker of many poems: privacy was a chosen artistic condition within a large network, not evidence of isolation.

Books, Asian art, and the eastern journey

Percival assembled a library of roughly ten thousand volumes and studied Japanese and Chinese art with sustained seriousness. A 1910 eastern trip, undertaken partly as a rest cure for neuritis, widened that education. She met Arthur Wesley Dow, examined Japanese prints and Edward Sylvester Morse's Japanese pottery, saw Oriental ceramics and Whistler's Peacock Room in Charles Lang Freer's collection, and moved through galleries and exhibitions in Boston, New York, Baltimore, and Washington. She also met Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the illustrator George Wolfe Plank, who became a correspondent of more than thirty years and designed bookplates for her. These encounters sharpened the visual economy already present in her work without reducing it to a borrowed 'Oriental' manner.

Suffrage and civic culture

Percival's aesthetic life had a civic dimension. A member of the Friday Morning Club from 1903, she lectured on New England antiques and Oriental porcelain, proposed an art committee, and chaired it. She organized an exhibition of American etching in 1910, including Whistlers from her own collection, and Southern California's first bookplate exhibition in 1911. She designed and collected bookplates and later received an award for her children's examples. On the 1910 eastern trip she attended a great suffrage meeting at Madison Square Garden. After California enfranchised women in 1911, she took pleasure in casting a presidential-primary ballot in 1912. Her suffragism, collecting, club work, and wage labor all belonged to one practice of female intellectual and material independence.

Marriage, friendship, and chosen household

Percival never married, although her diaries record several suitors and more than one proposal. She wanted children but rejected marriages that did not promise the companionship or freedom she required. Her mother remained the central member of the household, returning to Down-hyl Claim after a brief marriage in 1914. In later years Percival found important companionship with the younger Charles ‘Jack’ Masse, who shared her interests in gardens, books, and music and sang settings of her poems. Rather than treating unmarried life as absence, the poems and diaries show a deliberately organized household of kinship, friendship, animals, objects, and plants. Her purchase of her own silver—instead of waiting for the wedding gifts conventionally allotted to women—was characteristic.

The 1911 garden book

Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift arranges 108 brief poems through Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Percival designed its cover and worried over paper, typography, and format as closely as over the verse. Arthur Wesley Dow praised the design, although sales disappointed her. The sequence belongs to Arts and Crafts bookmaking and California garden culture, while its compression, visual precision, and attention to Japanese and Chinese art often approach the poetics soon associated with Imagism. Eleven poems were set by Brabazon Lowther as *A California Garden Cycle*. Its apparent slowness is calculated: the small lyric becomes a unit in a seasonal architecture, and recurrence carries emotional weight that no isolated quatrain fully reveals.

Collector and domestic artist

Books were only one part of Percival's material archive. She collected Asian art, prints, bookplates, photographs, silver, textiles, quilts, fans, dolls, paper dolls, miniatures, hats, and daguerreotypes, arranging them with the same care she brought to the garden and the printed page. The scale could be exuberant, but the impulse was not mere accumulation. Objects preserved techniques, histories, friendships, and forms of beauty excluded from official cultural narratives. Her house became a private museum whose displays were repeatedly rearranged and shared. The children's bookplates, fanciful gardens, handmade cards, guest books, photographic albums, and cover designs demonstrate that she did not separate writing from visual or domestic art.

The books publishers refused

Percival's published books represent only part of her literary career. Her illustrated manuscript *The Children's Garden Book* with plans for such spaces as the Kate Greenaway Garden, the Aladdin Garden, and the Flying Carpet Garden, circulated unsuccessfully for about a decade before appearing posthumously in a scholarly edition. 'Aunt Abby and Others,' an extensive free-verse family memoir and spiritual inventory, failed to win the 1931 Atlantic Press prize for which she had hoped. In 1933 she began *Our Old-fashioned Flowers*, another union of gardening, memory, and cultural history. Rejection did not stop the work, but it helps explain why a writer with a long, various career came to be remembered chiefly as a collector and local personality.

War, loyalty, and the late poems

Retirement did not bring financial ease. In 1940 Percival used the last thirty-five dollars of an old savings account partly for taxes and firewood and partly to commission Ward Ritchie to print a Christmas card bearing her poem 'Christmas Tree Market.' She hoped Ritchie might also print a book of her free verse. During the Second World War this Anglophile grieved over the Blitz, yet after Pearl Harbor she defended Japanese culture and remained loyal to Japanese American friends. The Sakai family, whose belongings she stored at Down-hyl Claim, sent her a package from Manzanar. Such gestures belong beside the late poems' refusals of cultural and emotional simplification.

The last garden and the estate

By the early 1940s Percival lived with arthritis, high blood pressure, and increasing physical limitation, but she continued to garden, repair the house, observe the night sky, and record the life of Down-hyl Claim and her cat Bon-bon. In November 1944 she suffered a stroke in the garden and lay there overnight before a neighbor found her. She died in a Pasadena rest home on February 19, 1945, aged seventy-five. Her will distributed chosen objects among fifty-two friends and institutions. Major groups of papers, books, photographs, dolls, textiles, and decorative arts eventually entered UCLA, the Huntington, Scripps College, and the Clark Library, making the private house legible as a dispersed public archive.

Posthumous books and the Olive Percival rose

Percival arranged for Ward Ritchie to issue two books after her death. *Our Old-fashioned Flowers* and *Yellowing Ivy* appeared in 1946. The latter replaces much of the trim stanzaic song of 1911 with freer, more openly elegiac lines. The garden remains, but it has become a memory theater of endurance, absence, age, and chosen beauty. Percival had also wished for a rose to bear her name. Paul Howard patented the cherry-red Olive Percival rose in 1949; examples were planted at the White House and used to honor teachers, although the variety did not endure commercially. The flower was an apt memorial to a writer who understood cultivation as both art and moral practice.

Three stages and a surviving archive

This collection separates the recoverable early anthology verse, the complete 1911 seasonal sequence, and the complete posthumous 1946 book. These are publication stages rather than sealed aesthetic periods: images and phrases recur across decades, and the late poems repeatedly look back toward the garden Percival began to make at the century's turn. The poems should also be read beside a remarkably rich archive: twenty-three diaries, hundreds of photographs, correspondence, manuscripts, albums, bookplates, and material collections. Together they reveal not a minor poet accidentally attached to an eccentric household, but a working woman who made house, garden, camera, collection, book, and lyric parts of one sustained authorship.

Editorial Note and Sources

The two book sections are complete transcriptions from the original local scans. Text is read from the source page rather than from the earlier selected Percival PDF. Italics, stanza divisions, and clearly intentional verse-line indentation are retained. Narrow-page hanging continuations are rejoined because the present measure provides more room. Scan debris is removed only where the image supplies a clear reading. Compound-word hyphens remain hyphens; em dashes are closed up without surrounding spaces. *Yellowing Ivy* prints its verse in italics, which this edition preserves. Its poem page reads ‘Shadow of Roses,’ although the contents page reads ‘Shadow in Roses’; the poem-page title is followed here. Percival’s prose books are documented but not silently converted into poetry. The cataloged manuscript ‘To Remember’ and the reported first poem sold to *Life* are not printed because verified texts were not recovered.

1. Olive Percival, *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), original local scan.
2. Olive Percival, *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), original local scan and uncropped spread witness.
3. Olive Percival, ‘San Pedro,’ in George Wharton James, ed., *The California Birthday Book* (Los Angeles: Arroyo Guild Press, 1909), October 16 entry; verified through Project Gutenberg.
4. Jane Apostol, *Olive Percival: Los Angeles Author and Bibliophile* (UCLA Library, 1992), local scan.
5. ‘Olive May Graves Percival,’ biographical draft supplied in the BKS Extremes project folder.
6. Linda Popp Di Biase, ‘Forgotten Woman of the Arroyo: Olive Percival,’ *Southern California Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (1984): 207–234.
7. Olive Percival Papers, 1889–1945, Collection 1260, UCLA Library Special Collections, Online Archive of California finding aid.
8. Olive Percival photograph collection and travel-diary descriptions, Huntington Library.
9. Huntington Library, ‘The Worlds of Olive Percival’; PBS SoCal, ‘Who Is Olive Percival?’ and ‘Olive Percival, Author & Bibliophile.’

ANTHOLOGY VERSE

Stage I | *Apprenticeship and public garden, 1896–1910*

The paired lyric below is the one additional poem located during research and verified in its original anthology setting. Percival's acknowledged appearances in *Life*, *The Butterfly*, *The Lotus*, *Smart Set*, *The Graphic*, and *Sunset* remain a field for further poem-by-poem recovery.

San Pedro

MORNING.

A smooth, smooth sea of gray, gray glass;
An open sea, where big ships pass
Into the sun;
A boat-dotted harbor; gulls, wheeling and screaming,
And surf-song and fisher-cry end our night's dreaming.
Day has begun.

EVENING.

A broken sea of rosy jade;
A rose-pink sky; black ships that fade
Into the night;
Across the bay, the city seems
But elfin music, drowsy dreams
And silver light!

Publication. *The California Birthday Book*, ed. George Wharton James (Los Angeles: Arroyo Guild Press, 1909), October 16 entry.

BOOK ONE | *LEAF-SHADOWS AND ROSE-DRIFT*

Stage II | The Arroyo seasonal sequence, 1911

This section restores the complete 108-poem sequence in its original seasonal order. The book's full subtitle is *Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*.

Spring

The Disturbers

My garden is a quiet place;
It's strange I cannot read:
But O there are so many dreams
And visions one must heed!
'The roses whisper, whisper; and all the towhees talk;
Then O the dancing shadow-leaves on the mossy walk!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 3.

Southern California

Throughout the year, with ev'ry dress,
With veils of light, of haze, of gloom,
She wears her regal bridal-wreath
Of Eden-scented orange-bloom.

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 4.

Star-Rise

The radiance of the young, young world is paling;
Grove and garden forget to sing;
For through the spring-scented twigs of gray, gray fig-trees
Glow the white ev'ning star of spring!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 5.

In Possession

Skies and hills and trees are mine;
O the beauty of the Spring!
Day of fragrant quietude;
Night of silences that sing!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 6.

The Cherokee

Through the lilac mist of April twilight,
My roof gleams white with its fairy-snows
That, under tropic sun, melt all too quickly!
O wonder-beauty! O magic rose!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 7.

Rehearsal

The little flow'rs in the sweet and spear-straight grasses
Devoutly nod and sing, in primal ecstasy;
All's repetition of Botticelli springtimes,
Of southern Aprils long ago, in Italy!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 8.

April

O! when the great sky is blue, blue, blue,
And the winds blow straight from the sea;
O! when the canyons are sweet, sweet, sweet
With the springtime's old pageantry:
It's then from under a roof we must, singing, wander far,—
Forgetting sphinxes and riddles, from dawn to sunset-star!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 9.

Baby Blue-Eyes

Not for the sunshine-daisies
But for you all my praises,
Tenderest flowers of blue!
Eyes o' my dear dream-children,
Wet with the tears of spring dew!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 10.

The New Moon

Above the gum-tree's silhouette,
In sky of pale, pale gold,
Night lifts an Indian silver ring,
Her broken bracelet old!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 11.

The Beauty of Glazenwood

Sunrise sky and the sunset sea
Are here in the heart of this my inconstant rose 5
All youth's glamor and youth's appeal!
Does beauty suffice, O rose of a day? Who knows?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 12.

Alien Spring

The high, high hills, the green, green hills,
The snow-white clouds from the western sea
Are now my metaphor of spring;
But once it was the anemone!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 13.

Broken Tryst

Through the white dawn-mist of April,
(A bird sang somewhere near!)
To the old rose-tree I hurried;
I called—O did you hear?
I touched a red, red rose—the petals shed;
Then—then I remembered that you were dead!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 14.

Outside

The beauty of April's miracle
Once brought ecstasy;
But since I'm by joy forgot, it is
Formal pageantry!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 15.

In the Foothills

On a wonderful day like this,
The first of the spring,
Do you know, O My Love, a song
That is perfect enough to sing?

O My Love, O My Love, alas!
The beauty of spring,
Though in every rose and vine,
Is in none of the songs men sing!

On a radiant day like this,
The first of the spring,
Only flowers and clouds and birds
With adequate gayety sing!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 16.

Her Symbols

Gardenias are hers and the orange;
Jasmine and the long fairy-lace;
The daphnes; magnolias; tuberoses;
Lilies of a mystical grace!
Sweet, sweet, sweet are Her Flowers!

Bride-roses are hers and the daisy;
Wake-robins and dawn-flowers pale;
Azaleas that glimmer like moon-mist;
Iris and the shy virgins-veil!
White, white, white are Her Flowers!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 17.

Sunset Skies

My garden is flaunting ten thousand roses
But perverse am I: I love the best
Those heavenly fields of azaleas, iris,
Now abloom for all, above the west!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 18.

Embers

Laugh not at me, Little Children,
For I'm as young as the Spring!
See the red silk of the prune-tree!
The sheen of the blackbird's wing!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 19.

Lilacs

Sweet are the lilacs of that far-off spring;
Sweet is the voice of one long dead!
Fragrance of lilacs to my heart must bring
Pain honey-sweet, uncomforted!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 20.

Garden Magic

April-night and my garden tell their secrets to me,
For I watch by the pool, beneath a dead olive-tree.
White-magic is learned from an imaged star;
And sorcerer's spells from the basil-jar.
But it's heigh-ho! It's heigh-ho! I none dare tell,
But the white birds and blue moths, at matinbell!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 21.

The Charm Giver

As I was hurrying up Life's hill,
Once on a May-morn fair,
With all my dreams and in search of Joy,
I met with Goody Care.

She waylaid me with horror-tales
And took my toys from me;
But then at parting she gave a charm,
Called Perfect Sympathy!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 22.

The Favorites

O there are roses white in my garden,
White as a bride-dress, white as a shroud;
And there are flawless roses beside them
Pink as a shell is, or sunrise-cloud!

O there are roses red in my garden,
Redder than war is, redder than wine!
But yellow roses, yellow as sunset,
They are the roses that I call mine!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 23.

The Miracle

My heart was full of painted toys,
The dreams of dreams and childish joys;
Forlorn, forlorn, forlorn was I,
When Love came!

But miracle: my world made new!
New stars, new dreams that all come true!
I'm singing, singing, singing now
Since Love came!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 24.

You

You are akin to the singing morn
And to the peace of noon;
O you are one with the burning sun
And with the wearied moon!
Many-mooded as sea or fire:
Only you are my one desire!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 25.

Release

Song of bird and pinkest dawn,
Scent of rose in air!
Over seas my love is gone
And I do not care!

Old, old call of chanticleer,
Maids bid me arise;
I must up and sing, for fear
Of my Mother's sighs!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 26.

The Rose-Arbor

White boughs, white boughs,
Bent with the Maytime snows;
White heaped the path:
Drifts from a Banksia rose!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 27.

May Noon

The little parks have lost their Eden-green;
The town's all a blatant show!
Where is the wonder of the almond-bloom?
O where did the Springtime go?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 28.

Summer

Under the Trees

My garden has many whisperers
And gossips very, very dear;
(Their charm the graceless only can forget!)
O every time I listen I
Leave off the old, subverting fear
And cease to be but a marionette!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 31.

June

When the pepper-tree trails her lace in the dust
And the roses rest;
When at dawn and at dusk the frogs whir in tune
And the rain-gods jest:
It is June, white June!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 32.

The Plumbago Hedge

I wake and with bewildered eyes
Behold the summer, noonday skies,
Lying in little blossom-flecks along the wall;
It is a sign for me, I know,
Of many heavens here below:
Radiant, tender harmony awaiting all!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 33.

Trees after Dark

Close against the old, old mystery
Of the blue night-sky,
Stand black and tall the eucalyptus trees;
They sway like marching spearmen in the breeze; 8
And aloof, like idlers, live-oaks stand,
Watching them go by!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 34.

The Humming-Bird

Did you see, did you hear that green glint of a bird,
'The pomegranates over and under?
O a garden is ever, each day in the year,
A place of Edenic, sweet wonder!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 35.

Lost

For a little mountain-brook, snow-cool,
Through these desert-years I grope;
But all is mirage, mirage, mirage
And deliria of hope!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 36.

Magnolias

Brimming with the sweet of a tropic summer
Are the blossom-cups white of the magnoliatree;
Drugged with dreams are they of enthralling sorrows,
Of incredible joys,—by a far, far, moonlit sea!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 37.

My Hill

Between the brown and oak-plumed hills
Is the hill of my dreams, desires;
All day a realm of blue, blue mist
And at sunset all opal fires.
Ah! the feet of the heedless its paths have found;
But for me it is ever forbidden ground!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 38.

Silenced

Last night, the gray bird sang by its nest
In the jewel-green camphor-tree;
The nest now is cold; silent the bird;
O the pain of death's mystery!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 39.

Disillusioned

Time's poet and lover find June-days sweet;
Yet are they sadder to me
Than twilight pools where dead autumn-leaves float;
Than sobs that die in a violin's throat;
Or winter's white pageantry!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 40.

Envy

I would that I were an early riser,
Up and alert before dawn;
Then would I know the long story
That you, my dear Morning Glory,
Hear from that bird on the lawn!
I would that I were a flow'r—and wiser!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 41.

July

Bleached the hills and the river-bed;
Brown the mesa, where linnets sing;
All the days are white glare, white dust.
O the mists and the dreams of Spring!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 42.

Handicapped

The nosegay Life handed me at birth
Is such a crude, crude thing and strange,—
All odorless, thorny, gaudy flow'rs!
Who but a god dare rearrange?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 43.

Under the Jacaranda Tree

At all times of the year, is my garden a place
Where for me many miracles come to pass;
Into flowers to-day, the blue sky I saw change:
Jacaranda flowers upon the grass!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 44.

Disloyalty

With gay nasturtiums embroidered o'er,
Is Summer's dusty, dusty gown,
Lobelia-blue is her jeweled belt;
An oleander-wreath her crown!
All sweetness, brightness; yet we tire of her perfection
And dream of winter verdure, with unfair affection!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 45.

The Pioneer

Nobody knows his name to-day
But far greater than soldier or king was he;
As in this land of blighting sun,
For the future he planted a tree, a tree!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 46.

A Country Rose-Hedge

White dust of a rainless summer
And chill of the fog at night
Are hard to endure,
O Roses!
But winter's a gleesome mummer
And all of these months of blight
His masked smile shall cure,
Poor Roses!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 47.

Escape

All the hills around were high, were high;
But the sea-fog broke the dream;
And the snow-white bird flew by, flew by!
See how pale the death-lamps gleam!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 48.

Favoritism

Mourning-brides, daisies, sweet-johns and pinks
And pretty-maids, pansies, snow-on-the-lea;
All, despite the white glare and neglect,
Are blooming so gayly, daily, for me!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 49.

Life

An awkward scramble; then
A song of shrill delight;
'The dangers of the nesting-time;
At last, when comes the resting-time,
A wounded, silent flight:
The fate of birds and men!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 50.

Forest Fires

A summer of white dust-smother! Meads
All silence; the foothills bleaching weeds!
Garden and bee are dead and pools are dry!
Pray! Pray! For devil-fires enflame the sky!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 51.

Amaryllis

O the world it withers in the desert-wind;
(And three moons away is the rain!)
The wild-gourd vine swaggers through the roadside-dust,
Too content with its white domain.
In my brown, drear garden, is a sudden pink:
(Not a rose on vine nor on tree!)
’T is a row of lilies and without one leaf!
O adorable bravery!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 52.

A Chopin Nocturne

A dark, cool night and over-sweet
With tuberose breath;
A jeweled javelin in the heart:
Ecstatic death!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 53.

Clowns

O the goggled hop-toads are fat, old clowns!
All day, in a fern-bed so cool, do they loll and wait
And rehearse their joke; but at dusk, attired
In spotted, green silk, how alert and importunate!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 54.

The Lily-Pool

I have heard of a lake, where great ships sail;
On whose shores twenty cities take their pleasure!
I am hid in a garden, to reflect
One white lily, a lonely woman's treasure!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 55.

Convalescence

As content and as still as a lizard of bronze,
On the terrace I lie,
With beautiful, rhythmic dreams.
Is it true I once followed the rush of the town?
And ne'er looked at the sky?
How droll and remote that seems!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 56.

Breath of the West

White nights, white days drift by;
And the summer goes
Under a fleckless sky;
The sunset-sunrise breath
Is of greasewood, sage!
O the mere scent-of-rose
Who'd buy? Not I! Not I!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 57.

August Nights

'The garden's parched and dusty flow'rs
Grow sweet, grow cool with dew;
The country silence sings and brings
Serenity anew!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 58.

Retrospect

There is one thing more, more futile
Under the moon, under the sun,
Than to water dead, dead rose-vines:
It is to weep, when love is done!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 59.

Moonrise

The splendor of the southern summer-moon, new risen,
Appalls like seraphim, between the trees and hill!
Unworded, old, ancestral joys and fears awaken!
In adoration, all the little birds are still!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 60.

Sabbath

I have for mine a hidden sanctuary
And there my spirit, on its knees,
Can say a rosary of joy's renewal,
Beneath the ancient, patient trees |
Ever-soothing, ever-healing is their paternal voice;
And, made sweet by garden-stillness, my soul can sing, rejoice!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 61.

Defeated

I would that my life were the life of a rose,
Mere serenity my brief, brief lot;
And then when the summer is ended for me,
Who will know or grieve? I'll be forgot!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 62.

Summer Vigil

The silent, midnight lily-garden is a place
Of rest, of dreams exalted, through the moonwhite hours,
Of Night's great beauty; but alas! one hears the sigh
Of Springtime's vanished and forgotten little flow'rs!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 63.

Autumn

Winter's Approach

The tea-rose hedge has such young, red leaves;
O Summer-blinded, come out and see!
O hear the song of the desert-wind,
In praise of rain, of fertility!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 67.

September Afterglow

The foothills are nearer (such great, brown beavers!)
And arroyo and canyon are lakes of lilac mist;
The tree-spires rise deeply blue on the mesa;
And the mountains encircle with chain of amethyst!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 68.

Autumn Victories

The geranium-seed, with white wings spread,
Is flying far, far, far,—now it at last is free!
The chrysanthemums bold are parading
In a triumphal, a final felicity!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 69.

Do You Remember

Do you remember
That long-ago September?
The autumn-leaves all wet with rain?
The autumn-daisies in that old lane?
I remember!

Do you remember
That desolate November,
When autumn-leaves repeat the words
Of Love, who died ere flew the birds?
I remember!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 70.

Life's Patchwork

Here a hope and there a hope;
Some songs and dreams are there;
Here are fears and there are tears,
Failures and a prayer!

Here a flower, there a star;
And here of joy a shred;
Here a grief and there a grief;
Over-wide the bed!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 71.

The Poet and the Philosopher

“O what is so great as The Beauty of
Life?” He asked of The Sage.

“Its loneliness only, Dear Child; for thy soul’s a lark in a cage!”

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 72.

October Afternoon

The petals of the flow'r of time, the year,
Are falling, falling;
Paler the sun;
The sweeping, unseen winds and mists of fear
Are calling, calling,
My youth is done!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 73.

The Secret

Last May, I filled the blue hawthorne-jar
With fragrant leaves from bush and from tree;
It is the tomb of a girlhood's joy;
And yet I call it a pot-pourri!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 74.

November

Brown, brown, brown is the arroyo,—
Hill-encircled, misty, gold!
Little leaves whirl and float in the breeze;
Leopard-alisos gleam through the trees;
Still, still, still is the arroyo!
O allurements manifold!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 75.

Disciplined

I took my heart and I made me a god;
Home was its name and 't was fair to see;
But life, the despot, as tribute claimed it.
I'll not appeal from the tyranny!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 76.

Myrtle

In my garden of bright, tranquil hours,
In the gloom of the old live-oak tree,
There are shining some small, starry flow'rs,
Dimly blue like a mist-covered sea.
Their name and their fame is in many a book;
And yet how demure, deferential they look!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 77.

Unforgetting

When they dissect my heart and my brain,
Do you know what they 'I] disclose?
Merely a farewell kiss in the rain
And a fragrant brier-rose!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 78.

The Last Rose

Sunshine pale and the sea-wind
Touched my head;
Life was begun.
Pink my heart glowed! Then rains fell,
I was dead
And summer done!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 79.

The Meadow-Lark

The praise of the shy, little meadow-lark
Rings with certitude;
Her tone is all Orient-pearls and gold;
Supreme beatitude!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 80.

Resignation

Since her young eyes did close in sudden sleep
My life's a cloudy night o'er long, its dewy flowers scentless;
Through starless solitudes I plod alone.
They say the dawn will compensate for loneliness relentless!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 81.

Sunset Clouds

The lost armadas of my lost years
Majestic float to a saffron shore;
And now at dusk they furl their red sails
And drift in seas where no breakers roar!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 82.

Outlived

Deep, deep, deep the love of my life is buried
Beneath heavy years of care;
Immortelles nor willows the spot adorn not
And no angel watches there!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 83.

November's Rose-Drift

The heaped-up petals are sweet, beneath the blight;
All dying, dying
That which was a rose!
Mere reminiscence the voice-of-earth to-night
And sighing, sighing
Of a great repose!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 84.

Winter

The First Rain

O the ground is rose-pink with the wet coral-beads
Lost by our old pepper-tree,
When she joined in the dance of the wind and the rain!
Pardonable gayety!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 87.

Winter Twilight

The Marechal Niel roses hang heavy with rain;
Visitor-robins are singing;
And from the dispirited passion-vine old
Yellow-jade lanterns are swinging!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 88.

The Remembrancer

Under my window, a green carpet is spread;
No sacred prayer-rug and yet
Precious it is: for on that day in Mid-March
You planted this mignonette!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 89.

A Winter Morning

O the rain, with her lute and her mandolin,
Came last night a-singing!
And the garden made merry, her rosy bloom
On the paths a-flinging!
Now vanished the singer; yet come and see
The sun-jewels sparkling on grass and tree!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 90.

The Past

The past is a darkened corridor,—
Echoing, chilling, haunted
By Memory's bats and her dragon's roar;
(Horrid with ooze and slime is the floor!)
Who is the man not daunted?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 91.

Transmutation

When first I heard my Mother sing,
The tone was silver, white and fair!
But now the silver all has crept
From out her voice and o'er her hair!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 92.

In the Rainy Season

Long, long day of winter rains
That sob and sob and drip, drip, drip like tears!
Perfect joy such gloom might be,
Sweet with roses, melody!
But O the silent, the estranging years!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 93.

Values

The day was a disappointment,
A weariness, a sorrow;
But gazing at the afterglow
Brings courage for the morrow:
Personal griefs reduce to proper size,
Under the high and tranquil ev'ning skies!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 94.

Ashes of Roses

And was this the bright image of my flow'rdecked shrine?
Hollow brass fire discloses!
Desolation surrounds: can I forget my faith
And the ashes of roses?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 95.

A Rainy Sunday

Long, long day of tears and silence,
Of gloom, of rain;
Someone's day of joy and sun;
My day of pain!

Ceaseless drip of sighing palm-tree,
Though tears are vain;
But, at dusk, a meadow-lark
Sings in the rain!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 96.

In Winter

A perfect rose, all a silvered-pink,
Bloomed by my door at morn;
(Life is so sweet, sweet!)
I went to claim it at eventide
But winds had scattered it far and wide;
Silent I stood, forlorn!
(Is life so sweet, sweet?)

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 97.

Clear Skies

The fire of the Christmas-flower is quenched
And the earth is bright and sweet with rain;
The dragon-fly crawls on top of his leaf;
Who shall sulk and who distrust again?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 98.

Prejudice

December asserts my calendar;
My garden declares it's spring;
I'd rather believe the hyacinths
Than any mere printed thing!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 99.

Reading in the Garden

Along the hard, windswept paths of the garden,
December's brown leaf-birds fly, noisily fly;
Four Persian kittens like dervishes chase them,
Or pause to pretend—who knows what?
Who knows why?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 100.

A Christmas Dawn

The bright marvel of the morning star has paled;
All the world is swathed in gloom, in dreams;
But one steadfast little Star-of-Bethlehem
In the songless, rain-wet garden gleams!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 101.

Duality

Whenever I step from stone to stone,
By the ancient toy-trees from Hokusai's
Japan;
Whenever I climb the wishing-bridge,
I remember I live on a paper-fan!
But I've searched by the pool and by the bamboo,
All in vain, for my fan! Now what would you do?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 102.

The Scheme Entire

If I had a rose plate and a Ming yellow jar;
A room full of books, a Korin lacquer-box;
If I had a good cook, a new motor-car,
A place out of town, a blue sea with some rocks;
If just trifles like these were mine for a minute,
I would love this old world and want to stay in it!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 103.

The Reader

When all the world is a table of books
And the night is never ending;
When the big, white moon is a shaded lamp
And no guests my time are spending;
When essentials like these are arranged for me,
How extremely agreeable life will be!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 104.

Points of View

My Mother derides as junk and old-iron
These Japanese sword-guards so dear to my heart;
She states that they cost four tailor-made dresses.
(Which moths might have eaten!). How cheap is High Art!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 105.

To a Yeizan Color-Print

Ah! this is the way I used to look,
In the golden days of august Japan,—
In five robes of crape, all cherry-bloom;
With an obi wide; and a full-moon fan!
Was I not shy? 'T was fashionable then!
See my hair: how amazingly modern 't was dressed!
Look at my hands! My tiny, red mouth!
But the way that I managed to walk was the best!
I remember my gowns were all shockingly dear
But I had those I needed (eight hundred and more);
So I always looked pretty, no matter the hour;
And a lady that pretty was never a bore!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 106.

Old Books

My old, old books that ever wait
In proud humility,
The emeralds of Cortez great
Can never buy of me!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 107.

Destiny

There 's never a day, O Love of Mine,
There 's never a day for you and me
To meet and to rest beneath Life's Pine;
Forgot by The Seven Gods are we!
Yet on the same lotus, with closed eyes,
We shall dream together in Paradise!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 108.

February

Deep is my love for the firelit hearth,
The chosen book in the quiet room,—
Where I may dream all the dreams of life,
Content to wait my long night-of-doom!
But there's a lure in dimpling pools,
The scent of wet blossom and bending pine!
When skies come down and touch the hill,
The ends of the earth they at last are mine!
Not content am I to gaze then through the panes:
But, a king, I'm out and away when it rains!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 109.

Mona Lisa

My Black Cat.

(My Black Cat)

At life with student-eyes,
You look in sweet surprise
And silence meek;
When will your schooling end?
When will you condescend
With me to speak?
O small Companion of my garden-days,
How very sweet are meditation's ways!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 110.

Paganism

O to be a mocking-bird,
A mocking-bird,
A-singing in the lane!
O to be a deodar,
A deodar,
A-tossing in the rain!
O to be in tune with life!
O to be in love with life,
Aloof from all the pain!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. III.

After the Rain

Out in the vineyard, the larks are calling;
« Arise, O Sleeper, arise, arise!
See San Antonio's snow-crown glisten
Above your radiant paradise |
The scars, the despairs of summer are gone;
Laughter is better than sorrow;
Arise and behold God's sky and the hills;
Roses for ev'ry to-morrow!"

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 112.

Yellow Tanagers

The enchanting splendor of old, old Peru
In the lemon-tree flashed, one chill day of rain:
Yellow tanagers, many miles off their course!
Will that breath-taking vision e'er come again?

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 113.

Gray Days

Under a sky of gray, flawless jade,
Orange-trees blossom, red roses fade
And the peacocks scream;
Dreams hurry back from memory's sea;
Sunshine subservient now must be
To a rainbow gleam |

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 114.

A Los Angeles Sunset

O I saw our Three Mountains at sunset
And their snows were a tourmaline fire!
Then they glimmered like opals and faded
To dreams, dreams of forgotten desire!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 115.

Adequate

After the dolorous gloom of The Rains,
Red roses of Spring!
Perfectly praised is God's beautiful earth,
For meadow-larks sing!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 116.

The End

Good-bye, good-bye
To a day of shadowed, rose-sweet hours;
Bitter-sweet charm o' fallen leaf.
Good-bye, good-bye
To my garden of a thousand flow'rs!
O but the year was brief, brief!

Publication. *Leaf-Shadows and Rose-Drift: Being Little Songs from a Los Angeles Garden*
(Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1911), p. 117.

BOOK TWO | *YELLOWING IVY*

*Stage III | The late garden and elegiac retrospect, posthumously published
1946*

The complete posthumous book follows in its original order. Its typographic decision to set the poems in italics is retained.

Yellowing Ivy

*I sang my song,
I dreamed my dream,
Life's summer flew by like a bird;
Now my roses all are flowerless thorns;
The shining green ivy that framed my door
Yellows like lacquer
And dies!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 3.

Again It Is Spring

*Here in the south, again it is Spring!
Under the awakening trees,
White snow has drifted,
The sweet snow of the English primroses,
Delicately scented!*

*A brocade of imperial velvet, regally wide,
Borders the long walk to your door,
All pansies, lovesome and friendly,
Quietly smiling recognition.
Again it is Spring!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 4.

Countryside

*This is my hour, this:
Hour of paling star and shadow
And violet velvet dark,
Cooled by the breeze from the western sea;
Then the joyful word of the meadow lark
That the quiet night is over.
Sweet was rest,
Sweeter is morning sun!*

*This is my hour, this:
Hour of sudden dawn and sunrise,
Of jewel-pink mountain, vale,
Murmur of tree and nesting bird,
Scent of daphne flower, dew-drenched, pale;
And the quiet night is over.
Sweet was rest,
Sweeter is morning sun!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 5.

Garden Magic

*Once, in early sunlight, pale and opalescent
(O, it was in the Spring, in the Springtime!),
The trellised tangle of maidenhair-fern vine
Glittered with raindrops
Carefully placed along the stems
Like small beads, like flower-buds,
In garden of elf and of fairy.*

*Then, by some magician unseen, undetected
(O, it was in the Spring, in the Springtime!),
All those raindrops were transformed;
Suddenly, they were flowers,
Flowers of Venetian glass,
Of translucent white jade,
Exquisitely infinitesimal!
O, it was in the Spring, in the Springtime!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 6.

Yucca Bloom

*Around this yellow, yellow sea
Of a million-million little daisies,
The high hills, benign and jewel-green,
Are set with the white, the churchly beauty
Of yucca spires;
Silver petaled, austere but sweet,
They are the springtime's desert glory!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 7.

Starlight

*A glimpse through the suddenly opened door,
On this dark Spring night,
Has taken away my breath, my sorrow!
For, velvet-budded and sweet with renewal,
The branches of the great sycamore tree
Hang thick with stars,
Stars of silver-white fire
And O! so near! So near!
On tiptoe, might not one
 (Joyous and reverent!)
Touch the blazing belt of The Hunter—
Caress The Dog at his heel?*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 8.

Daphnes

*A quiet, country evening of early southern Spring,
Mist-blurred, chill
And by the moon unlighted;
Where, where is the iris-path?
Where have I strayed?
Ah! the unseen daphne flowers
Persuade I'm in my garden
And near my waiting door!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 9.

Valentine Roses

*Did these velvety, valentine roses,
So red and so sweet,
Grow in some happy garden, down by the sea?
Did queens walk in the gilded afterglow there?
I wonder
Did roses as perfect once bloom in Eden,
For Eve to pick and wear in her hair?
I wonder . . . wonder.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 10.

May Night

*Again it is Maytime and moonlight—
Cool silver the night and blue!
O, I remember—remember with rapture—
Do you?
In the dusk of the orange trees,
The mocking bird sang—sang—sang—
Of you!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 11.

Forest-Quiet

*What brings to me the peace my grandsires knew,
The vision of their ancient past,
In this wide land, then so sparsely peopled—
And what fills my heart with reverence,
With joy and exaltation?
This, the deep and quiet forest!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 12.

Flower Arrangement in White

*In pool, mirror-clear,
Of moon-white tray of blanc-de-chine,
Held up by their lovely skirts,
Flounced and frilled so neatly, nicely,
With petals frost-white but scentless,
Three Ophelias are floating—slowly—
 slowly—
Three white camellias, three perfect ladies—
Perfect—proud—disdainful—
All in high fashion—
And of a gentle distinction.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 13.

Valentine Impromptu

*I shiver with memories
Of the very great dreariness,
Of the years that were so heavy, so long,
Before I knew you!
Understanding, you came:
You made of the everyday living of life
A singing garden of flowers, bright flowers;
You made of the separate hours
A many-colored bouquet,
Fragrant, unfading!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 14.

No Career

*To her,
Whose busy, busy hands
Helped to widen the trail,
Make smooth the rough, the lonely paths,
Who had to learn the hard way of the wilderness,
I bring a wreath.*

*To her,
Who planted trees, trees,
Who set a rosebush by her door, vines at her window,
Who, remembering, loving, the ways back-home,
Planted lilacs, roses, herbs-of-healing,
I bring a wreath.*

*To her,
Who, lovingly and pridefully, took the time
To train and teach and guide her children;
Who made her hearth-bright dwelling
A longed-for place,
Of memory stimulative and revered,
I bring a wreath,
A wreath of cinnamon roses!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 15.

Like a White, White Flower

*Love is like a white, white flower,
Exquisite and honey-sweet,
Sometimes!
The petals fade, the petals fall
And the fragrance goes,
Always!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 16.

Loneliness

*All the long, long afternoon,
The white sunlight stenciled
Upon the windowpane
The shadow of swaying woodbine,
Until coolness came and darkness;
Then dreamery was somber reverie,
In the sweet sadness of a summer evening
And garden silence.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 17.

At Tea

*It is easy enough to be attentive, sweet,
To remember to ask
Sugar? Lemon? Cream?
Filling thin china cups with the hot, scented tea,
Watching wood on the fire
And the candles gleam;
To chat and to manage the correct small-talk,
Yet minding so little the jest, the praise—
For, smiling and smiling, I am sure I hear
Your step unforgotten, on the moon-drenched walk!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 18.

All Passes

*Where now are the eager lovers, poets,
Once sighing, singing,
Under this same May moon?
Ah!*

*They are dust, nameless dust,
Needing no commiseration.*

*Where now are the myrtle-crowns, the roses,
Of brides in veils of misty whiteness,
Lovely in the glow of altar candles?
Oh!*

*All are dust, scentless dust,
Legends wistfully cherished.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 19.

Honeysuckle

*In this dissonant world
Of chaos and dolor,
Of blighting change and of heartbreak,
You, Little Flower,
With your delicate frillery, buff and white,
Are a joy, a solace ineffable!
Despite the discordance,
Unchanged is your fragrance—
The same that I loved, loved
Long ago, in the June of my youth!
Little Flower, Little Flower,
Your beauty uninsistent
Is one of the towers of strength,
Of which there are seven.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 20.

Midsummer

*Ivy-leaf shadows,
Rose-vine shadows,
On the cool terrace floor;
Pepper-tree shadows,
Eucalyptus tree shadows,
On the wide garden paths
Shadows—shadows—shadows—
What need of flowers?*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 21.

Jasmine Drift

*The silver of the summer moon has paled,
The garden-world is songless, chill;
Empty are The Three Existences,
For the deep, deep drift of jasmine-stars,
So honey-sweet, so velvet-soft, so white,
And you, you, you
Are dead.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 22.

Shadow of Roses

*The glaring sun of midsummer
Shines through the rose-vines
And perfectly stencils on the smooth terrace-floor,
Their intricate pattern.
Of the design, Eden-old, of roses.
Just roses, roses,
Can a war-wounded world,
Distraught, dolorous,
Ever complain,
Ever tire?*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 23.

July

*Where is the drift of snowdrops,
Under the solemn live oak tree?
Where are the cherished white primroses,
Eden-scented, unobtrusive?
They were of the springtime,
Dreamlike and cooled by misty dawning,
Now poignantly remote, forgotten.
Under this burning sky, this cloudless sky,
Brighter flowers eagerly bloom,
Bravely saluting the sun,
Quietly fading, falling,
Quickly superseded—
For it is July.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 24.

Make Me Forget

*Make me forget, forget,
All my sins, all my failures,
The burden of lead, the burden of stone!
And make me forget all my broken vows,
As uphill (but singing, singing!)
I trudge alone.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 25.

Leaf-Drift

*The patterned drift of fallen leaves,
On the rain-wet violet bed,
Are the thank-you-notes
And the courtly farewells
Of her gracious majesty;
For The Sycamore's summer, her long, bright summer
Of flower-tribute, of bird-song,
Is over.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 26.

White Beauty

*What is lovelier than Woman,
Smoothly coiffed and in white muslin befrilled?
What?
A sweet-scented, little white flower.*

*What is lovelier than both?
What?
The crescent moon, over the garden pool.*

*What is lovelier than all, all?
What?
New snow, at sunrise.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 27.

August

*I know a quiet garden,
Where my heart finds rest.
Rest from the day's great weariness;
I know a hidden garden,
Where the shy birds nest,
Far from the desert dreariness.
There, in the gilded silence,
As the burning day closes,
I am confessed, re-pledged, by
Twilight, lilies, roses!
Starlight, lilies!
Moonlight, roses!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 28.

After the Theater

*The night's all fairy-fog, cool and gray,
With grayer trees—vague, tall and slim;
Men come and go, in the tangled mist
Like puppet shadow-pictures dim!
O, the player's world-of-glitter the real world seems
And this a silent city of eerie dreams!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 29.

Afternoon in Autumn

*This, this,
My life is like the maple tree,
In autumn, after wind and rain and frost;
Like leaves, flame-bright, upon the ground,
The songs, the hopes, I've lost.
And rains, The Winter Rains, are near!*

*Perhaps,
The beauty of the rain-wet leaves
Brings comfort to the weary, weary tree;
For long and lonely twilight hours
Seem gilt with memory.
But rains, The Winter Rains, are near!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 30.

Who Can Say

*Where is the beauty
My Mother-dear gave me?
Not now in my dressing-glass—no, ah! no—
And not in the limpid brook—
Not in the quiet lily-pool!
O, it's only in your eyes, Beloved!
Your unforgetting eyes!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 31.

Unvanquished

*Under the hot, blue sky of September
(No coolness of cloud-shadow,
No promise of rain!)
Among great boulders, blackened by fire,
And under a once mighty live oak
(So saddened and saddening, in the charred desolation!).
A little fern is uncurling
Its tender, its incredible greenness.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 32.

Wine Grapes

*The yellow light of the autumn afternoon
Is a slowly paling glory.
The warm air is fragrant with ripe grapes
That, in huge bunches hang heavily
On the vines that were pruned so mercilessly, expertly!
Against the dreamland loveliness of misty blue mountains,
Acres and acres and acres of vineyard,
Humming with bees,
Bloomy with the white dust of the long summer,
Reveal, at last, the patience in growth
And the rewarding:
Sweetened were all by the burning sun
That disciplined the shining greenness of tender vines,
Slowly changing them into the yellow of fine gold;
And, to the grapes, brought the great mystery
Of maturity perfected.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 33.

No More Dreams

*All my dream-houses,
Along the pleasant streets of the shining years,
Are in ruins,
Quite formless, beautyless,
Even fearsome!
Dulled by defeat, by exactions, realities,
Ever more exhausting, insistent,
One slowly leaves the desolation,
To wander without zest
Where no roses bloom,
Where no birds sing,
And without the solace
Of the once dear illusions.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 34.

Home Again

*Do you see that golden light,
Shining through the rose-vines and ivy?
It is the lamp on the waiting book-table,
In the quiet room.
It is your light,
It is my light,
It is our light,
Ours! Ours!*

*Do you see that lovely light,
Making rosy the windowpane, the doorway?
It is from the hearth-fire of juniper,
Gilding the quiet room.
It is your home fire,
It is my home fire,
It is our home fire,
Ours! Ours!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 35.

Christmas Tree Market

*I do not want a blue one—
Nor rose du Barry, oyster-white nor mauve!
I do not want that pink, chartreuse or silver!
But one from snow-sweet, quiet grove.*

*I want a plain, clean, green one,
Agleam with berry red, not tinsel, gold—
O! Christmas brought such big and fragrant green trees,
When you and I were six years old!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 36.

Anodyne

Old? Old? Old?
Nay, nay, not yet,
Except by carefully calendared years—
For I have this bird-haunted, tree-shaded garden
To work in, read books in, drink tea in,
To dream dreams in—
To remember—forget!

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 37.

Rainy Day

*The black cypress trees are tossing their heads,
Slowly but proudly—proudly—
Being heavy with rain-beads and flowers of crystal!
Blurred is the pane of the window,
With the breath of December;
The sky's jade bowl of gray
Ominously darkens
And tips—tips—tips—
Spilling the icy rain!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 38.

Absence

*Since he went away,
Each day is as one month of winter,
All chilling rain, rain, rain—
And no roses!
The flower-bright life,
Once well-ordered, tranquil,
Is now bewilderment
And prayer importunate.*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 39.

Alien

*No delicate blossoms of snow
On the dusky deodar tree
And yet it is Yule!
But the holly-bush shines
In the cold, silver rain
And the last rose of the year
Is red!*

Publication. *Yellowing Ivy* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1946), p. 40.

AFTERWORD

Publication record, archive, and future recovery

A career in chosen forms

Percival's poetry moves from public-magazine apprenticeship to a rigorously shaped seasonal book and then to a posthumous late suite. Throughout, the smallest garden perception can hold a philosophy of work, solitude, friendship, mortality, or pleasure. The compactness is not slightness: selection and arrangement are her governing arts.

Publication and music

The 1911 book acknowledges earlier appearances in *The Butterfly*, *The Lotus*, *Smart Set*, *The Graphic*, and *Sunset* without assigning individual poems to journals. Brabazon Lowther's setting of eleven lyrics as *A California Garden Cycle* offers another route through the sequence and confirms the contemporary musical life of Percival's short forms.

The open archive

UCLA's Olive Percival Papers occupy roughly twenty-two linear feet. The Huntington preserves about 875 photographs as well as diaries, manuscripts, and related material; Denison Library holds books and objects from her collections. This edition prints every poem in the two locally scanned books and the one additional anthology poem recovered online, but it does not claim manuscript completeness.

Dates

Archival authorities used here give July 1, 1869, and February 19, 1945, as Percival's birth and death dates. Some locally preserved secondary documents instead report 1868 and February 18. The present edition follows the dates in the UCLA, Huntington, and published biographical records while recording the discrepancy rather than suppressing it.

Colophon

Compiled from the BKS Extremes Olive Percival and Journals folders, with additional archival and internet research, August 2026. Designed in EB Garamond at six by nine inches. The cover uses the user's no-text Percival artwork. This edition remains extensible as further verified periodical and manuscript witnesses are recovered.