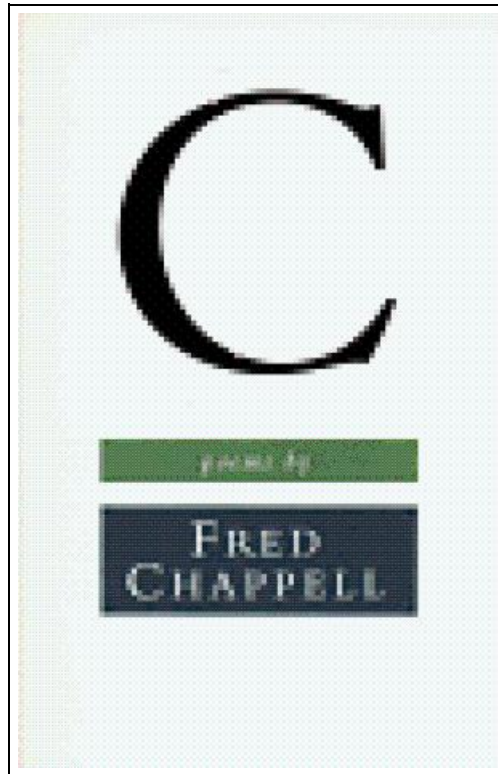


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Louisiana State University Press, United States, 1993. Paperback. Condition: New. New.. Language: English . Brand New Book. Fred Chappell has long been considered one of the South's finest writers of both fiction and poetry. C not only provides abundant justification for that assessment but also makes clear the inadequacy of the geographical stricture; Chappell is indeed a writer of world-class stature. C is of course the roman numeral for one hundred - the precise number of poems that appear in this dazzling collection. Delicate, highly wrought miracles of compression and insight, these pieces gleam with passion, humor, and intelligence. Like many things that gleam, however, they also have sharp edges, and while they may make us laugh, they can also wound. Chappell himself perhaps voices this warning most eloquently in Proem : . In such a book as this, / The poet Martial says, / Some of the epigrams/ Shall have seen better days, / And some are hit-or-miss; / But some - like telegrams - / Deliver intelligence/ With such a sudden blaze/ The shine can make us wince. At times Chappell's tone is acerbic, as in this sly comment on self-indulgence of some confessional poets: If my peccadilloes were so small / I never would undress at all, a couplet that would surely draw a delighted chuckle from Alexander Pope himself. With the apparent effortlessness of a master, Chappell also can suffuse a poem with sensual wonder; in A Glorious Twilight, for example, an ecstatic speaker rhapsodizes about a woman painting her nails such a brilliant shade of bright / she seems to have sprouted 22 fingers. And sometimes his jeweler's eye and the sheer artfulness of his language align the shutters of our perception so precisely that we can see for a hushed instant..



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