

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO



ROBERT
FROST

罗伯特·弗洛斯特

ROBERT FAGGEN 编

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出版前言

《剑桥文学指南》是上海外语教育出版社从海外引进的一套研究、介绍外国文学的丛书，内容涉及作家、作品、文学流派、文学史等诸多方面。作者均为该领域有着较深造诣的专家、学者。

《罗伯特·弗洛斯特》便是该丛书中的一本。

伟大的诗人在世时往往因为被误解而得不到当代人的认同，然而罗伯特·弗洛斯特却是一个例外。

罗伯特·弗洛斯特(1874—1963)是20世纪最受欢迎的美国诗人之一。单单列举他一生中的各项荣誉就足以让人们对他肃然起敬：美国非官方的桂冠诗人；44所大学荣誉学位的获得者；4次普利策奖的获得者；肯尼迪总统就职典礼时受邀朗诵诗歌的诗人。他著有《孩子的意愿》、《波士顿以北》、《新罕布什尔》、《西流的小溪》等十多部诗集，其中《未选择的路》、《停马在雪夜的林边》、《摘罢苹果》等诗歌深受诗歌爱好者的青睐，《未选择的路》甚至被选入中学语文教材。

罗伯特·弗洛斯特的辉煌成就不能不让人们对投入更多的关注。生活中的弗洛斯特是否像诗坛上的他一样受人景仰？除了像《未选择的路》

等脍炙人口的诗歌外,还有哪些作品值得品读?如何理解他诗歌中的隐喻?弗洛斯特是否是一位田园诗人?他的政治经济观点如何?

针对如上问题,本书收录了十二篇相关的权威文章,旨在帮助读者更好地理解弗洛斯特和他的诗歌。本书中,第一篇文章用大量的资料对弗洛斯特的生平进行了整理综合并给予了中肯的评价,使读者看到了诗人以外的弗洛斯特;第二篇到第九篇文章从不同方面对弗洛斯特的诗歌风格、写作技巧以及运用的修辞手法进行了细致的分析,例如,第二篇给读者指明了弗洛斯特的非代表作品中值得细读的优秀诗歌,第三篇着重分析了诗人的写作风格,让读者对弗洛斯特的诗歌和田园诗的风格异同有更清楚的认识;最后三篇文章则从政治、经济、人文的角度分析了弗洛斯特本人及其体现在诗歌中的相关观点。这十二篇文章立意新颖,角度各异,读者若要深层次解读弗洛斯特的诗歌并全方位地了解这位伟大诗人,这些文章无疑将会提供重大帮助,以上问题的答案也自然会明朗起来。

本书的读者对象为大学外语教师,外国文学研究人员,外国文学专业的研究生、博士生,以及具备了较高英语阅读能力的外国文学爱好者。

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1874 Born on March 26 in San Francisco, California to Isabelle Moodie and William Prescott Frost Jr. Named Robert Lee Frost after Confederate general Robert E. Lee. Originally from New Hampshire, his father had, as a teenager, run away to join the confederate army before being caught in Pennsylvania and sent home. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard, he married the Scottish born Isabelle, who was brought up by her uncle in Ohio.
- 1875 Father named city editor of the San Francisco *Daily Evening Post*, edited by social reformer Henry George.
- 1876 Sister, Jeanie Florence, is born on June 25 in grandparents' home in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Returns to San Francisco in late November with mother and sister. Father, already beset by drinking and gambling problems, is diagnosed with consumption.
- 1885 Father dies of tuberculosis on May 5, leaving family only \$8 after funeral expenses. Father's body taken to Lawrence, Massachusetts for burial. Family lives with paternal grandfather, now retired from job as a mill supervisor, and grandmother, a former leader of local suffragist movement. Family goes to Amherst, New Hampshire and stays at farm of great-aunt Sarah Frost. Family returns to Lawrence and Frost is placed in third grade.
- 1886 Family moves to Salem Depot, New Hampshire. Mother begins teaching fifth to eighth grades in the district school.
- 1889 Finishes school year at the head of the class of Lawrence High School. Befriends Carl Burell, an older student, who introduces him to botany, astronomy, and evolutionary theory.
- 1890 Publishes first poem, "La Noche Triste," based on episode in Prescott's *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, which appears in the Lawrence High School *Bulletin* in April.
- 1892 Shares valedictory honors at graduation with Elinor White, and delivers address "A Monument to After-Thought Unveiled."

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- Becomes engaged to Elinor. Enters Dartmouth College instead of Harvard because his grandparents blame Harvard for his father's bad habits and because it is less expensive. Leaves Dartmouth college at the end of December.
- 1893 Works at the Arlington Woolen Mill in Lawrence, changing carbon filaments in ceiling arc lamps. Lives with mother and sister in Lawrence.
- 1894 Quits job at the mill and begins teaching grades one through six in Salem. Tries unsuccessfully to convince Elinor to marry him. "My Butterfly: An Elegy" published in *The Independent* and begins correspondence with its literary editor Susan Hayes Ward.
- 1895 Marries Elinor White in Lawrence on December 19 in ceremony conducted by a Swedenborgian pastor. Works as a reporter for Lawrence *Daily American and Sentinel*.
- 1896 Son Elliot is born on September 25. Helps mother with a new school.
- 1897 Passes Harvard College entrance examinations in Greek, Latin, ancient history, English, French, and physical science. Enters Harvard as a freshman and moves into Cambridge apartment with Elinor, Elliott, and his mother-in-law.
- 1899 Concerned with his own, Elinor's, and mother's health, he withdraws from Harvard on March 31. Daughter Lesley is born on April 28. Takes up poultry farming with financial help from his grandfather.
- 1900 Elliott dies of cholera on July 8 and is buried in Lawrence. Frost moves family to 30-acre farm in Derry, New Hampshire. Mother dies of cancer on November 2 and is buried in Lawrence.
- 1901 Grandfather William Prescott Frost dies on July 10; wills Frost a \$500 annuity and use of the Derry farm for ten years, after which Frost is to be given ownership of the farm.
- 1902 Expands poultry business. Son Carol is born on May 27.
- 1903 Publishes short story "Trap Nests" in *The Eastern Poultryman* (first of 11 stories and articles published in the *Poultryman* and *Farm-Poultry*, 1903-05). Daughter Irma is born on June 27.
- 1905 Daughter Marjorie is born on March 28.
- 1906 Begins full time position teaching English at Pinkerton Academy in Derry. Publishes poem "The Tuft of Flowers" in Derry *Enterprise* in March.
- 1907 Daughter Elinor Bettina is born on June 18 and dies on June 21, 1907.
- 1909 Publishes poem "Into My Own" in *New England Magazine* in May. Moves family from the farm to apartment in Derry Village.

- 1911 Accepts teaching position at State Normal School in Plymouth, and teaches courses in education and psychology. Sells the Derry farm in November.
- 1912 Family moves to England for a few years; Frost devotes himself to writing full time. Rents cottage in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, 20 miles north of London. Prepares manuscript of *A Boy's Will* and submits it to London publishing firm of David Nutt and Company.
- 1913 *A Boy's Will* is published on April 1 and receives several favorable reviews including Ezra Pound's in *Poetry*. Through Pound, meets Hilda Doolittle ("H. D."), Ford Hermann Hueffer (Ford Maddox Ford), May Sinclair, Ernest Rhys, and William Butler Yeats. Attends weekly gatherings at homes of T. E. Hulme and Yeats. Forms close mentoring friendship with essayist Edward Thomas.
- 1914 Moves family to Dymock, Gloucestershire. *North of Boston* published on May 15 by David Nutt and Company to many favorable reviews. Learns that New York publishing firm of Henry Holt and Company will publish his books in the United States. Decides to return to the United States.
- 1915 *North of Boston* published by Henry Holt on February 20. Frost arrives in New York on February 23. *A Boy's Will* is published by Henry Holt in April. Moves to Franconia, New Hampshire in June. Meets poet Edwin Arlington Robinson and poet and anthologist Louis Untermeyer, who becomes a lifelong friend. Elinor becomes ill during pregnancy and recovers after miscarriage.
- 1917 Family moves to Amherst, Massachusetts in January. Edward Thomas killed by artillery shell in France on April 9 at the battle of Arras. Accepts offer to extend teaching appointment at Amherst.
- 1918 Awarded honorary MA degree by Amherst College in May. Reappointed professor of English.
- 1920 Resigns position at Amherst College in February in dispute with President Meiklejohn over teaching philosophy and to devote more time to writing poetry. Sister Jeanie arrested in Portland, Maine for disturbing the peace; Frost commits her to the state mental hospital. Sells property in Franconia and buys farm in South Shaftsbury, Vermont. Begins serving as consulting editor for Henry Holt and Company.
- 1921 Accepts a one-year fellowship in letters at the University of Michigan.
- 1923 *Selected Poems* is published on March 15. *New Hampshire* published by Henry Holt on November 15. Accepts new appointment at Amherst College.

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- 1924 Awarded Pulitzer Prize for *New Hampshire*. Receives honorary degrees from Middlebury College and Yale University. Accepts life-time appointment at University of Michigan as Fellow in Letters.
- 1925 Leaves Michigan in December when daughter Marjorie is hospitalized with pneumonia and a peri-cardiac infection.
- 1926 Accepts offer to return to Amherst as part-time professor of English. Participates in inaugural session of the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference in Vermont.
- 1927 Moves to Amherst. Marjorie enters Johns Hopkins Hospital for ten weeks of treatment.
- 1928 Visits Ireland and England, visiting Padraic Colum, George Russell ("AE"), and Yeats. Meets T. S. Eliot for the first time, in London. *West-Running Brook* is published November 19 by Holt along with an expanded edition of *Selected Poems*.
- 1929 Sister Jeanie dies in state mental hospital in Augusta, Maine, on September 7. Frost and Elinor move into 150-acre "Gully Farm" in South Shaftsbury, Vermont.
- 1930 *Collected Poems* published by Holt. Elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.
- 1931 Awarded Pulitzer Prize for *Collected Poems*.
- 1934 Marjorie dies after intensive treatment for fever at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Frost and Elinor go to Key West, Florida under doctor's orders where they are joined by Carol and his family.
- 1937 Wins Pulitzer Prize for *A Further Range*. Elinor undergoes surgery for breast cancer in October. Spends winter with Elinor in Gainesville, Florida.
- 1938 Elinor dies of heart failure in Gainesville on March 20. Frost resigns Amherst position and returns to South Shaftsbury. Kathleen Morrison becomes his secretary and arranges lecture appearances. Moves to Boston in October.
- 1940 Carol commits suicide with a deer-hunting rifle on October 9 in South Shaftsbury.
- 1941 Moves to new home at 35 Brewster Street in Cambridge, spending summers at the Homer Noble Farm and winters in South Miami. Accepts fellowship from Harvard in American Civilization.
- 1942 *A Witness Tree* is published by Holt on April 23.
- 1943 Awarded Pulitzer Prize for *A Witness Tree*, becoming the first person to receive the prize four times. Appointed George Ticknor Fellow in the Humanities at Dartmouth College.
- 1944 Daughter Irma afflicted by mental instability separates from husband John Crone.

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- 1945 *A Masque of Reason* is published by Holt in March. Works on *A Masque of Mercy* during the summer. Returns to Dartmouth as Ticknor Fellow.
- 1946 Irma and her six-year-old son Harold stay with Frost during the summer as her mental condition deteriorates. Modern Library publishes *Collected Poems* with preface "The Constant Symbol."
- 1947 T. S. Eliot visits Frost in Cambridge. *Steeple Bush* is published by Holt on May 28. Frost has Irma committed to the state mental hospital in Concord, New Hampshire, in August. *A Masque of Mercy* is published by Holt in November.
- 1949 *Complete Poems of Robert Frost 1949*, published by Holt on May 30.
- 1950 US Senate adopts resolution honoring Frost on his seventy-fifth birthday (actually his seventy-sixth). Attends conference held in his honor at Kenyon college.
- 1953 Awarded the Fellowship of the Academy of American Poets.
- 1954 Attends series of eightieth birthday celebrations including one at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York sponsored by Holt. Travels with Lesley to Brazil as delegate to the World Congress of Writers held in São Paulo in August.
- 1957 Frost, T. S. Eliot, Archibald MacLeish, and Ernest Hemingway sign letter, asking Attorney General Herbert Brownell to drop treason indictment against Ezra Pound. Awarded honorary doctorates by Oxford and Cambridge. Revisits Gloucestershire and Beaconsfield. Returns to US and becomes actively involved in effort to free Ezra Pound.
- 1959 Attends dinner at Waldorf-Astoria in honor of his eighty-fifth birthday. Lionel Trilling's speech creates controversy reported in *The New York Times*.
- 1960 Congress passes bill awarding Frost a gold medal in recognition of his work. Testifies before Senate subcommittee in favor of a bill to establish a National Academy of Culture. President-elect Kennedy invites him to take part in inaugural ceremonies.
- 1961 Writes new poem in heroic couplets for inauguration on January 20. Apparently unable to read it because of glare and recites, instead, "The Gift Outright." Travels to Israel and Greece under auspices of the State Department and lectures at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Delivers three lectures in Athens. Vermont state legislature names Frost "Poet Laureate of Vermont."
- 1962 *In the Clearing* published March 26 by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, on his birthday, March 26. At invitation of President Kennedy,

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travels in late August to the Soviet Union as part of a cultural exchange program sponsored by the State Department. Travels to Gagra on the Black Sea and meets with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. Returns to United States and creates controversy when he tells press that Khrushchev "said we were too liberal to fight." Undergoes prostate operation on December 10. Suffers pulmonary embolism on December 23.

- 1963 Awarded the Bollingen Prize for Poetry on January 3. Suffers another pulmonary embolism on January 7. Dies shortly after midnight on January 29. Private memorial service is held in the Appleton Chapel in Harvard Yard, January 31, and public service is held at Johnson Chapel, Amherst College, on February 17. Ashes are buried in the Frost family plot in Bennington, Vermont on June 16.

NOTE ON THE TEXT AND LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Texts of all Frost poems are from *Robert Frost: The Collected Poems, Prose, and Plays*, edited by Richard Poirier and Mark Richardson, Library of America, 1995. Most of the references to Frost's essays and letters are from the selections in this edition.

- CPPP** *Collected Poems, Prose, and Plays*, edited by Richard Poirier and Mark Richardson. New York: Library of America, 1995.
- SL** *Selected Letters of Robert Frost*, edited by Lawrance Thompson. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964.
- I** *Interviews with Robert Frost*, edited by Edward Connery Lathem. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966.

POEMS CITED

Note: dates cited in the text refer to first collections where poems appeared if different from dates cited below

	<i>Date first published</i>	<i>Collected Poems, Prose, and Plays</i>
		page reference
A Considerable Speck	1939	324
A Correction	1920	535
A Drumlin Woodchuck	1936	257
A Fountain, a Bottle, a Donkey's Ears and Some Books	1923	196
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