

Robert Frost  
1874-1963, San Francisco, CA

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, where his father, William Prescott Frost Jr., and his mother, Isabelle Moodie, had moved from Pennsylvania shortly after marrying. After the death of his father from tuberculosis when Frost was eleven years old, he moved with his mother and sister, Jeanie, who was two years younger, to Lawrence, Massachusetts. He became interested in reading and writing poetry during his high school years in Lawrence, enrolled at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1892, and later at Harvard University in Boston, though he never earned a formal college degree.

Frost drifted through a string of occupations after leaving school, working as a teacher, cobbler, and editor of the Lawrence *Sentinel*. His first published poem, "My Butterfly," appeared on November 8, 1894, in the New York newspaper *The Independent*.

In 1895, Frost married Elinor Miriam White, whom he'd shared valedictorian honors with in high school and who was a major inspiration for his poetry until her death in 1938. The couple moved to England in 1912, after they tried and failed at farming in New Hampshire. It was abroad that Frost met and was influenced by such contemporary British poets as Edward Thomas, Rupert Brooke, and Robert Graves. While in England, Frost also established a friendship with the poet Ezra Pound, who helped to promote and publish his work.

By the time Frost returned to the United States in 1915, he had published two full-length collections, *A Boy's Will* (Henry Holt and Company, 1913) and *North of Boston* (Henry Holt and Company, 1914), and his reputation was established. By the 1920s, he was the most celebrated poet in America, and with each new book—including *New Hampshire* (Henry Holt and Company, 1923), *A Further Range* (Henry Holt and Company, 1936), *Steeple Bush* (Henry Holt and Company, 1947), and *In the Clearing* (Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1962)—his fame and honors (including four Pulitzer Prizes) increased.

Though his work is principally associated with the life and landscape of New England—and though he was a poet of traditional verse forms and metrics who remained steadfastly aloof from the poetic movements and fashions of his time—Frost is anything but merely a regional poet. The author of searching and often dark meditations on universal themes, he is a quintessentially modern poet in his adherence to language as it is actually spoken, in the psychological complexity of his portraits, and in the degree to which his work is infused with layers of ambiguity and irony...

...About Frost, President John F. Kennedy, at whose inauguration the poet delivered a poem, said, “He has bequeathed his nation a body of imperishable verse from which Americans will forever gain joy and understanding.”

Robert Frost lived and taught for many years in Massachusetts and Vermont, and died in Boston on January 29, 1963.

Biographical information gathered from [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org)