

Robert Frost Farm

History of Robert Frost

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874 in San Francisco. After his father died when Robert was 11, his family moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts where his father's family lived. At Lawrence High School, Robert began to write poetry. In his senior year, Frost met Elinor Miriam White, with whom he shared an interest in reading and writing poetry. Frost entered Dartmouth in the fall of 1892, and although he stayed for less than one semester, it was there that Robert Frost began to think of becoming a poet.



When Frost left Dartmouth, he returned to Massachusetts where he taught school for one term. On November 8, 1894, he sold one of his poems, "My Butterfly: An Elegy" to a magazine and saw it published in the Independent. This was the first appearance of Frost's poetry in a publication with national circulation.

In December of 1895, Robert Frost and Elinor Miriam White were married in Lawrence, MA. The couple began to raise a family - a son, Elliott was born in 1896 and a daughter, Lesley in 1899. Frost also attended Harvard College as a special student, continued to write poetry, and occasionally saw his work published.

In 1900, Frost's paternal grandfather, worried by Robert's apparent lack of ambition, bought a farm in Derry, N.H. for Robert's use. In the fall of 1900, Robert and Elinor moved into their home with Lesley; Elliott had died earlier that year at the age of four. (continued on next page)

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History of Robert Frost (continued)

The farm was completely isolated. For Robert Frost, who especially enjoyed the seclusion, the farm was an ideal setting to raise his family and continue to write poetry in private. Though the farm and its surroundings were the inspiration for much of what Frost wrote, it was his poetry, not the farming, that was his primary concern.

In 1906, Frost secured a position to teach English at Derry's Pinkerton Academy. In 1909, the Frosts rented an apartment in Derry Village to be closer to the Academy. In 1911, Frost sold the Derry farm, moving to Plymouth, N.H. to take a teaching position at the N.H. State Normal School. In 1912, Frost and his family (now including a son, Carol and two daughters, Irma and Marjorie) went to England. They settled in a rented house in Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire. With the recognition of his work in England and America, a new phase of Robert Frost's life began. He was earning money as a poet and was also in great demand as a lecturer. In 1917, he began teaching at Amherst College and remained as a professor under various arrangements until 1938. He was co-founder of the Bread Loaf School of English in Ripton, Vermont, to which he returned to lecture every summer. (continued on the next page)



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History of Robert Frost (continued)

At the same time that his literary career flourished and he enjoyed much success in his public life, Robert Frost suffered several personal tragedies in close succession. In 1934, his daughter Marjorie died. Her death has been described as Robert's great tragedy and final blow to Elinor, who died of a heart attack in 1938. In 1940, Robert Frost's only remaining son, Carol, committed suicide. Frost's daughter, Irma was committed to the State Hospital in Concord, N.H. for a short time and then under the care of Lesley, was finally settled into a nursing home in northern Vermont.



A year after his wife's death, Robert Frost purchased the Homer Noble farm in Ripton, Vermont. Although in his later years Frost lived in Cambridge, MA and in Florida, the farm became for him a place of refuge and restoration, and his final permanent residence.

Up until his death, Frost wrote, read his poetry, and lectured. In addition to countless other prizes and awards, Frost received the Pulitzer Prize for poetry four times. On his 89th birthday in 1962, he received a special Congressional Medal of Honor. On the same day, *In the Clearing*, Robert Frost's last book of new verse, was published.

Robert Frost died on January 29, 1963, having had four children, six grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren.

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