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# Robinson Jeffers Newsletter

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Our list of subscribers continues to grow. Seventeen States are represented, with New York second only to California. Copies of the Letter also go to Australia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Ireland, and Italy. This summer we added a subscriber from Tokyo - Tokuhiko Miura, who belongs to a group of young Japanese poets who publish the quarterly Orpheus which is devoted to original Japanese poems and translations. Mr. Miura's translation of Jeffers' "Inscription for a Gravestone" was selected by World Poetry for Young People (Sekai Seishun Shishu) for inclusion in their 1967 anthology. This is published by the Mikasa Publishing Company, Tokyo. Mr. Miura is a member of the faculty of the English department of Hosei University, Tokyo. University publications have included two of his critiques, "R. J.'s Quest in The Double Axe" and "A Vision in R. J.'s Tamar."

A distinguished addition to the Robinson Jeffers Committee is the poet and biographer Muriel Rukeyser of New York.

We are happy to announce that The Selected Letters of Robinson Jeffers, edited by Ann Ridgeway, is being published by the Johns Hopkins Press, for June release. We will give you more explicit information for obtaining this fine work in our June Newsletter. Mrs. Ridgeway, a former faculty member of Michigan State University, has for several years devoted her summers to visiting libraries and individuals who own Jeffers letters. This has taken her to all sections of the United States and would make a fascinating story in itself. Members of our Committee have taken a particular interest in this project and we take this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Ridgeway on completing a work which entailed great personal sacrifice and dedication against discouraging odds.

In October your Editor had the privilege of visiting the Southern Oregon College in Ashland, and the Portland State College in Oregon, where we held three-day seminars on R. J. with the students and members of the faculty in the English Departments. About eighty-five per cent of the enrollment of these two colleges are self-supporting, and most of them are first generation college students, so they have a keen appreciation of their opportunities. Their attendance at the seminars and their intelligent questions about Jeffers' poetry was most rewarding since it was their first introduction to Jeffers except for a very few individuals.

In this issue we are presenting "Some Notes on Jeffers" written by William White who is the co-editor of the Walt Whitman Review. In the last paragraph of this article, collectors and bibliographers should note the listing of previous publications about Jeffers written by Mr. White.

SOME NOTES ON JEFFERS  
William White

In an article in the American Book Collector, March 1967, I referred to journals and newsletters which deal with single authors in English and American literature: among American writers are Stephen Crane, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, George Washington Harris, Henry James, Herman Melville, Henry Miller, Jesse Stuart, Henry David Thoreau, Mark Twain, and Walt Whitman.

This shows that no matter how interested one is in a writer, it's easy to be ignorant of what's going on -- as Dr. Samuel Johnson said in another connection, "Sheer ignorance, Madame, sheer ignorance!" - and I herewith apologize to the Robinson Jeffers Committee for omitting the Robinson Jeffers Newsletter. (Among English writers, I also missed the Evelyn Waugh Newsletter, but that just began in April, whereas RJN has been in business since 1962.)

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I can appreciate your editor's feeling, in the June issue of RJN (No. 14), that there may not be enough interest in the Newsletter to warrant continuing its publication. As a new subscriber - and I was able to get copies of all of the back issues - I'm glad the publication has not ceased. And the new name-plate in green ink in the April issue is a distinct improvement; it also lends an air of stability, if not permanence, to the Newsletter.

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The often heard comment that Robinson Jeffers is not so widely read as he should be, nor does he get his proper critical acclaim, reminds me of a paragraph by Hilaire Belloc: "In the best of times (the most stable, the least hurried) the date at which general appreciation comes is a matter of chance, and to-day the presentation of any achieved work is like the reading of Keats to a football crowd. It is of no significance whatsoever to English Letters whether one of its glories be appreciated at the moment it issues from the press or ten years later, or twenty, or fifty. Further, after a very small margin is passed, a margin of a few hundred at the most, it matters little whether strong permanent work finds a thousand or fifty thousand or a million of readers. Rock stands and mud washes away."

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As Jeffers specialists know, the errors in the first printing of The Beginning and the End, listed in the RJN No. 3, December 1963, and in The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, Vol. LX, Third Quarter 1966, p. 347, were corrected in the third printing of the book; that is, all but three of them (p. 29, l.10; p. 46, l.11; and p. 63, l.28). However, in correcting

"Confound" (p. 26, 1.13) to read "Dumbfound," the printer made another error, for the word now reads "Dumdfound." This makes four misprints remaining in The Beginning and the End.

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Robinson Jeffers: Selected Poems, noted in RJN No. 12, November 1965, is a remarkably accurate edition for a paperback, or for any volume of poetry. In collating the text, I discovered but five typographical errors, all but one being matters of punctuation:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Correction</u>
4	4	Period instead of a colon after "granite"
28	7	Hyphen instead of a dash after "moon"
41	30	Hyphen after "fire" is missing
72	2	"For to be equal" should read "For to equal"
107	23	"What" should not begin with a capital

Also, in the note about Jeffers on p. 115, the name of the university he attended should be the University of Western Pennsylvania, not the University of Pennsylvania. (The information on the back of the cover gives the correct name.)

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For those who are interested in such matters, I have a short piece, "Robinson Jeffers: A Checklist, 1959-1965," in The Serif (Kent State University Library), Vol. III, June 1966, pp. 36-39, which I am sure is incomplete but which I hope to bring up to date, although I am aware that others are working on Jeffers' bibliography.

My own interest in Jeffers goes back to 1938, when I was living in Hermosa Beach and wrote an essay on him for the University of Southern California Daily Trojan, where I got an MA degree (in 1937) and later taught American Literature (in 1962). At USC I found some uncollected poems by Jeffers, which I reprinted in American Notes & Queries, Vol. I, January 1942, pp. 149-151. (See also The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, Vol. XXXIV, Fourth Quarter 1940, pp. 362-363.) And I've continued to do articles on him from time to time, such as "Robinson Jeffers' Space" in the Personalist (University of Southern California), Vol. XLIV, Spring 1963, pp. 175-179; and "Robinson Jeffers: Poet of Black Despair" in The English Language and Literature (Seoul: The English Literary Society of Korea), No. 17, November 1965, pp. 91-101.