

## **Robert Frost Contribution to American Literature**

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### **I. Introduction :-**

Poet Robert Frost (1874-1963) is America's most popular poet. Frost transported the reader from the ordinary to the sublime through simple images such as a piece of New England apple or a loose stone in a neighbor's fence row. As a modernist poet, Frost sought to break free from the poetic conventions of older traditions like others of his time, often exhibiting the rhymes and meters of traditional poetry. However, winner of four Pulitzer Prizes and recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, Frost's poetry is a timeless voice of the American spirit.

### **Robert Frost's Contribution to American Literature :-**

Robert Lee Frost (1874-1963) was born and raised in California in the northeastern United States until the age of 10. His father's death forced him to return to New England, where they settled in Lawrence, Massachusetts. In that first term, he left Dartmouth College to return to Lawrence and support his family by teaching. In 1895, he married and applied to Harvard as a special student and was accepted as a three-year program, but withdrew after two years. After the deaths of his son Eliot and his mother and daughter Elinor, he fell into a deep depression and seriously considered suicide. In 1912 he moved with his family to England, where he found a publisher for his first book of verse, *A Boy's Will* (1913), followed by a second, *North of Boston* (1914). These publications, along with friendships with Ezra Pound and Edward Thomas, increased his exposure in literary magazines. He returned to the US in 1915 and settled on a farm in New Hampshire. There he was brought up, Frost, the poet of nature.

Robert Frost, verse relies heavily on the language of men. Many of his poems take the form of dramatic monologues or dialogues using converted New England speech patterns. His third collection, *Mountain Interval* (1916) Like Eliot and Pound, he went to England, attracted by the new directions of poetry there. A charismatic public reader, he was renowned for his tours. At the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy in 1961, he read the original work, which helped spark a national interest in poetry. His popularity is easily explained: he wrote about traditional farm life, appealing to nostalgia for the old ways. His subjects are universal - apple picking, stone walls, fences, country roads, etc. Frost's approach was clear and accessible: and he rarely used pedantic allusions or ellipses. His frequent use of rhyme also appealed to a wide audience.

His fourth collection, *New Hampshire* (1923), was published and soon won the Pulitzer Prize. *West Running Brook* (1928) followed. His *Collected Poems*, published in 1930, won his second Pulitzer. Frost's poetic work is often deceptively simple. Many poems suggest a deeper meaning. For example, a quiet snowy evening with an almost hypnotic rhyme scheme may suggest the not entirely unwelcome approach of death. From: "Stopping at the Woods on a Snowy Evening" (1923):

"Whose woods are these, I think I know." But his house is in the village, He won't see me stop here / To watch his woods fill with snow, / My little horse must think it strange / To stop without a farm near / Between the woods and the frozen lake / The darkest evening of the year...And miles to go before I sleep, / And miles to go before I sleep".

Frost's collection *A Another Range* (1936) and *A Witness Tree* (1942) brought him greater popularity. *Masque of Reason* (1945) and *Masque of Mercy* (1947) are his later collections of mature poetry. These last collections of poetry were in dramatic blank verse, depicting biblical characters and exploring the relationship between man and God in the modern world. In 1947 he published a collection of lyrics, *A Steeple Bush*. He wrote poetry until the end of his life, even when he was sick and ill. His last collection *On the Clearing* appeared in 1962.

### **How many poems did Robert Frost write?**

Robert Frost did not experience literary success until the age of 40. After publishing his first book of poetry, *A Boy's Will*, he was widely published and wrote over 100 poems. His poetry is often set in New England, where he spent much of his life.

**What is the main theme of Robert Frost's poetry?**

Frost's poetry, though often using simple scenes of nature, is far from simple. Frost often found ways to express the depth of life and death and in his poetry. In one instance of "Fire and Ice", an unusual ice storm prompts Frost to explore the end of the world.

**What is Robert Frost's most famous poem?**

Frost's most famous poem is "The Road of No Road". The scene is a simple New England lane that diverges in some woods. Through imagery, Frost explores how missed opportunities are both sad and somehow necessary.

**What is Robert Frost's writing style?**

Robert Frost is known for incorporating the blunt, colloquial style of New England speech. The incorporation of New England dialogue has led critics to call Frost's style "conversational" and "rustic". Overall, though, his tone is introspective.

**What was Robert Frost's first collection of poems?**

Frost achieved literary success after 40 years. His first published book of poems was *A Boy's Will*, published in England in 1913. His second book of poems, *North of Boston*, was published in 1914.

**How did Robert Frost influence the world?**

During his lifetime, Frost influenced generations of writers and poets. His poems are anthologized for study around the world. He is known for poems of austere beauty and simplicity, even as they address themes that are universal.

**Style and critical reception**

Critic Harold Bloom claimed that Frost was one of the "major American poets". Poet and critic Randall Jarrell has often praised Frost's poetry, writing, "Robert Frost seems to me, along with Stevens and Eliot, the greatest of the American poets of this century. Frost's merits are extraordinary. No other living poet has written so well of him." actions of ordinary people; his wonderful dramatic monologues or dramatic scenes spring from a knowledge of men which few poets possess, and are written in verse which makes use, sometimes with absolute mastery, of the rhythms of real speech". He also praised "Frost's earnestness and honesty" and stated that Frost was particularly skilled at representing a wide range of human experience in his poems.

Jarrell's notable and influential essays on Frost include "Robert Frost's Home Burial" (1962), which consisted of an extended detailed reading of this particular poem,[33] and "To The Laodiceans" (1952), in which Jarrell defended Frost against to critics who accused Frost of being too "traditional" and out of touch with modern or modernist poetry.

In Frost's defense, Jarrell wrote: "The usual ways of looking at Frost's poetry are grotesque simplifications, distortions, falsifications - knowing his poetry well should in itself be enough to dispel any of these and make clear the need to find some other way to speak about his work." And Jarrell's close reading of poems like "Neither Too Far, Nor Too Deep" has led readers and critics to become more aware of the complexity of Frost's poetry.

In the introduction to Jarrell's book of essays, Brad Leithauser notes that "the 'other' Frost that Jarrell recognized behind the ingenious, homespun New England rustic goods—the 'dark' Frost who was desperate, scared, and brave—became the Frost, "All we have learned to recognize, and the little-known poems that Jarrell identified as central to the Frost canon are now found in most anthologies." [36][37] Jarrell lists a selection of Frost's poems that he considers his most masterly, including "The Witch of Coös", "Home Funeral", "Servant to Servants", "Directive", "Neither Too Far Nor Too Deep", "Provide, Provide", "Acquaintance with the Night", "After the Apple Harvest", "Mending the Wall", "The Most", "The Old Man's Winter Night", "To the Earth", "Stop by the Woods on a Snowy Evening", "Spring Pools", "The Lovely Shall Be Choosers", 'Design' and 'Desert Places'. In 2003, critic Charles McGrath noted that critical views of Frost's poetry have changed over the years (as has his public image). In an article entitled "The Vicissitudes of Literary Reputation", McGrath wrote: "Robert Frost... at the time of his death in 1963 was widely regarded as a New England folklorist... In 1977 the third volume of Lawrence Thompson's book was published. the biography suggested that Frost was a far more vile work than anyone imagined; a few years later, thanks to the reappraisal of critics such as William H. Pritchard and Harold Bloom and younger poets such as Joseph Brodsky, he returned again, this time as a bleak and ruthless modernist."

In *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, editors Richard Ellmann and Robert O'Clair compared and contrasted Frost's unique style with the work of poet Edwin Arlington Robinson, as both often used New England settings for their poems. However, they state that Frost's poetry was "less [consciously] literary" and that this was perhaps due to the influence of English and Irish writers such as Thomas Hardy and W.B. Yeats. They note that Frost's poems "show a successful pursuit of sheer colloquialism" and always try to stay grounded while using traditional forms despite the trend in American poetry toward free verse, which Frost famously described as "like playing tennis. without network."

In providing an overview of Frost's style, the Poetry Foundation points to the same, placing Frost's work "at the intersection of nineteenth-century American poetry [with its use of traditional forms] and modernism [with its use of idiomatic language and commonplace, everyday subject matter]." They also note that Frost believed that the meter's "self-imposed limitations on form" were more helpful than harmful because he could concentrate on the content of his poems instead of being concerned with creating "innovative" new verse forms.

An earlier study of the poet by James Radcliffe Squires in 1963 argued that Frost was distinguished as a poet whose verses fly more for the difficulty and skill with which he achieves his ultimate visions than for the philosophical purity of the visions themselves. "He wrote at a time when the poet's choice seemed to lie between the forms of despair: science, solipsism or religion of the last century... Frost rejected it all, and in the rejection for a long time it seemed that less dramatically committed than others... But no, he must be seen as dramatically committed to a single solution... If Frost allows both facts and intuition a clear kingdom, he speaks for many of us. a mixture of senses and a certain experience, so that his poetry feels like a nostalgic memory with a subtext touching on some conceivable future, he speaks better than most of us. That is, as a poet must."

Classicist Helen H. Bacon has suggested that Frost's deep knowledge of the Greek and Roman classics influenced much of his work. Frost's education at Lawrence High School, Dartmouth, and Harvard "was based mainly on the classics." As an example, he links imagery and action in Frost's early poems "Birches" (1915) and "Wild Grapes" (1920) to Euripides' *Bacchae*. He cites certain motifs, including that of a tree bent to the ground, as evidence of his "very careful reading of the *Bacchae*, almost certainly in Greek". In the later poem "One More Brevity" (1953), Bacon compares the poetic techniques used by Frost to those of Virgil in the *Aeneid*. He notes that "this sampling of the ways in which Frost drew on the literature and concepts of the Greek and Roman worlds at every stage of his life shows how permeated he was."

In *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, the editors state that "Frost's best work explores fundamental questions of existence and depicts with chilling starkness the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe." [46] Critic T. K. Whipple focused on this bleakness of Frost's work, stating that "in much of his work, especially in his harshest book on North Boston, he emphasizes the dark background of life in rural New England, with its degeneration often descending into sheer madness."

## **II. Conclusion:-**

In stark contrast, Poetry's founding publisher and editor, Harriet Monroe, emphasized the folksy New England persona and characters in Frost's work, writing that "perhaps no other poet in our history has so perfectly put the best of the Yankee spirit into a book. " he notes his frequent use of rural settings and farm life and likes that Frost is most interested in these poems to "show the human response to natural processes". He also notes that while Frost's narrative, character-based poems are often satirical, Frost always has a "sympathetic humor" about his subjects. he read the original work, which helped spark a national interest in poetry. His popularity is easily explained: he wrote about traditional farm life, appealing to nostalgia for the old ways. His subjects are universal - apple picking, stone walls, fences, country roads, etc. Frost's approach was clear and accessible: and he rarely used pedantic allusions or ellipses. His frequent use of rhyme also appealed to a wide audience.

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