

American backgrounds of our national life, far from the cities, through personal observation of their natural and human characteristics." He marked out the Appalachian region as his special domain, "to create from their rich illiteracy and lore a nucleus of literature, wrought of their native speech."¹ In his creative work and in various public forums, MacKaye expressed again and again his concern for the function of art in a democracy. He strenuously championed an art of the people and for the people—and sometimes, in performance at least, by the people.

Frost, at the beginning of the twenties, was probably better-known in England than in America. He had first won the attention of poets and critics for his use of spoken language (especially that of New England rural types) as a poetic vehicle. The American edition of *North of Boston* (1915) was a popular success, but the first peak of Frost's reputation was to come with the publication of the *New Hampshire* volume (1923) for which he won, in the following year, his first Pulitzer Prize. The poems for this volume were revised and arranged during Frost's residency at Michigan.

For Frost, the residency concept must have seemed like an ideal opportunity to practice those educational techniques which had on occasion made him a figure of controversy in university employments. He never had much patience with standard classroom procedures. "You never quiz in a good society," Frost said in an interview following the second of his one-year appointments at Ann Arbor. "Lecturing is a step better, but it's not much good. Controversy or debate is examining in a natural way—is finding each other out—and is considerably better than the other two ways. But communion of minds is the best way; it is an ever-going self-revelation."²

Furthermore, Frost believed in the educative power of example. He urged universities to present students with the opportunity to watch accomplished men and women in all fields practice

¹ Preface to *This Fine-Pretty World* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), p. xiii. Preface to *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928), p. xiii.

² *Interviews with Robert Frost*, ed. Edward C. Lathem (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), p. 55.