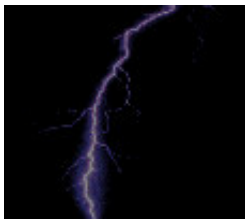


Merry we meet. Merry we meet. Merry we mee

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Welcome



Robert 'von Ranke' Graves

(1895 – 1985)



Written and compiled by George Knowles

prolific writer who during his life produced more than 140 books including: fifty-five collections of poetry, fifteen novels, ten classical translations, forty works of non-fiction, an autobiography and many literary essays. Among his best selling books were his autobiography: 'Good-Bye to all That' (1929), and two historical novels: 'I, Claudius' (1934) and its sequel 'Claudius the God' (1943), both of which continue their commercial success through the popularity of BBC television adaptations. His most controversial best seller was his study of the myths and folklore of religion, called: 'The White Goddess' (1948).

THE WHITE GODDESS

*All saints revile her, and all sober men
Ruled by the God Apollo's golden mean -
In scorn of which we sailed to find her
In distant regions likeliest to hold her
Whom we desired above all things to know,
Sister of the mirage and echo.*

*It was a virtue not to stay,
To go our headstrong and heroic way
Seeking her out at the volcano's head,
Among pack ice, or where the track had faded
Beyond the cavern of the seven sleepers:
Whose broad high brow was white as any leper's,
Whose eyes were blue, with rowan-berry lips,
With hair curled honey-coloured to white hips.*

*Green sap of Spring in the young wood a-stir
Will celebrate the Mountain Mother,
And every song-bird shout awhile for her;
But we are gifted, even in November
Rawest of seasons, with so huge a sense
Of her nakedly worn magnificence
We forget cruelty and past betrayal,
Heedless of where the next bright bolt may fall.*

Robert Graves was born on the 24th of July 1895 in Wimbledon, England. He was the third of five children descendant from lines of academic ancestry. His grandfather Charles Graves (1812-1899) had been Bishop of Limerick, a prominent Irish antiquarian and a pioneer in deciphering Ogham inscriptions (see - <http://www.she-eire.com/Magic&Mythology/Ogham/Bethluinnin/ogam.htm>).



Charles Graves (Grandfather)

His father Alfred Percival Graves (1846-1931) was a minor poet and Gaelic scholar who played an important part in the revival of Irish literature, he was also the author of a popular song called 'Father O'Flynn'.



Alfred Percival Graves (Father)

His mother was Amalie von Ranke Graves, a great-niece of the German historian Leopold von Ranke (1795-1866). Leopold was a historian and educator of some renown, whose quest for objectivity in history had a great impact on other historians of his day. The son of an attorney, Leopold was born in Wiehe on the 12th December 1795, and after studying at Leipzig University he worked for a time as a schoolmaster. His first book was called: 'History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations 1494-1514 (published in 1824). In it he criticised contemporary historians by condemning their reliance on what had been proposed and theorised, instead of relying on 'what is' and what was 'fact'. He then introduced his own more objective methods, which inspired the modern day school of history writing by relying primarily on eyewitness documentation of actual historical events. He also introduced the 'seminar' as a method of teaching history and trained a generation of influential scholars.

A year later in 1825, Leopold was rewarded with a professorship at the University of Berlin, a position he would hold until 1871. His studies took him to Vienna and Italy; where his research into state archives provided the material for some of the most respected historical writings of his

age. His works cover the history's of some major European countries and include: 'The History of the Popes During the 16th and 17th Centuries' (1834-36), 'The History of the Reformation in Germany' (1839-47) and 'Civil Wars and Monarchy in France in the 16th and 17th Centuries' (1852). He also wrote an incomplete World History in nine volumes (1881-88). Leopold von Ranke died on the 23rd of May 1886. In the village of Wiehe, Germany, where he grew up, a museum has been named in his honour outside of which stands a commemorative statue.



Leopold von Ranke Museum in Wiehe

A more contemporary family connection of note can be made to Olivia Melian Durdin-Robertson and her brother Reverend Lawrence Alexander Robertson (the 21st Baron of Strathloch) owners of Clonegal Castle, Clonegal, Co Wexford in the Republic of Ireland. While there seems to have been little social contact between the two families, it was here at the Vernal Equinox (21st March) 1976 that Olivia with her brother Lawrence and his wife Pamela, co-founded and established the now highly respected *Fellowship of Isis*.



Olivia Robertson (Cousin)

Representing the Fellowship of Isis at the Parliament of the World's Religions in August 1993.

Robert Graves

As a young man, Robert Graves was greatly influenced by his mother's patriotic beliefs in God, King and Country, mixed with his father's love of Celtic poetry and mythology. Coming from a

fair well to do family, during his early education Graves attended a number of London's top preparatory schools but proved a difficult student more interested in boxing and mountain climbing than studying. He preferred the freedom of summer holidays in Wales, where he was able to explore the rugged countryside at his family's home near Harlech. His roving experiences to historic Harlech Castle and the mountainous slopes of Snowdonia would influence much of his early poetry.

In 1908 he won a scholarship to 'Charterhouse' one of England's most famous and notable public schools. He is said to have hated the school because of bullying about his name 'von Ranke' alluding to his German ancestry and the propensity toward homosexuality prevalent in public schools during his time there:

In his autobiography: *Goodbye to All That* (1929), Robert Graves wrote about his time at Charterhouse:

"In English preparatory and public schools romance is necessarily homosexual. The opposite sex is despised and treated as something obscene. Many boys never recover from this perversion. For every one born homosexual, at least ten permanent pseudo-homosexuals are made by the public school system: nine of these ten as honourably chaste and sentimental as I was.

In the second term the trouble began. A number of things naturally made for my unpopularity. Besides being a scholar and not outstandingly good at games, I was always short of pocket money. Since I could not conform to the social custom of treating my contemporaries to tuck at the school shop, I could not accept their treating. My clothes, though conforming outwardly to the school pattern, were ready-made and not of the best-quality cloth that all the other boys wore.

The most unfortunate disability of all was that my name appeared on the school list as 'R. von R. Graves'. I had hitherto believed my second name to be 'Ranke'; the 'von', encountered on my birth certificate, disconcerted me. Carthusians behaved secretively about their second names, and usually managed to conceal fancy ones. I could no doubt have passed off 'Ranke', without the 'von', as monosyllabic and English, but 'von Ranke' was glaring. Businessmen's sons, at this time, used to discuss hotly the threat, and even the necessity of a trade war with the Reich. 'German' meant 'dirty German'. It meant: 'cheap, shoddy goods competing with our sterling industries.' It also meant military menace, Prussianism, useless philosophy, tedious scholarship, loving music and sabre-rattling.

One of my last recollections at Charterhouse is a school debate on the motion 'that this House is in favour of compulsory military service'. The Empire Service League, with Earl Roberts of Kandahar, V.C., as its President, sent down a propagandist in support. Only six votes out of one hundred and nineteen were noes. I was the principal opposition speaker, having recently resigned from the Officers' Training Corps in revolt against the theory of implicit obedience to orders. And during a fortnight spent the previous summer at the O.T.C. camp near Tidworth on Salisbury Plain, I had been frightened by a special display of the latest military fortifications: barbed-wire entanglements, machine-guns, and field artillery in action. General, now Field-Marshal Sir William Robertson, who

had a son at the school, visited the camp and impressed upon us that war with Germany must inevitably break out within two or three years, and that we must be prepared to take our part in it as leaders of the new forces which would assuredly be called into being. Of the six noes, Nevill Barbour and I are, I believe, the only ones who survived the war".



Charterhouse

While life at Charterhouse may have proved difficult for Graves, in order to avoid it's rigid routine, he often escaped into the world of poetic fancy. His first published poem: *'The Mountain Side at Evening'* appeared in the schools magazine: *'The Carthusian'* in June of 1911:

The Mountain Side at Evening

*Now even falls
And fresh, cold breezes blow
Adown the grey-green mountain side
Strewn with rough boulders. Soft and low
Night speaks, her tongue untied
Darkness to darkness calls.*

*Tis now men say
From rugged piles of stones
Steal shapes and things that should be still;
Green terror ripples through our bones,
Our inmost heart-strings thrill
And yearn for careless day.*

The poem caught the attention of George Mallory, who at the time was one of the schools History masters. Mallory would later claim fame himself as the mountaineer whose name became synonymous with Mt. Everest. As an expert mountaineer, he was one of the first to attempt to climb its summit, leading three British expeditions to Mt Everest in the early 1920s. On the third expedition in 1924, Mallory and his climbing partner Andrew Irvine mysteriously disappeared in heavy weather. It seemed certain they had died somewhere on the

mountainside, whether they reached the summit before they died was unknown. In 1999, another expedition found Mallory's frozen body 27,000 feet up on the north face of the mountain. The body while well preserved due to the freezing temperatures, offered no evidence that he had reached the summit before his death. Nearly 30 years after his death, Sir Edmund Hillary would become the first man to officially reach the summit of Mt. Everest in 1953.



George Mallory



On Mount Everest

Mallory was impressed by the poetic ability of Graves, and introduced him to the works of other writers, such as: John Masefield, George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells and Rupert Brooke. Once he had started, Graves became increasingly fascinated with literature and by 1913, he co-edited a new school magazine called: *'The Green Chartreuse'*. In it Graves wrote a number of witty and eccentric essays, written in a style similar to those he wrote in the 1950s and 1960s. Mallory was also instrumental in launching his career as a poet and writer by introducing Graves to Sir Edward Marsh, a patron of the Arts and Poetry.

Marsh was a high-ranking Civil Servant who served as private secretary to Sir Winston Churchill for more than 20 years. An avid collector of contemporary art he became the patron of young aspiring artists, writers and particularly poets. He was also the editor of the influential anthology *'Georgian Poetry'*. In 1912 together with the publisher Harold Monro (owner of The Poetry Bookshop in London), he collated the first of five anthologies containing contributions from some of the days most noted writers and poets including: Rupert Brooke, Wilfred Gibson, John Drinkwater, John Masefield, James Flecker, Walter de la Mare and D. H. Lawrence. Later in 1917 he would add contributions from: Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, Robert Nichols and Wilfred Owen.

Through Marsh's encouragement, Graves continued to experiment with verse forms and language, and poems such as *'The Jolly Yellow Moon'*, convinced Marsh that he had discovered in Graves a potential poet in the making:

The Jolly Yellow Moon

*Oh, now has faded from the West
A sunset red as wine,
And beast and bird are hushed to rest
When the jolly yellow moon doth shine.*

*Come comrades, roam we round the mead
Where couch the sleeping kine;
The breath of night blows soft indeed,
And the jolly yellow moon doth shine.*

*And step we slowly, friend with friend,
Let arm with arm entwine,
And voice with voice together blend,
For the yellow moon doth shine.*

*Whether we loudly sing or soft,
The tune goes wondrous fine;
Our chorus sure will float aloft
Where the jolly yellow moon doth shine.*

In 1913, Graves won a scholarship to continue his studies at St. John's College, Oxford. However by this time conflict in Europe had been brewing for sometime, and in August 1914, just a week before he was to start at St. Johns, war was declared against Germany. Graves at home in Harlech, Wales, immediately enrolled as a Junior Officer in the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

After initial training in Wrexham, NE Wales, in May 1915 he was sent and stationed in the trenches near Cuinchy in France. While waiting to see action on the battlefield he continued to write poetry, many of which poems he sent back to Edward Marsh. In September 1915 Graves took part in the 'Battle of Loos', surviving which he was then sent back to base camp for further training. While there he met Siegfried Sassoon who had joined his regiment and the two became firm friends.



Robert Graves



Siegfried Sassoon

In July of 1916 during the first offensive of the 'Battle of the Somme' both men were wounded, Graves seriously when shrapnel from an exploding shell pierced his chest and thigh. Returned to England to recover from their wounds, the army mistakenly informed Graves' father that his son had been killed, and forwarded his personal belongings back to the family. His obituary was even published in 'The Times' newspaper before it was realised he was still alive:

Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Crawshay informing Robert Graves's parents of their son's death on 22nd July 1916.

I very much regret to have to write and tell you your son has died of wounds. He was very gallant, and was doing so well and is a great loss. He was hit by a shell and very badly wounded, and died on the way down to the base I believe. He was not in bad pain, and our doctor managed to get across and attend to him at once.

We have had a very hard time, and our casualties have been large. Believe me you have all our sympathy in your loss, and we have lost a very gallant soldier. Please write to me if I can tell you or do anything.

Graves had been fortunate given the extent and nature of his wounds, but would suffer the rest of his life due to permanent damage he sustained to his lungs. Sent to north Wales to convalesce he resumed his friendship Siegfried Sassoon, though some contend their relationship developed into more than just friendship. Graves also published his first collection of poetry called *'Over the Brazier'* (London: The Poetry Bookshop, 1916; and New York: St Martins Press, 1975). At the same hospital Sassoon introduced Graves to Wilfred Owen who was being treated for shell shock. Graves recognised his talent as a poet and recommended him to Edward Marsh, thus furthering his short career.

Graves and Sassoon began to edit each other's work and both were critical of the way the war effort was being mismanaged. Sassoon however was not afraid to write about it, and after going 'absent without leave' to highlight his protest, he wrote to his Commanding Officer denouncing the war. Graves then played an important part in saving Sassoon from court-martial. He managed to persuade the Commanding Officer that Sassoon was mentally unbalanced due to the effects and stress of the war, and that instead of a court-martial; a Medical Board should be convened to assess his mental state. As a result, Sassoon was sent to a convalescent home in Craiglockhart near Edinburgh, and placed into the care of Dr W.H.R. Rivers for psychological evaluation.

Before returning to active duty, in January of 1917 Graves suffered a relapse brought on by a respiratory infection leading to bronchitis. He was then sent to Somerville College, Oxford, now being used as a temporary military hospital. While there, he had two more books on poetry published: *'Goliath and David'* (London: Chiswick Press, 1917) and *'Fairies and Fusiliers'* (London: William Heinemann, 1917; New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1918), both helped to establish his reputation as a wartime poet.

Due to the extent of his wounds Graves was assured of home-service for the rest of the war, but like many other injured veterans, he could not overcome the feelings of guilt that while he was safe, the rest of his men were still at war and in peril. As soon as he was sufficiently capable, Graves managed to get himself posted back to the front. However, before he could see any further action, his company's surgeon spotted him. The surgeon considered Graves to be unfit for active duty and threatened him with court-martial if he did not immediately remove himself back to England.

On his return to England and for the rest of the war, Graves was stationed at the regiment's headquarters in Wales. There he was kept occupied in training Officer cadets for active duty in

France and Germany. In the autumn of 1917, Graves met and began his first serious romance with Nancy Nicholson, the seventeen-year-old daughter of painter William Nicholson.



Nancy, a portrait by her father.

In January 1918, Graves and Nancy Nicholson were married. Their wedding was attended by Wilfred Owen who was home on leave from the war in France. As a wedding present, Owen presented Graves with a set of twelve 'apostolic spoons', perhaps igniting the theme of religion that would occupy much of Graves' later life. This was the last time Graves would meet Owen, for he returned to the battlefields of France where he died just a week before the armistice was called on the 11th of November 1918.

Shortly after the end of the war, Graves was demobbed from the army. Still quite traumatized by his experiences in the war, Graves decided to take up his position reading English at St. John's College in Oxford.



There he was befriended and taken under the wing of T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) who at that time was a research fellow at Oxford while serving as a political adviser to the Middle East Department of the Colonial Office. Graves would later write his first official biography, which became his first commercially successful book: *'Lawrence and the Arabs'* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927) and as *'Lawrence and the Arabian Adventure'* (New York: Doubleday, 1928).



T.E. Lawrence

Over the next few years within the peaceful surrounds of the Oxfordshire countryside, he and Nancy produced four children: Jenny, David, Catherine and Sam. Initially their relationship was happy and they even worked together on a children's book of poems which Nancy illustrated: *'Treasure Box'* (London: Chiswick Press, 1920) and as *'Country Sentiment'* (London: Martin Secker, 1920; New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1920), but the stress of family life, little money and Robert's still traumatized condition made for an unstable marriage. While completing his 'BLitt degree' in 1926, Graves then met and began an intense and personal relationship with the American poet and theorist 'Laura Riding'. Possessed of a strong and domineering personality, Riding's influence would have a dramatic effect on Graves' future writings, as well as his marriage to Nancy, for they soon became lovers.



Laura Riding

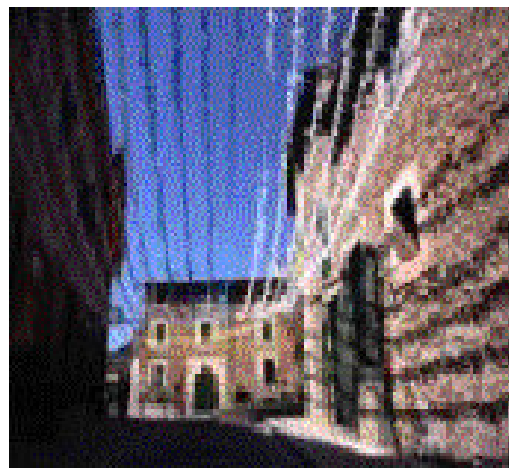
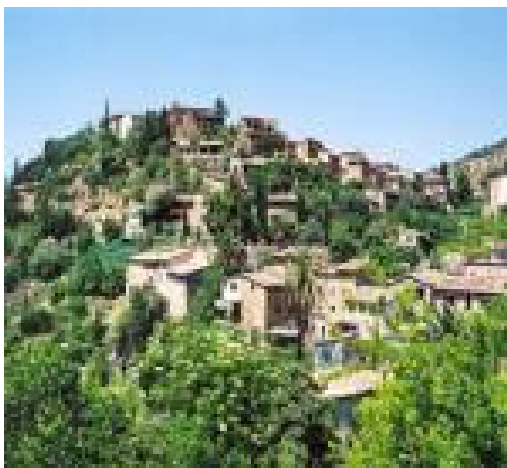
That same year in 1926, Graves accepted a short-term position as Professor teaching English at the University of Cairo in Egypt. He left England with his wife and children, accompanied by Laura Riding, ostensibly to collaborate with him on a study of modern poetry. While in Cairo, he and Riding established a small publishing business called the 'Seizin Press', through which they would later produce a semi annual magazine called 'Epilogue'.

Returning to England his sometimes stormy relationship with Riding continued, but was fraught with infidelities on both sides, indeed at one point in order to keep his attention, Riding even attempted suicide by jumping from a third floor apartment window causing damage to her back and pelvic bone. Due to stress resulting from his relationship with Riding, his marriage to Nancy seriously deteriorated and they separated permanently in 1927.

By this time Graves was a prolific writer and had published numerous books, mainly on poetry. As Riding recuperated in hospital, they collaborated and published two successful academic books: 'A Survey of Modernist Poetry' (London: William Heinemann, 1927; and New York: Doubleday, 1928), and 'A Pamphlet Against Anthologies' (London: Jonathan Cape, 1928) and as 'Against Anthologies' (New York: Doubleday, 1928), both of which became influential books on modern literary criticism.

Two more books followed: 'Mrs. Fischer or The Future of Humour' (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1928) and 'The Shout' (London: Mathews & Marrot, 1929) before he wrote first best seller, a somewhat controversial autobiography called: 'Good-Bye to all That' (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929; New York: Jonathan Cape and Smith, 1930; revised. Re-issued by New York: Doubleday, 1957; London: Cassell, 1957; and Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1960). This book describes his unhappy time at school, his horror and disillusionment of war, and the end of his marriage to Nancy. While the book became a huge bestseller, it also alienated several of his friends, most notably Siegfried Sassoon and another poet Edmund Blunden.

The success of 'Good-Bye to all That' allowed Graves the means to escape from England, a country he had long been dissatisfied with, and move with Laura Riding to the little village of Deya in Majorca. There in a secluded area just outside of the village, he built him himself a house and set himself up as a full time writer.





Deya in Majorca

Graves still considered himself primarily a poet and from Majorca produced a series of books on poetry: *'Poems: 1914-26'* (London: William Heinemann, 1927; New York: Doubleday, 1929) and *'Poems: 1926-1930'* (London: William Heinemann, 1931), but poetry alone could not sustain his life style, so he turned his attention to Classical literature and Mythology. With the growing tension of civil unrest and another war looming, he produced his two most successful historical novels: *'I, Claudius'* (London: Arthur Barker, 1934; New York: Smith & Haas, 1934) and its sequel *'Claudius the God and his Wife Messalina'* (London: Arthur Barker, 1934; New York: Smith & Haas, 1935). Later in the 1970's, the BBC would adopt both these novels and turn them into an internationally popular television series.

In 1936 at the start of hostilities brought on by the Spanish Civil War, Graves and Riding were forced to leave Majorca. After staying for brief periods in Lugano, Italy and Brittany in France, they settled for a time in London where their relationship began to deteriorate. While in London, Graves was introduced to Alan Hodge and his fiancée Beryl Pritchard, members of the Graves-Riding literary circle. He would later collaborate with Hodge on a number of projects, but his fiancée would play a more important role in his life.

Early in 1939 Graves and Riding sailed for a brief tour of America where they were invited to stay and visit with friends. After one particularly good review of Riding's poetry appeared in the press, written by American journalist Schuyler Jackson, they were invited to stay and visit with him at his family home in Pennsylvania. Despite his being married with four children, Riding quickly fell in love with Jackson and determined she would have him, abruptly she announced to Graves that their relationship was over. Graves was shocked at the speed in which it had happened, but realised the futility of arguing with her once her mind was made up, reluctantly he returned to London, England on his own. A year later having ousted his wife Kit, Laura Riding and Schuyler Jackson were married.

Back in England, Graves had started to collaborate with Alan Hodge on *'The Long Weekend'* (London: Faber & Faber, 1940; New York: Macmillan, 1941), and *'The Reader Over Your Shoulder'* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1943; New York: Macmillan, 1943) reproduced in 1947 as *'The Use and Abuse of the English Language'*. At the same time he also began a relationship with his wife, Beryl Hodge (nee Pritchard) who would later become his second wife, and remain with him for the rest of his life.



Beryl Hodge

When war against Germany was declared on the 3rd of September 1939, Graves and Beryl Hodge already living together, settled into the peaceful village of Galmpton in Devon. There they began to build a new life and despite the privation's and restrictions afforded by the war, produced a new family of four children: William, Lucia, Juan and Tomas. In the meantime, Graves continued writing and collaborating with Alan Hodge, who surprisingly seemed to bear no grudge against him for stealing his wife.

More books on poetry followed, including: *'No More Ghosts': Selected Poems* (London: Faber & Faber, 1940), *'Work in Hand'* with Norman Cameron and Alan Hodge (London: Hogarth Press, 1942), and *'Poems 1938-1945'* (London: Cassell, 1945; New York: Creative Age Press, 1946). He also wrote a number of novels including: *'Sergeant Lamb of the Ninth'* (London: Methuen, 1940; reproduced as *'Sergeant Lamb's America'* (New York: Random House, 1940), *'Proceed, Sergeant Lamb'* (London: Methuen, 1941; New York: Random House, 1941) and *'The Story of Marie Powell: Wife to Mr. Milton'* (London: Cassell, 1943) reproduced as *'Wife to Mr Milton: The Story of Marie Powell'* (New York: Creative Age Press, 1944).

More significant were his next two books: *'The Golden Fleece'* (London: Cassell, 1944) reproduced as *'Hercules, My Shipmate'* (New York: Creative Age Press, 1945) and *'King Jesus'* (New York: Creative Age Press, 1946; London: Cassell, 1946), these were his first ventures into the mythology of religion, a theme that would consume the rest of his life in his search to find and understand the White Goddess, and nearly all of his poetry from here on in is dedicated to her in token of his adoration.

However domesticated and idyllic this time may have seemed to them, and as they struggled to ignore the turmoil caused by a war raging all around them, like most people during that time, they couldn't entirely escape it's effects. In 1943 they received news that David, his second son from his first marriage, was missing in action. They later learned that while attempting to single-handedly take out a well-defended enemy position, he had been shot and sadly didn't survive.

By the end of the war in May of 1945, Graves surveyed the war ravaged ruins of a country he had never really been happy in, and longed to return to the peace and seclusion of his home in Deya, Majorca. In May 1946, together with Beryl and his four children, he managed to secure

transport and return to Majorca. There they set up home in the house he had built himself, which would remain his permanent place of residence for the rest of his life.



The Robert Graves house in Deya, Majorca

Back in the seclusion of his home in Majorca, Graves began his quest for the White Goddess in earnest producing his first draught in 1948 which would go through a number of revisions: *'The White Goddess'* (London: Faber & Faber, 1948; New York: Creative Age Press, 1948; rev., London: Faber & Faber, 1952, and 1961; New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1958). In 1950 he and Beryl were married and while he would remain loyal to her for the rest of his life, he also sought additional poetic inspiration from the auspices of four younger muses. The first being Judith Bledsoe, followed by Margot and Cindy, and toward the end of his life Juli. From them he was inspired to write over 500 poems dedicated to the White Goddess in her various aspects of maiden, mother and crone.

Except for annual trips to England to confer with publishers, give lectures and TV interviews, meetings with other writers, poets and friends, such as: T. S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein, among which can be added such celebrities as: Ava Gardner and Ingrid Bergman, he was not a lonely man. Graves also made occasional trips to Europe and even rarer trips to the United States, but for the most part of his time he preferred to remain in Majorca and concentrate on his writing. Not only did he write poetry, his main genre, but such a prolific writer had he become, he began producing books on criticism, fiction and mythology, and even translated some of the Greek and Latin classics such as: Apuleius – *'The Golden Ass'*, Seutonius – *'The Twelve Caesars'* and Homer's – *'Iliad'*.



Study at Home

In 1961, Graves returned to England briefly and served as Professor of Poetry at Oxford University until 1966. In 1968 he received the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry, and was also offered a CBE, but such an honour he declined, as he didn't agree with the British honours system. Through the 1970's as age and senility began to over take him, and to ensure his reputation as a poet, he collated what he felt was his finest work in '*Collected Poems, 1975*' (London: Cassell, 1975).

Robert Graves died in Majorca following a long illness and gradual mental decline on the 7th of December 1985. He is buried at Deyá Church on the Island of Majorca, the place he called his home. The church with its tiny cemetery is located at the top of the village on a ledge above a deep gorge. He has no fancy gravestone, only a small area of concrete into which his name and dates were scratched before it dried.



The last resting place of Robert 'von Ranke' Graves

Robert Graves toward the end of his life was unquestionably an eccentric man. What cannot be questioned was his important contribution to English literature. He foremost wanted to be known as a poet, but by the time of his death in 1985, his works were being published throughout the world and his literary reputation as a critic, novelist and classical writer of mythological history, seems to have exceeded this goal. One legacy he did leave behind was his total belief in the 'White Goddess'.



Sources:

To be added.

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Best wishes and Blessed Be

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