

From the Editors

Focus on Robert Graves and His Contemporaries is an international, interdisciplinary journal devoted to furthering discussion on the cultural impact of the Great War. Founded in 1972 as *Focus on Robert Graves* by Professor Ellsworth Mason, this journal published articles of great scholarly value for almost twenty years. In early 1988 Professor Mason yielded the editorship of the magazine to a group of scholars associated with the University of Maryland University College. After much reflection, it was decided to change the name of the journal to *Focus on Robert Graves and His Contemporaries* and significantly widen the editorial perspective of the magazine. This widening has taken place in three ways.

First, in keeping with the original purpose of the magazine, we continue to promote Graves scholarship in every way possible. Robert Graves remains one of the great unexplored writers of the twentieth century. The diversity of his *oeuvre*, the quality of his poetry, and the richness of his personal experience assure him a place as one of the important writers of our time. At this point in the evolution of the journal, we are especially committed to two projects: first, we would like to publish close readings of Graves' poems in almost every issue; secondly, we will frequently publish articles on little known books and articles by Graves. For example, in this issue, we publish Patrick Quinn's analysis of *Mock Beggar Hall* and *Welchman's Hose* and Lucia Boldrini's reflection on *Wife to Mr. Milton*.

Second, *Focus* would like to serve as a vital forum for the discussion of the impact of the Great War on world literature, art, other cultural forms. A special issue of *Focus*, already in preparation under the direction of Nancy Sloan Goldberg and Patrick McGuinness, will study the French experience of the Great War. We feel that an understanding and appreciation of Robert Graves is best fostered by placing him in a wide cultural context.

Third, because in many ways the Great War is the determining event of the twentieth century, *Focus* will always seek to publish articles that grapple with the significance and implications of the Great War.

The editors of *Focus* would like to emphasize their commitment to publishing articles by writers and scholars of all countries. The magazine itself is published in

Heidelberg, Germany by the European Division of a large American university; the editors teach for the universities of three different countries (England, America, and Germany); our staff is distributed all over the globe. By moments, this international perspective makes editing the magazine challenging: over the last year we have been asked innumerable times about style and notation standards. *Focus* attempts to adhere to the *Handbook* of the Modern Language Association although we are by no means MLA dogmatists. Potential contributors can always get clarification on these matters from either of the two co-editors.

We have also been asked about our policy towards the submission of poetry and fiction. Although *Focus* was originally designed as a journal of cultural criticism, we have been receiving submissions of excellent poetry and prose for over two years now. As an experiment we began to publish some of this material and response to it has been overwhelmingly favorable. As one letter said, "the thing that is so attractive about your magazine is that you are not bound up by artificial academic categories. Graves, Sassoon, and Jünger were *writers*--why shouldn't you publish fiction and poetry which is relevant to the Great War?"

In order to facilitate the distribution of the journal and exchange between readers, we are planning on *Focus* having its own Web Page by the early part of 1996.

Focus is especially grateful to Susquehanna University Press for its kind permission to publish a selection from Patrick Quinn's *The Great War and the Missing Muse*. Thanks, too, to O'Brien Browne for his submissions and thoughts on the Great War and contemporary writing.

Our next issue (II/5) will be published in early spring of 1996. This issue will contain a special section on Bassanta Mallik with articles by Madhuri Sondhi and Mary Walker. Anne Powell will publish important pieces on Alun Lewis and Charles Sorley.

The editors welcome suggestions and questions about all aspects of *Focus on Robert Graves and His Contemporaries*. Readers should feel free to use the fax number and e-mail address listed on the title page. Each inquiry will receive a prompt and personal reply.

Richard Schumaker
University of Maryland
University of Trier