George Starbuck was born in Columbus, Ohio. He attended the California Institute of Technology, the University of California, the University of Chicago, and Harvard University. Starbuck spent two years as a corporal in the Military Police Corps before working at various universities. Starbuck was also a contributor to numerous periodicals including The New Yorker, The Atlantic Monthly, and Poetry magazine. He died in 1996 after a twenty-year battle with Parkinson’s disease.