Robert Francis was born in Upland, Pennsylvania, and studied at Harvard. Although he taught at workshops and lectured at universities across the United States, he lived for over sixty years in the same house near Amherst, Massachusetts. His poems are often charmingly whimsical, presenting conundrums and mysteries with a light, lyrical touch. Robert Frost, an important influence on the poet, said that Francis was “of all the great neglected poets, the greatest.”