

A Place to Go to: Robert Penn Warren on Travel, Migration, and Exile"
SAML A Conference
November 9, 2012

Both in his life and in his writing, Robert Penn Warren displayed major relevance to our announced topic (a variant of his novel *A Place to Come to*). He migrated out of his native Kentucky at age 20, when he traveled to Berkeley and Yale for graduate study, and later spent time as an exile, or expatriate we might say, as a Rhodes Scholar in England. As a professor of English for half a century, he migrated from LSU to the University of Minnesota and back to Yale, while also sojourning as far afield as Mexico, Italy, and France when the spirit moved him. His fiction and poetry exhibit a similar profile, featuring numerous wanderers and wanderings across space and time, often amplified by excursions into historical episodes such as those in *Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce*, *Brother to Dragons* (featuring the Lewis and Clark expedition), and *Audubon: A Vision*. The topic could include political exile, as in *Jefferson Davis Gets His Citizenship Back*, or the various ideological migrations such as those in *Segregation* and *Who Speaks for the Negro?* Likewise, the idea of home can figure powerfully into the topic of travel, migration, and exile, as illustrated (for example) in the spectacle of Warren's Kentucky boyhood obsessing the aged poet living in New England.

Proposals having any kind of relevance to our topic will be especially welcome for this panel, though other proposals relating to Robert Penn Warren or to his "Circle" (his vast network of literary connections) are also welcome. Send a 250-word abstract by June 24 to Victor Strandberg at vhs@duke.edu or by snail mail at 8701 Hwy 157, Rougemont NC (27572).