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# Editor's notes

BY TOM MORAN

**M**alcolm Cowley was one of the most important (and easily the most omnipresent) literary figures of the past century. Over a career that spanned eight decades (or, roughly speaking, from the Wilson to the Reagan administrations), he encouraged, befriended, edited, assisted, critiqued and praised innumerable American authors, from F. Scott Fitzgerald to Cormac McCarthy. He single-handedly resurrected the reputation of William Faulkner, published John Cheever's first story in *The New Republic* when he was still a teenager, and helped shepherd Jack Kerouac's "On the Road" into print (without Cowley's patient editorial support, the novel might still be in manuscript). Cowley's was a long, eventful and controversial life, amply documented in his letters, edited by Hans Bak as "The Long Voyage: Selected Letters of Malcolm Cowley, 1915-1987"