Preface to the Fordham University Press Edition

It is propitious and gratifying that Fordham University Press has decided to reissue these two volumes of The Basic Writings of Josiah Royce. When first published, in 1969, reviewers and commentators were taken with both the sweep and the depth of Royce's thought. After Royce's death on September 14, 1916, his philosophical reputation went into a decline, and he often was represented as being an abstruse acolyte in the Neo-Hegelian tradition. This edition, by contrast, makes crystal-clear that Royce provided us with a thick and expansive philosophical tapestry, including major works in social philosophy, logic, the history of philosophy, and moral philosophy, especially his treatment of loyalty, herein published in full.

Scholarship attendant on Royce's philosophy has developed in quality and quantity since the publication of these volumes in 1969. Of special consideration is the splendid second edition of John Clendenning's The Life and Thought of Josiah Royce, in 1999, and the indefatigable, philosophically astute commentaries by Frank Oppenheim, S. J. In March 2003, the Josiah Royce Society was founded; among its tasks will be preparation for a critical edition of Royce's works, published and unpublished. Those of us who recognize the extensive range of his thought believe that, at this time of planetary strife, Royce is among the thinkers who can provide direct and intelligent help as we struggle to ameliorate our condition. Reading Royce is not easy, but then neither are the difficulties we now face.
In addition to the heartfelt acknowledgments found in the original publication of these volumes, I add here gratitude to Scott Pratt, J. Brent Crouch, Kelly Parker, Michael Brodrick, and David Henderson, my research assistant. And I am grateful to Patricia A. McDermott, without whom, for me, nothing would be done.

John J. McDermott