Convocation opens ‘Stuart Day’

By CHARLES SPENCER

Jesse Stuart, author of 455 short stories, 46 books, and thousands of poems, appears today as part of “Jesse Stuart Day” at Marshall.

Stuart, recently nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in poetry for his 46th book, “The World of Jesse Stuart,” was awarded an honorary degree by Marshall in 1962.

“We are fortunate to have one of America’s outstanding writers living in our area and it is fitting that Marshall University recognize him not only for his great literary contributions, but also for the inspiration he has provided hundreds of young writers in this region,” President Robert B. Hayes said.

Dr. Ruel E. Foster, author of a 1968 biography of the famed Eastern Kentucky writer, and David A. Peyton, editorial page editor of the Huntington Advertiser, will address an 11 a.m. convocation in the Multi-Purpose Room in Memorial Student Center.

Peyton’s topic will be “Jesse Stuart’s ‘Appalachian Harvest.’”

Stuart, also will speak at the convocation, presided over by Hayes, and will be the guest of honor at a small luncheon following the convocation.

Prior to the convocation, starting at 10:45 a.m., a slides-and-music program will be presented in the Student Center Multi-Purpose Room.

Photographs of Stuart’s home area in Greenup County, Ky. will be flashed on the screen accompanied by Appalachian folk songs sung by MU student Hugh Daniel. The photographs were made by “The Saturday Evening Post” and by Mrs. John Mitchell.

Stuart will be present at a 2 p.m. unveiling of a special collection of his works in the Special Collections Room of the James E. Morrow Library.

The collection includes 60 volumes. A number of limited special editions are included in addition to the first editions of Stuart’s books, according to Dr. Kenneth T. Slack, director of libraries.

Stuart will autograph those volumes which had not been signed previously.

“We were tremendously pleased to be able to obtain the Stuart collection,” Slack said. “Jesse Stuart undoubtedly ranks as one of the nation’s greatest living authors and his collected works will be a key element in meeting our goal of building the Marshall library into one of the outstanding regional libraries in the country.”

Despite his widespread fame, Stuart still lives in nearby Greenup County, Ky., on a 1,000 acre farm in W. Hollow, less than a mile from where he was born 68 years ago.