Search Wikipedia

Read

William Robertson Davies CC OOnt FRSL FRSC (28 August 1913 – 2

journalist, and professor. He was one of Canada's best known and

letters", an unfashionable term Davies gladly accepted for himself.[1]

most popular authors and one of its most distinguished "men of

December 1995) was a Canadian novelist, playwright, critic,

Edit View history

Q

Main page

Contents

Current events

Random article

About Wikipedia

Contact us

Contribute

Learn to edit

Upload file

Tools

Community portal Recent changes

What links here

Special pages

Permanent link

Cite this page

Wikidata item

Print/export

Page information

Download as PDF

Printable version

In other projects

Wikiquote

Languages

العربية

Deutsch

Español

Français

Português

Русский

Svenska

文 13 more

Edit links

فارسى

Related changes

Help

Donate

Robertson Davies

Article

Talk

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Hi reader. This is the 4th time we've interrupted your reading recently, but 98% of our readers don't give. Many think they'll give later, but then forget. This Friday we ask you to protect Wikipedia. All we ask is \$2.75, or what you can afford, to secure our future. We ask you, humbly: Please don't scroll away. If you are one of our rare donors, we warmly thank you. Please select a payment method

We ask you, humbly: don't scroll away.

PayPal Mastercard. AMEX

Contents [hide]

VISA

1 Biography

1.1 Early life

1.3 1960s

1.4 1970s

2 Personal life

4 Works

1.2 Middle years

1.5 1980s and 1990s

4.4 Short story collection

4.6 Letters and diaries

3 Awards and recognition

4.1 Novels

4.2 Essays

4.3 Plays

4.5 Libretti

4.7 Collections

MAYBE LATER (L) CLOSE X

amazon pay

Davies was the founding Master of Massey College, a graduate residential college associated with the University of Toronto.

Robertson Davies CC OOnt FRSL FRSC

Canadian writer Robertson Davies, author of The Deptford Trilogy which included the famous book, Fifth Business **Born** 28 August 1913 Thamesville, Ontario, Canada Died 2 December 1995 (aged 82) Orangeville, Ontario, Canada Occupation Journalist, playwright, professor, critic, novelist **Nationality** Canadian Alma mater Queen's University (did not graduate) Balliol College, Oxford Genre novels, plays, essays and reviews **Notable** The Deptford Trilogy, The works Cornish Trilogy, The Salterton Trilogy Brenda Ethel Davies (m. 1940, **Spouse**

1917–2013)

Exterior of the college from the

residence of the master

southeast on Hoskin Avenue, showing

Jennifer Surridge, Miranda

Davies, Rosamond Bailey

Children

5 References 6 Sources 7 External links Biography [edit]

Early life [edit] Davies was born in Thamesville, Ontario, the third son of William Rupert Davies and Florence Sheppard McKay. [2] Growing up, Davies was surrounded by books and lively language. His father,

senator of Kingston, Ontario, from 1942 to his death in 1967, was a newspaperman from Welshpool, Wales, and both parents were voracious readers. He followed in their footsteps and read everything he could. He also participated in theatrical productions as a child, where he developed a lifelong interest in drama. He spent his formative years in Renfrew, Ontario (Blairlogie in his novel What's Bred in the Bone); many of the novel's characters are named after families he knew there. He attended Upper

Canada College in Toronto from 1926 to 1932 and while there attended services at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. [3] He would later leave the Presbyterian Church and join Anglicanism over objections to Calvinist theology. Davies later used his experience of the ceremonial of High Mass at St. Mary Magdalene's in his novel *The Cunning Man*. After Upper Canada College, he studied at Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario, from 1932 until 1935. According to the Queen's University Journal Davies enrolled as a special student not

working towards a degree, because he was unable to pass the mathematics component of Queen's entrance exam. [4] At Queen's he wrote for the student paper, The Queen's Journal, where he wrote a literary column. He left Canada to study at Balliol College, Oxford, where he received a BLitt degree in 1938. The next year he published his thesis, Shakespeare's Boy Actors, and embarked on an acting career outside London. In 1940, he played small roles and did literary work for the director at the Old Vic Repertory Company in London. Also that year, Davies married Australian Brenda Mathews, whom he had met at Oxford, and who was then working as stage manager for the theatre. [2] They spent their honeymoon in the Welsh countryside at Fronfraith Hall, Abermule, Montgomery, the family house owned by Rupert Davies.^{[5][6]} Davies's early life provided him with themes and material to which he would often return in his later work, including the theme of Canadians returning to England to finish their education, and the

theatre. Middle years [edit]

Davies and his new bride returned to Canada in 1940, where he took the position of literary editor at Saturday Night magazine. Two years later, he became editor of the Peterborough Examiner in

During his tenure as editor of the Examiner, which lasted from 1942 to 1955 (he subsequently served as publisher from 1955 to 1965), Davies published a total of 18 books, produced several of his

newspaper, CHEX-AM, CKWS-AM, CHEX-TV, and CKWS-TV.

director, Sir Tyrone Guthrie, in publishing three books about the Festival's early years. [2][9]

the small city of Peterborough, Ontario, northeast of Toronto. Again he was able to mine his experiences here for many of the characters and situations which later appeared in his novels and plays.[2] Davies, along with family members William Rupert Davies and Arthur Davies, purchased several media outlets. Along with the Examiner newspaper, they owned the Kingston Whig-Standard

own plays, and wrote articles for various journals.^[2] Davies set out his theory of acting in his Shakespeare for Young Players (1947), and then put theory into practice when he wrote Eros at Breakfast, a one-act play which was named best Canadian play of the year by the 1948 Dominion Drama Festival. [7] Eros at Breakfast was followed by Fortune, My Foe in 1949 and At My Heart's Core, a three-act play, in 1950. Meanwhile, Davies was writing humorous essays in the Examiner under the

pseudonym Samuel Marchbanks. Some of these were collected and published in The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks (1947), The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks (1949), and later in Samuel Marchbanks' Almanack (1967). An omnibus edition of the three Marchbanks books, with new notes by the author, was published under the title The Papers of Samuel Marchbanks in 1985.[8] During the 1950s, Davies played a major role in launching the Stratford Shakespearean Festival of Canada. He served on the Festival's board of governors, and collaborated with the Festival's

Although his first love was drama and he had achieved some success with his occasional humorous essays, Davies found his greatest success in fiction. His first three novels, which later became known as The Salterton Trilogy, were Tempest-Tost (1951, originally conceived as a play), Leaven of Malice (1954, also the basis of the unsuccessful play Love and Libel) which won the Stephen Leacock Award for Humour, and A Mixture of Frailties (1958).[8] These novels explored the difficulty of sustaining a cultural life in Canada, and life on a small-town newspaper, subjects of which Davies had first-hand knowledge.

In 1960, Davies joined Trinity College at the University of Toronto, where he would teach literature until 1981. The following year he published a collection of essays on literature, A Voice From the Attic, and was awarded the Lorne Pierce Medal for his literary achievements.^[2]

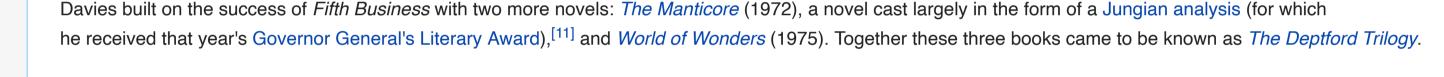
of the world.^[2]

1960s [edit]

In 1963, he became the Master of Massey College, the University of Toronto's new graduate college. [2] During his stint as Master, he initiated a tradition of writing and telling ghost stories at the yearly Christmas celebrations.^[10] These stories were later collected in the book *High Spirits* (1982).^[8]

1970s [edit] Davies drew on his interest in Jungian psychology to create *Fifth Business* (1970), a novel that relies heavily on Davies's own experiences, his love of myth and magic and his knowledge of small-town mores. The narrator, like Davies, is of immigrant Canadian background, with a father who runs the town paper.

The book's characters act in roles that roughly correspond to Jungian archetypes according to Davies's belief in the predominance of spirit over the things



1980s and 1990s [edit]

short-listed for the Booker Prize for fiction in 1986.^[11] The Lyre of Orpheus (1988) follows these two books in what became known as The Cornish Trilogy.^[8] During his retirement from academe he continued to write novels which further established him as a major figure in the literary world: Murther and Walking Spirits (1991) and The Cunning Man (1994).[8] A third novel in what would have been a further trilogy – the Toronto Trilogy – was in progress at the time of Davies's death.[2] He also realized a long-held dream when he penned the

When Davies retired from his position at the university, his seventh novel, a satire of academic life, The Rebel Angels (1981), was published, followed by What's Bred in the Bone (1985) which was

libretto to Randolph Peters' opera: The Golden Ass, based on The Metamorphoses of Lucius Apuleius, just like that written by one of the characters in Davies's 1958 A Mixture of Frailties. The opera was performed by the Canadian Opera Company at the Hummingbird Centre in Toronto, in April 1999, several years after Davies's death.^[12] In its obituary, The Times wrote: "Davies encompassed all the great elements of life ... His novels combined deep seriousness and psychological inquiry with fantasy and exuberant mirth." [13] He remained close friends with John Kenneth Galbraith, attending Galbraith's eighty-fifth birthday party in Boston in 1993,[14] and became so close a friend and colleague of the American novelist John

Irving that Irving gave one of the scripture readings at Davies's funeral in the chapel of Trinity College, Toronto. He also wrote in support of Salman Rushdie when the latter was threatened by a fatwā from Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran in reaction to supposed anti-Islam expression in his novel *The Satanic Verses*.^[15] Personal life [edit]

Davies was married to Brenda Ethel Davies (1917-2013) in 1940 and survived by four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren from his three daughters Miranda Davies, Rosamond Bailey and

Awards and recognition [edit]

author Jennifer Surridge.[16][17]

 Won the Stephen Leacock Award for Humour in 1955 for Leaven of Malice. Won the Lorne Pierce Medal for his literary achievements in 1961.

Davies never learned to drive.^[18] His wife Brenda routinely drove him to events and other excursions.

Won the Dominion Drama Festival Award for best Canadian play in 1948 for Eros at Breakfast.

- Won the Governor-General's Literary Award in the English language fiction category in 1972 for The Manticore. Short-listed for the Booker Prize for Fiction in 1986 for What's Bred in the Bone.
- Honorary Doctor of Letters, University of Oxford, 1991.^[2] • First Canadian to become an Honorary Member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. [2] • Companion of the Order of Canada. [2]
- Park in Toronto named after him in 2007.^[19] Works [edit]

Novels [edit] The Salterton Trilogy • *Tempest-Tost* (1951)

- Leaven of Malice (1954) A Mixture of Frailties (1958)
- The Deptford Trilogy • Fifth Business (1970) The Manticore (1972)
- World of Wonders (1975) The Cornish Trilogy • The Rebel Angels (1981)
- What's Bred in the Bone (1985) • The Lyre of Orpheus (1988) • The "Toronto Trilogy" (incomplete)
- Murther and Walking Spirits (1991) • The Cunning Man (1994) Essays [edit]
- Fictional essays • The Diary of Samuel Marchbanks (1947)

• The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks (1949) Samuel Marchbanks' Almanack (1967)

- edited by the author into: • The Papers of Samuel Marchbanks (1985) Criticism
- Shakespeare's Boy Actors (1939) (as W. Robertson Davies) Shakespeare for Young Players: A Junior Course (1942) • Renown at Stratford (1953) (with Tyrone Guthrie)
- Thrice the Brindled Cat Hath Mew'd (1955) (with Tyrone Guthrie) A Voice From the Attic (1960) also published as The Personal Art • A Feast of Stephen (1970)

• Twice Have the Trumpets Sounded (1954) (with Tyrone Guthrie)

- Stephen Leacock (1970) • One Half of Robertson Davies (1977)
- The Enthusiasms of Robertson Davies (1979; revised 1990) (edited by Judith Skelton Grant) • The Well-Tempered Critic (1981) (edited by Judith Skelton Grant) • The Mirror of Nature (1983)
- Reading and Writing (1993) (two essays, later collected in The Merry Heart) References [edit]
- 1. A Responding to Peter Gzowski's query as to whether he accepted the label, Davies said, "I would be delighted to accept it. In fact, I think it's an entirely honourable and
- desirable title, but you know people are beginning to despise it." Davis, J. Madison (ed.) (1989). Conversations with Robertson Davies. Mississippi University Press. p. 99.
 - 3. ^ Penguin USA: Book Club Reading Guides: The Cunning Man ☑ Archived ☑ 27 April 2006 at the Wayback Machine
 - September 2015.
 - 6. A English E (ed) 1999 "A Collected History of the Communities of Llandyssil, Abermule and Llanmerewig". Section 6, pt. 1
- 4. ^ Labiba Hague (29 June 2010). "Canadian classics come to Queen's: Famed author Robertson Davies' collection set to be displayed in library"

 ☐. Queen's University Journal. Retrieved 5 January 2021.

2. ∧ a b c d e f g h i j k l "Robertson Davies" ☑. The Canadian

Encyclopedia. Retrieved 8 September 2019.

Eros at Breakfast (1948) Hope Deferred (1948) • *King Phoenix* (1948)

Plays [edit]

Overlaid (1948)

• The Merry Heart (1996)

Happy Alchemy (1997) (edited by Jennifer Surridge and Brenda Davies)

- At the Gates of the Righteous (1949) • *Fortune My Foe* (1949) • The Voice of the People (1949)
 - At My Heart's Core (1950) • A Masque of Aesop (1952)
- Hunting Stuart (1955) A Jig for the Gypsy (1955)
- General Confession (1956) A Masque of Mr. Punch (1963) • Question Time (1975)
- Short story collection [edit] • *High Spirits* (1982) Libretti [edit]

• Brothers in the Black Art (1981)

- Doctor Canon's Cure (1982) • *Jezebel* (1993) • *The Golden Ass* (1999)
- Letters and diaries [edit]
- For Your Eye Alone (2000) (edited by Judith Skelton Grant) • Discoveries (2002) (edited by Judith Skelton Grant) • A Celtic Temperament: Robertson Davies as Diarist (2015) (edited by Jennifer Surridge and Ramsay
- Derry)
- Collections [edit] Conversations with Robertson Davies (1989) (Edited by J. Madison Davies) • The Quotable Robertson Davies: The Wit and Wisdom of the Master (2005) (collected by James
- Channing Shaw) • The Merry Heart: Reflections on Reading Writing, and the World of Books (New York: Viking, 1997).

ISBN 9780670873661

- Politics, His Economics. New York. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, Playwright: A Search for the Self on the Canadian Stage ☑. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. ISBN 0-2005, pp.532ff photos. 7748-0211-1. Retrieved 7 October 2015.
- 15. Appignanesi, Lisa; Maitland, Sara, eds. (1990). The Rushdie File . Syracuse University Press. p. 172 ₺. ISBN 0-

2016.

16. A Ptashnick, Victoria (10 January 2013). "Robertson Davies" wife, Brenda Davies, dies at age 95" ☑. *The Star*. Archived ☑ from the original on 5 June 2016. 17. ^ Shanahan, Noreen (7 February 2013). "Brenda Davies

8156-2494-8. Retrieved 8 October 2015.

14. A Richard Parker, John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His

18. ^ Merilyn Simonds (25 November 2015). "A great Canadian diarist" . Kingston Whig Standard. Kingston, Ontario. Retrieved 5 January 2021. "Their marriage was quite a love

(1917–2013): Robertson Davies' mate and manager" .

Globe and Mail. Archived down the original on 30 June

- why we included letters from when he went to Ireland. He was not very good at being away from her." 19. A Ross, Val (31 May 2007). "Park named after Robertson Davies" d. Globe and Mail.
- Grant, Judith Skelton, Robertson Davies: Man of Myth, Viking, Toronto, 1994. ISBN 0-670-82557-3 (hard cover); ISBN 0-14-011452-1 (paperback)

Sources [edit]

External links [edit]

V·T·E

2015.

9 October 2015.

Retrieved 15 October 2015.

original don 12 January 2012.

 Works by or about Robertson Davies
 ☐ in libraries (WorldCat catalog)

V·T·E

Robertson Davies fonds (R4939)

 at Library and Archives Canada

Robertson Davies' Personal Library
 ☑ (Queen's University at Kingston)

- V •T •E

Categories: 1913 births | 1995 deaths | Canadian Anglicans | Canadian literary critics | Canadian monarchists | Canadian newspaper editors | Canadian male journalists

University of Toronto faculty | Fellows of the Royal Conservatory of Music | Stephen Leacock Award winners | 20th-century Canadian novelists 20th-century Canadian dramatists and playwrights | Canadian male dramatists and playwrights | Fellows of the Royal Society of Literature | 20th-century Canadian male writers Massey College, Toronto

This page was last edited on 9 November 2021, at 05:04 (UTC). Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.

Privacy policy About Wikipedia Disclaimers Contact Wikipedia Mobile view Developers Statistics Cookie statement

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia

- 10. ^ Spadoni, Carl; Grant, Judith Skelton (2014). A Bibliography 5. A "Robertson Davies: Man of Myth by Judith Skelton Grant. Published December 31st 1994 by Viking Books" ☑.

 - Goodreads.com. Archived ☐ from the original on 24
- of Robertson Davies derived Iniversity of Toronto Press. ISBN 9781442667280. Retrieved 15 October 2015. 11. ^{A a b} Corrigan, David Rockne (28 August 2013). "Canadian Novelist Robertson Davies Honoured with Postage Stamp"

 ☑. National Post. Retrieved 15 October 2015. 12. ^ Friedlander, Mira (17 May 1999). "The Golden Ass" ☑.

Variety. Archived do from the original on 15 October 2015.

13. ^ "Robertson Davies" ☑. Penguin.ca. Archived from the

canadianauthors.net. Canadian Books & Authors. Archived

from the original on 8 October 2015. Retrieved 7 October

9. ^ "Stratford Festival" d. stratfordfestival.ca. Stratford Festival.

Archived from the original on 15 October 2015. Retrieved

7. * Stone-Blackburn, Susan (1985). Robertson Davies,

Works by Robertson Davies

Winners of the Governor General's Award for English-language fiction

World Fantasy Award—Collection

Authority control

Canadian male novelists | Canadian people of Scottish descent | Canadian people of Welsh descent | Companions of the Order of Canada | Converts to Anglicanism from Presbyterianism

Fellows of the Royal Society of Canada | Governor General's Award-winning fiction writers | Writers from Ontario | Magic realism writers | Members of the Order of Ontario

World Fantasy Award-winning writers | People from Chatham-Kent | Queen's University at Kingston alumni | Upper Canada College alumni | Alumni of Balliol College, Oxford

- story and she was incredibly supportive. She was his first reader, and she drove him everywhere — he never learned to

 - drive and she organized his life to his convenience. That's

related to: Robertson Davies

Wikiquote has quotations

[show]

[show]

[show]

[show]

Powered by

MediaWiki

WIKIMEDIA