

Robertson Davies



Photo from [Northwest Passages](#)

[Robertson Davies](#) (1913 - 1995) was an editor, essayist and novelist who was also interested in the stage. Davies was originally educated at Upper Canada College in Toronto, and then Queens. His degree in literature came from [Balliol](#) College in Oxford. On completing this degree, he worked as an actor in London.

Upon returning to Canada in 1940, he worked as editor first of [Saturday Night](#) and later of *The Peterborough Examiner*. Meanwhile he wrote plays, as well as humorous essays published under a pseudonym, [Samuel Marchbanks](#).

The Salterton Trilogy came out in the early fifties. The second of these novels, *Leaven of Malice*, won the Stephen Leacock Medal. In the fifties he was also involved in launching the [Stratford Festival](#).

In 1960, Davies went to the U of T, eventually becoming the Master of the new [Massey College](#). He taught there for many years, publishing literary essays and winning numerous honorary degrees and awards.

His most famous novel, [Fifth Business](#), came out in 1970 and was nominated for the Booker Prize. This first of The Deptford Trilogy was followed by *The Manticore* (1972) and *World of Wonders* (1974).

"Happiness," said Robertson Davies, "is always a by-product," and "is not something that can be demanded from life." He advised that we "stop worrying about it and see what treasures you can pluck from your own brand of unhappiness." ([Quotations page.](#))