

WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM



«There are two good things in life - freedom of thought and freedom of action».

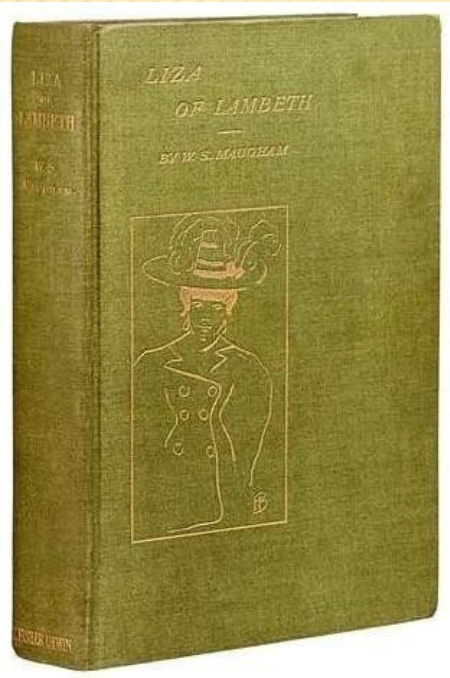
BIOGRAPHY



William Somerset Maugham was born in the British Embassy in Paris on 25th January, 1874. William's father, Robert Ormond Maugham, a wealthy solicitor, worked for the Embassy in France. By the time he was ten, both William's parents were dead and he was sent to live with his uncle, the Rev. Henry Maugham, in Whitstable, Kent.

EARLY WORKS

While training to be a doctor Maugham worked as an obstetric clerk in the slums of Lambeth. He used these experiences to help him write his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth* (1897).



FIRST WORLD WAR

- ❖ On the outbreak of the First World War, Maugham, now aged forty, joined a Red Cross ambulance unit in France.
- ❖ While serving on the Western Front he met the 22 year old American, Gerald Haxton. The two men became lovers and lived together for the next thirty years.
- ❖ During the war Maugham was invited by Sir John Wallinger, head of Britain's Military Intelligence in France, to act as a secret service agent. Maugham agreed and over the next few years acted as a link between Britain's Military Intelligence in London and its agents working in Europe.

Maugham had sexual relationships with both men and women and in 1915, Syrie Wellcome, the daughter of Dr. Thomas Barnardo, gave birth to his child.

Her husband, Henry Wellcome, cited Maugham as co-respondent in divorce proceedings. After the divorce in 1916, Maugham married Syrie but continued to live with Gerald Haxton.



In 1916, Maugham travelled to the Pacific to research his novel *The Moon and Sixpence*, based on the life of Paul Gauguin.

This was the first of his journeys through the late-Imperial world of the 1920s and 1930s which inspired his novels. He became known as a writer who portrayed the last days of colonialism in India, Southeast Asia, China and the Pacific, although the books on which this reputation rests represent only a fraction of his output.

On this and all subsequent journeys, he was accompanied by Haxton, whom he regarded as indispensable to his success as a writer. Maugham was painfully shy, and Haxton the extrovert gathered human material which the author



Maugham, by then in his sixties, spent most of the Second World War in the United States, first in Hollywood (he worked on many scripts, and was one of the first authors to make significant money from film adaptations) and later in the South

While in the US, he was asked by the British government to make patriotic speeches to induce the US to aid Britain, if not necessarily become an allied combatant. After his companion Gerald Haxton died in 1944, Maugham moved back to England. In 1946 he returned to his villa in France, where he lived, interrupted by frequent and long travels until his death



It is believed that Maugham laid the foundation for the modern genre of spy novel the book "Espionage, or the British Agent" (1928), which was partly based on the personal experience of the writer.

Alfred Hitchcock used a few passages from the text in the film "The Secret Agent" (1936), in particular the history of "Traitor" and "Hairless Mexican". In the film (the scene of a Switzerland) agent kills the wrong person, and then continues to pursue real sacrifice.

Maugham believed that true harmony lies in the contradictions of society, that normal is actually not the norm. "Ordinary life - this is a rich field for the study of the writer" - he said in the book "To sum up" (1938).

In a satirical short story "The Ant and the Grasshopper" he contrasts the two brothers, careless and unprincipled Tom and George virtuous workaholic, it is assumed that Tom, in the end, will be on the sidelines of life, however, he marries the rich old lady who dies and leaves him state.

Maugham died in Nice December 16, 1965.

It is said before he died he asked Sir Alfred Ayer to visit him and assure him that there is no life after death.



**Thank you for your
attention!**