

DONALD DAVIE

**A SEQUENCE FOR
FRANCIS PARKMAN**



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The Spectator

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New Statesman

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'So here it is at last . . . the record that everyone has been waiting for. By "everyone" I mean those people who like contemporary poetry and particularly enjoy the strong, dry distillation of it to be found in William Empson's pages. I think it is a fine thing that our age of *Schmaltz*, filleted reading, coldly organized razzmatazz, and plain insincerity should have produced such a poet. Buy this record. It is like a gulp of rough, red wine after an evening of sweet, bottled cider-substitute. It is a rest from the Poetry Voice, from the throbbing actress, from the suave tones of the poet-turned-elocutionist. It is a rest, also, from the howlings of beatniks. Praise be!'

John Wain, The Observer

20481

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Donald Davie

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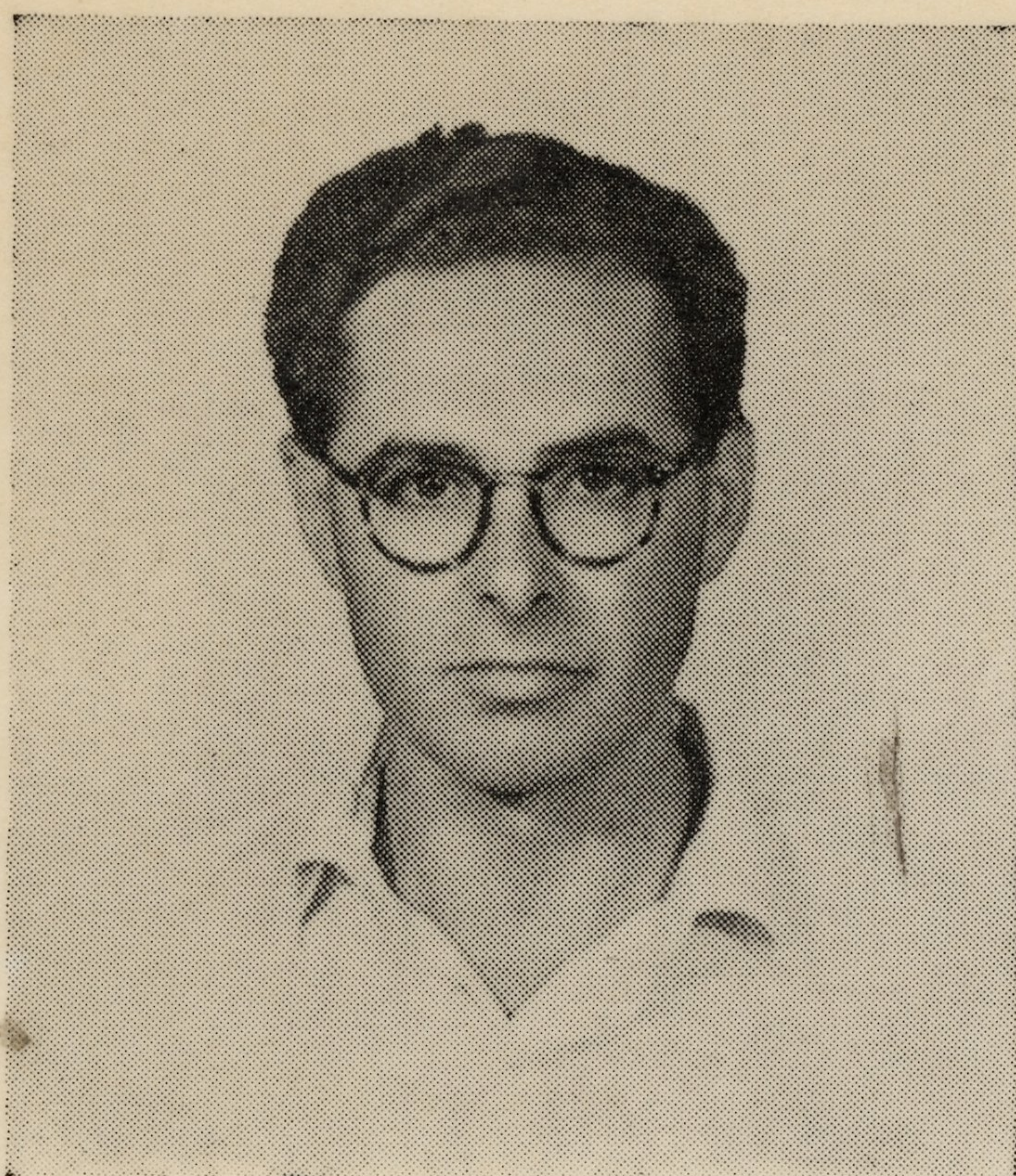
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'It is a vivid exposition of vorticist aesthetics and a testimony by a friend who knew Gaudier from the start and believed in his greatness as a sculptor. If those writing what passes for art criticism today had some of the fire of Mr. Pound their output would have a very different value.'

Times Literary Supplement

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LISTENBOOKS



DONALD DAVIE

Born in Barnsley, Yorkshire in 1922 and educated at Cambridge. On active service with the Royal Navy, 1941-46. Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, 1954-57. Visiting lecturer in English at Santa Barbara College, University of California, 1957-58. At present lecturer in English at Cambridge University and Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. Author of *Purity of Diction in English Verse* (1952), *Articulate Energy* (1955), and *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* (1961) and the following volumes of poetry: *Brides of Reason* (1955), *A Winter Talent* (1957) and *The Forests of Lithuania* (1959). Married, with three children.

A SEQUENCE FOR FRANCIS PARKMAN

by Donald Davie

A courtier of Louis XIV coming direct from the sophistications of Versailles to dance with the Mohawk chieftains in the Canadian wilderness; another Frenchman finding his way down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, for no better reason than to cure his sense of inferiority at being awkward in company; a motor car from Detroit named after the Indian warrior who tried to burn Detroit when it was a palisaded settlement—these are some of the quirks and ironies and bizarre conjunctions which fascinated Donald Davie in the history of America. He has put them into poems which delight in such exoticism, yet have another purpose. For in them he is trying to feel, as an Englishman, what it is like to be an American. This is an exploration of America not from the outside, aloofly, but by one who is grateful for American lives and landscapes, and tries to acknowledge his debt by probing sympathetically the American past.

Donald Davie's brilliant rendering of the Sequence, with its subtle variations of pace and wide range of intonation, modulates with great flexibility of tone from the elevated, to the ironic, to the flatly colloquial; clarifying for the reader nuances of feeling and intention.

Cover Design by George Hartley

Recording directed by George Hartley in Cambridge on the 15th November 1960.

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THE MARVELL PRESS, 253 HULL ROAD, HESSLE, YORKSHIRE