

Obituary for Richard Mayne

Richard Mayne was born in London in 1926 and educated at St Paul's school. Before going up to Trinity College, Cambridge he spent time in the army in Egypt working with a signals unit at Fayid on the Great Bitter Lake half way down the Suez Canal. He went up to Trinity College in 1947 where he obtained a starred First and a Ph.D in history . During his time there he was involved in the Footlights and wrote for the Cambridge Review and Varsity.

He went to Rome in 1953 to complete his dissertation and began writing freelance for The Spectator and The New Statesman. Here he married his first wife, Margot. On returning to Cambridge he took up a job as a tutor at the Cambridge Institute of Education and finished his Ph.D.

Bilingual in French and English and fluent in Italian and German he interviewed for a job working with Jean Monnet, who was to become the founder of the European Union, on the High Authority of the European Coal and Steel Community in Luxembourg. He later became a personal assistant to Monnet in Paris and to the first President of the EEC Commission Walter Hallstein. His commitment to European unity and Peace and reconciliation became a theme throughout his career.

Throughout his years as a senior international civil servant in Luxembourg, Brussels and Paris, he kept up his stream of literary journalism contributing to The New Statesman, The Observer, The Sunday Times and the Sunday Telegraph. He then began working for BBC Radio 3 and 4 on various features and series on the arts and current affairs including The Critics and Kaleidoscope. He moved to London permanently in 1969, became the Commission's chief representative in London and married his second wife, Jocelyn.

He held several academic posts including those of Visiting professor at the University of Chicago and Honorary Professorial Fellow at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. He was Council member of the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) and of the Federal Trust for Education and Research and an Officier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

As a historian he has written several books about Europe including The Community of Europe, The Institutions of the European Community, The Recovery of Europe and Postwar. He has translated many books, most notably, Jean Monnet's memoirs for which he won a prize and has edited several others such as Europe Tomorrow and Western Europe: A Handbook.

Towards the end of his working life he took advantage of his life-long love of films and became the film critic of The Sunday Telegraph and The European. He also wrote on cinema for the Economist.

He went on working into his eighties, lecturing and writing about his passion for Europe and the arts. He is survived by his wife, Jocelyn and his two daughters Zoe and Alice.