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William Dean Howells at 75  
(1912)

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# William Dean Howells Society



## Membership Information

<http://www.howellssociety.org>

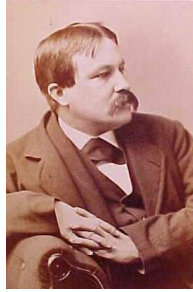
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## About W. D. Howells

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### William Dean Howells

One of the most influential literary figures of nineteenth-century America, William Dean Howells (1837-1920) rose to prominence as editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* (1871-1881), becoming one of the foremost proponents of literary realism.



While writing the “Editor’s Study” (1886-1892) and “Editor’s Easy Chair” (1899-1909) for *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine* and occasional pieces for *The North American Review*, Howells championed the work of many realist writers, including Emily Dickinson, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Hamlin Garland, Sarah Orne Jewett, Charles W. Chesnutt, Frank Norris, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Abraham Cahan, and Stephen Crane. He was also responsible for promoting such European authors as Ibsen, Zola, Pérez Galdós, Verga, and Tolstoy.

Although he wrote over a hundred books in various genres, including novels, poems, literary criticism, plays, memoirs, and travel narratives, Howells is best known today for his realistic fiction, including *A Modern Instance* (1881), on the then-new topic of the social consequences of divorce; *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885), his best-known work and one of the first novels to study the American businessman; and *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890), an exploration of cosmopolitan life in New York City.

Howells was elected the first president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1908, which instituted its Howells Medal for Fiction in 1925. He died of pneumonia on 11 May 1920.

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## Howells’s Principal Works

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1860 *Poems of Two Friends* (with John J. Piatt)  
*Lives and Speeches of Abraham Lincoln*  
1866 *Venetian Life*  
1867 *Italian Journeys*  
1871 *Suburban Sketches*  
1872 *Their Wedding Journey*  
1873 *A Chance Acquaintance; Poems*  
1875 *A Foregone Conclusion*  
1879 *The Lady of the Aroostook*  
1880 *The Undiscovered Country*  
1881 *Dr. Breen’s Practice*  
1882 *A Modern Instance*  
1885 *The Rise of Silas Lapham; Tuscan Cities*  
1886 *Indian Summer; The Minister’s Charge; “Editor’s Study”* (1886-1892)  
1888 *April Hopes; Annie Kilburn*  
1890 *A Hazard of New Fortunes; The Shadow of a Dream*  
1891 *An Imperative Duty; Criticism and Fiction*  
1892 *The Quality of Mercy*  
1893 *The Coast of Bohemia; The World of Chance*  
1894 *A Traveler from Altruria*  
1895 *My Literary Passions*  
1896 *The Landlord at Lion’s Head*  
1899 *Their Silver Wedding Journey*  
1900 *Literary Friends and Acquaintance*  
1901 *A Pair of Patient Lovers; Heroines of Fiction*  
1902 *The Kentons; Literature and Life; The Flight of Pony Baker*  
1904 *The Son of Royal Langbrith*  
1905 *Miss Bellard’s Inspiration*  
1907 *Through the Eye of the Needle*  
1908 *Fennel and Rue; Roman Holidays*  
1910 *My Mark Twain; Imaginary Interviews*  
1913 *New Leaf Mills; Familiar Spanish Travels*  
1916 *The Daughter of the Storage; The Leatherwood God; Years of My Youth*

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## About the Society

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The William Dean Howells Society is a non-profit scholarly organization dedicated to the study of the nineteenth-century editor, author, and critic W. D. Howells.

Founded by Jesse Crisler and a group of interested scholars at the ALA in 1997, the Society sponsors two panels at the annual American Literature Association convention, which is held on in late May every year.

The Call for Papers for the Howells Society sessions appears on the web site and in *The Howellsian*. The calls for papers are usually posted in September; the deadlines for proposals are usually in early January.

### Membership

Dues for the William Dean Howells Society are \$10.00 per calendar year. As a member of the William Dean Howells Society, you will receive the following:

- *The Howellsian*, which is published twice a year.
- Calls for papers and invitations to meetings and social events hosted by the Society.
- A directory of Howells Society members.

### Web site address:

<http://www.howellssociety.org/index.html>.

