



## As For Sinclair Ross

*David Stouck*

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Sinclair Ross (1908-1996), best known for his canonical novel *As for Me and My House* (1941), and for such familiar short stories as *The Lamp at Noon*. and *The Painted Door*,. is an elusive figure in Canadian literature. A master at portraying the hardships and harsh beauty of the Prairies during the Great Depression, Ross nevertheless received only modest attention from the public during his lifetime. His reluctance to give readings or interviews further contributed to this faint public perception of the man.

In *As for Sinclair Ross*, David Stouck tells the story of a lonely childhood in rural Saskatchewan, of a long and unrewarding career in a bank, and of many failed attempts to be published and to find an audience. The book also tells the story of a man who fell in love with both men and women and who wrote from a position outside any single definition of gender and sexuality.

Stouck's biography draws on archival records and on insights gathered during an acquaintance late in Ross's life to illuminate this difficult author, describing in detail the struggles of a gifted artist living in an inhospitable time and place. Stouck argues that when Ross was writing about prairie farmers and small towns, he wanted his readers to see the kind of society they were creating, to feel uncomfortable with religion as coercive rhetoric, prejudices based on race and ethnicity, and rigid notions of gender. *As for Sinclair Ross* is the story of a remarkable writer whose works continue to challenge us and are rightly considered classics of Canadian literature.

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