Sound and The Fury, The

from The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide

Novel 1929 by US writer William Faulkner. The story of a declining Southern family is told from four points of view including those of the three sons: Benjy, an imbecile; Quentin, a Harvard student who commits suicide; and Jason, an egotistical materialist. Dealing with historical collapse and lost love, the novel is a moving and technically difficult work.

Summary Article: Sound and the Fury, The
from The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English

A novel by William Faulkner, published in 1929. A complex account of the history of the Compson family, it is divided into four sections, largely reliant on Stream of Consciousness. The first (7 April 1928) is narrated by Benjy, the youngest member and an 'idiot'. Like his brothers Quentin and Jason, he is chiefly preoccupied with his sister Caddy. For Benjy, her disappearance amounts to the loss of the centre of his universe. The second section is told by Quentin, a Harvard freshman, on the day (2 June 1910) he commits suicide. In the third section (6 April 1928) Jason, the eldest son, reveals his bitterness and anger at the opportunities he has lost because of the irresponsibility and selfishness which he feels predominate in his family. The final section (8 April 1928, Easter Sunday) concentrates on the Compsons' black servant, Dilsey, and her grandson, Luster. An appendix which Faulkner added in 1946 reviews the history of the Compson family from 1699 to 1945 and ends with this assessment of the blacks who served the Compsons: 'They endured.'