

Joseph Addison's Education from "The Spectator's Account of Himself"

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What do you know about Joseph Addison's education from "The Spectator's Account of Himself?"

"The Spectator's Account of Himself" (1/3/1711) by Joseph Addison (1672-1719) is one of the authors of "The Coverley Papers." In this essay, he provided some information about his education.

School Studies: He did not write much about school studies in the essay. He described his early years as unremarkable, except for his serious manners, even as a baby. He was known to be a very quiet and studious child. He was always a favorite of his schoolmaster.

University Studies: He attended university, where he was recognized for his deep silence and dedication. He spent eight years at the university. He speaks only when necessary during public exercises. His focus was so intense that he became familiar with many celebrated ancient and modern books. He says,

There are very few celebrated books, either in the learned or modern tongues, which I am not acquainted with.

It refers to his deepness of learning.

Travels for Knowledge: After completing his education at the university, he decided to travel. His thirst for knowledge drove him to visit various countries in Europe. He says,

An insatiable thirst after knowledge carried me into all the countries of Europe.

He was curious about new and strange things, which led him to travel to Egypt. In Egypt, he sought to resolve scholarly debates by measuring a pyramid. Satisfied with his findings, he returned to his home country.

In short, his education was not just limited to formal studies but also included practical investigations during his travels.