
Contents

Editors' Preface	viii
Author's Preface	ix
Longman Literature in English Series	xi
Acknowledgements	xiii
1 Introduction	1
The matter of Britain	4
The censorship question	8
Demands for a National Theatre	13
Part One – An Overview: Plays in Context	
2 English Theatre in the 1890s	23
Society Drama	29
Arthur Wing Pinero	31
Henry Arthur Jones	35
Oscar Wilde	38
<i>Guy Domville</i> (1895)	42
Ibsen and new initiatives	44
'An English Théâtre Libre'	47
The close of the century	50
3 1900–1920 The New Drama	54
Harley Granville Barker	58
Elizabeth Robins and the suffrage dramatists	61
The Court dramatists: Galsworthy, Masfield and Hankin	64
George Bernard Shaw	74
The repertory movement and the Manchester School	75
The Irish drama	79
<i>Peter Pan</i> (1904)	83

4	1920–1940 Between the Wars	88
	Repertory theatres, independent theatres and theatre festivals	91
	O'Casey and the Abbey Theatre	94
	Mainstream theatre	98
	Noel Coward	101
	War plays and patriotism	102
	Rodney Ackland and J. B. Priestley	105
	Political theatre: the Group	109
	Political theatre: the Workers' contribution	111
	The advent of radio	115
	Cinema	122
Part Two – Closer Readings of Some Significant Works and Topics		
5	Four Comedies	129
	<i>The Importance of Being Ernest</i> (1895)	130
	<i>The Playboy of the Western World</i> (1907)	139
	<i>Hay Fever</i> (1925) and <i>Private Lives</i> (1930)	146
6	George Bernard Shaw	154
	'Intellect the surest tool'	156
	<i>Major Barbara</i> (1905)	161
	Staging and stage directions	164
	Shaw's dramatic language	167
	<i>Pygmalion</i> (1914)	169
	Subverting convention, and some Shavian limitations	172
	<i>Heartbreak House</i> (1921)	173
7	Literary Drama: Henry James, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot	178
	Henry James and the idea of theatre	180
	The language of realism	185
	W. B. Yeats and 'the deep of the mind'	187
	The verse drama movement	193
	<i>Murder in the Cathedral</i> (1935)	197
8	Dramatising Strife: The Working Classes on the British Stage	204
	Capital and Labour plays	207
	Domestic strife: D. H. Lawrence and others	213
	Questions of language	216
	<i>Men Should Weep</i> (1947)	221

9	Variable Authenticities: Staging Shakespeare in the Early Modern Period	227
	Historical authenticity: illusionist Shakespeare	228
	A new authenticity: William Poel and Elizabethan staging	233
	Shakespeare's 'Problem Plays'	239
	Granville Barker and twentieth-century eclecticism	241
10	The Blindfold Medium: Early Radio Drama	248
	<i>The White Chateau</i> (1925)	250
	Familiarity with the medium	253
	<i>The Squirrel's Cage</i> (1929) and <i>The Flowers Are Not For You To Pick</i> (1930)	256
	<u>Chronology</u>	261
	General Bibliographies	279
	(i) Historical and cultural context	280
	(ii) General dramatic criticism	281
	(iii) English Drama 1890–1940	282
	Individual Authors	290
	Notes on biography, works and criticism	290
	Index	329