

THE STORY
OF THE
HALIFAX THESPIANS
1927 - 1948

by
Phyllis Bentley

P R I C E
O N E S H I L L I N G

All profits from the sale of this book will be devoted
to the Halifax Thespians' Playhouse Reconstruction Fund

THE STORY OF THE HALIFAX THESPIANS.

By PHYLLIS BENTLEY.

THE STORY OF THE HALIFAX THESPIANS is typical of that of many institutions in this country, for the society began in the very smallest possible way as an ideal in the heads of a few people, especially one man, and grew gradually as this ideal gained acceptance and recognition and became valuable to ourselves and our fellow-citizens.

The society originated as follows. Miss Winnie Ambler answered an advertisement in the *Halifax Courier* to join an amateur dramatic society. Invited to attend a rehearsal, she found a small group, of whom Mr. F. J. Morris was one, preparing the production of a play by Mr. K. Malpas Grandage. This production was presented with some success at Square Church, but over the choice and casting of the next piece the quarrels which often accompany amateur theatricals broke out and the group seemed headed for disruption. During a particularly stormy session in December, 1926, Mr. Morris, who had been attending a meeting of the Halifax Authors' Circle, came in accompanied by its treasurer, Mr. Arthur Coe. Invited to address the group, Mr. Coe proceeded to outline, with the fire and zeal later so well known to the Thespians, his own finely idealistic notions of what an amateur dramatic society could be and do. Miss Ambler, fired by his enthusiasm, begged him to found in Halifax such a society as he described. They conferred together and decided to attempt the enterprise.

At this point I myself can take up the story. At a meeting of the Authors' Circle at which I was in the chair, Mr. Coe came to me in the tea interval and asked whether I would be interested in the formation of such a society. (I have never forgotten the incident ; I can see Mr. Coe now crouching on his heels in the chairman's alcove, outlining his exciting plans with all his eloquence flashing in his eyes, and Mr. Morris hovering benevolently in the rear). I had long viewed with wistful envy the amateur repertory companies (as they were

then) of Sheffield and Birmingham, and welcomed the idea of one for Halifax with enthusiasm, on condition that certain local people with real experience of such work, especially the Rev. L. J. Hines (minister at Northgate-End), who had worked with the Sheffield group, would join the scheme. Mr. Hines agreed to help ; we all worked hard, especially Mr. Coe and Miss Ambler, and a meeting was eventually arranged for 7-30 p.m. on Thursday, 29th September, 1927, at the White Swan Hotel. Two hundred and ten invitations were issued to "persons known to be interested" in the dramatic art, amongst whom were those polished actors the Osborns and members of their group.

At this meeting Mr. Hines acted as chairman, Mr. Coe as secretary, and Mr. Alfred Wareing, of the Theatre Royal, Huddersfield, gave an inspiring address on the future of the theatre and the part in it which amateur dramatic societies might suitably play. On the motion of Mr. James W. Sutcliffe, who years before had been the mainstay of the Halifax Playgoers' Society, seconded by the Rev. H. Ironmonger, it was resolved that first steps should be taken to form a Thespian society, which "will take an active interest in the more permanent and intelligent forms of dramatic art."

How often in the past twenty-one years has not that slogan been wielded as a bludgeon about the heads of Thespians whose views of the intelligent in drama differed from one's own!

Among those present at this inaugural meeting, and elected to a committee appointed to draft a constitution for the society, it is interesting to note the name of Mr. Wilfred Pickles, together with many members who are still active in the society to-day.

On October 20th, 1927, the constitution drafted, not without dust and heat, by this committee was passed by a general meeting ; the name of the society, perhaps influenced by that of our admired predecessors, the Huddersfield Thespians, was chosen, its rules decided ; THE HALIFAX THESPIANS were born. Henceforth I shall use no prefixes to the

names of Thespians, for friendliness and informality are our rule. Our first President was Clifford Ramsden, J.P. ; chairman : James W. Sutcliffe ; secretary : Arthur Coe ; treasurer : E. S. Latchmore ; assistant treasurer : J. Peel. A committee of twenty-four, and appropriate sub-committees for finance and management, casting, stage, play-reading, music and play-writing, were appointed.

I had the honour of being elected to the Casting and Play-reading Sub-committees, and from then there begin those frequent entries of Thespian committee meetings which, rarely less than twenty and often rising to fifty, fill my diary for each of the last twenty-one years.

The abundant and admirably kept records of the Thespians form entertaining reading, to which my diary entries add juicy comment. From the first the Thespian debates were candid, not to say outspoken, and disagreements were sharp and hot because interest was keen and personalities strong. "We did pretty well, I think, in picking plays" is followed in my diary by : "Very unsatisfactory. None of the people have read any plays ; they treat everything with levity, and are out for their own axe—except Messrs. X, Y, Z. Home feeling depressed." Thespian procedure, however, was always soundly democratic, and a more hopeful note is struck the following week : "Got some sound people on the Committee, and felt pleased and relieved." Very soon (January, 1928) it was found necessary to draw up six complicated standing orders for the guidance of producers, which contain the revealing item : "When a producer is given a cast he shall try out *all persons* put forward by the Committee" ; and a month or two later my diary reminds me that I went on an uncomfortable deputation to an outraged producer whose feelings had been intolerably hurt. But I also remember that he didn't leave the Thespians. Somehow, though we have most of us gone home depressed or raging, intending immediate retirement, regularly twice or thrice a year since 1927, we are still most of us busy with Thespian work to-day.

The Society's first public activity was a series of nine play-readings, given in the lecture theatre of the Lit. and Phil. in Harrison Road. The plays chosen justify the boast in my diary, I think, for their authors include Shaw, Ibsen, Galsworthy, Yeats, Chesterton, Barrie, Synge. The first reading, on Friday, December 2nd, 1927, was Masefield's *The Tragedy of Nan*. Dora Garnett took the part of Nan. I shall never forget the thrill and excitement of that night. A rebellious, poetical, intellectual play read publicly in Halifax! And Nan's moving tones, her rich dark curls tumbling down so beautifully! My diary says of this reading: "Simply splendid."

The first plays performed by the Thespians were three one-act pieces at the old Y.M.C.A. in Clare Road, on December 19th, 1927, and the first full-length play was *Dear Brutus*, given as a Saturday afternoon matinee at the Theatre Royal in the following March. But probably the most interesting of these early performances, from the historical point of view, was that in September, 1928, at the Y.M.C.A. of three short pieces, for the centrepiece was *Excerpts from Henry VI and Richard III*, and the part of the wicked Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was played by Wilfred Pickles, since not unknown to fame. The wooing scene between Richard and Lady Anne, played by Winnie Ambler, has remained as a glowing memory with me, which the photograph on page seven pleasantly recalls.

During this period the Society rented a single small rehearsal room at 19A, Crossley Street—and well do I remember a long and obstinate argument as to whether we could afford to paper and paint it. (We couldn't). But after a brief sojourn in the Queen's Hall, in the spring of 1930 we moved into three upper rooms at 32, Clare Road. One of them was of fair size, and at once the activities of the Society expanded.

This year, 1930, was a very important one in the history of the Thespians, for it saw the foundation of the Green Room and the completion of the agreement for the tenancy of the Alexandra Hall. In this year, too, we began to take part in the Festivals of the British Drama League.

To deal with this last item first: in some of these festival competitions original plays by Thespians—L. J. Hines with Frank King, and myself—were performed. I hope I shall not be thought egoistic if I mention the pleasure given me by the players in my little one-act Yorkshire piece, especially that ever-popular comedy actress, Doris Carter. The Thespians presently had the honour of giving a chairman, B. L. Sutcliffe, to the committee of the Northern Area of the British Drama League.

There had been for some time a strong feeling that the Society should provide facilities for members to improve their acting ability and so raise the standard of our productions. The secretary visited the Green Room Club of the Leeds Art Theatre to obtain details of their organisation, and at a general meeting of Thespian members in June, 1930, our Green Room Club was formed with Edith Thomas as secretary and as chairman, Louis Emerson, who filled the post for seven years. The first Green Room programme included lectures, play-readings, attendance at a drama school and a "make-up" competition. The characters for this competition were to be: for ladies, a nun or a drunken woman; for men, an elderly rector or a taxi-driver, and the results were judged by that fine actor-producer and popular though stormy Thespian, H. T. Lea. Although hampered at first by lack of funds to pay royalties on modern plays, the Green Room had throughout one great asset: its friendly and kindly atmosphere, and from the first it prospered, gaining 72 members the first season. To-day it has six hundred members and under the chairmanship of Frank S. Bentley gives private monthly shows, which provide a happy training-ground where our new members, whether young or old, can practise the arts of acting, producing, scene-painting, costuming and (by no means least) stage-lighting.

Meanwhile negotiations about the Alexandra Hall were in full swing. At the very first meeting of the Committee in 1927, Thespian attention had been called to a paragraph in the press stating that the Halifax Permanent Building Society had had plans approved "for a new building on land in

proximity to the head office in Commercial Street, which will provide, among other things . . . a public hall giving seating capacity for 750 people." The chairman and secretary obtained an interview with the then Managing Director, Sir Enoch (then Mr.) Hill, and pointing out that the Society was the largest prospective lessee for such a hall, enquired as to the possibilities of its adaptation into an Art Theatre. The enquiry was favourably received and instructions were issued that the requirements of the Society should be taken into consideration before the plans were finally approved. A long collaboration between the Thespian secretary and the Alexandra Hall architect followed, Arthur Coe visiting many Little Theatres throughout the country and consulting many experts on lighting, colour and the use of "unit" blocks for architectural scenery. Although on questions of lighting and stage space there was disagreement, a very beautiful little stage with the newest type of cyclorama was the result. Favourable terms—as they then appeared—were granted for rent, and the Hall was opened with a great flourish on March 11th, 1931, with the production of Capek's *Adam the Creator*. This play had been chosen because its expressionist technique gave great scope for the use of the new stage, and Arthur Coe's production took full advantage of the opportunity. High dignitaries of the Building Society movement and the world of drama attended, including Mr. C. Harold Ridge of the Cambridge Festival Theatre, who had advised us on lighting. Mr. St. John Ervine made a lively and encouraging speech, other amateur societies from neighbouring towns sent strong contingents to the audience, and photographs of the production were published in the British Drama League's organ *Drama* and also in the *Theatre Arts Monthly* of New York.

The tenancy thus begun lasted till the outbreak of war in 1939. Many fine productions were given, for details of which the reader is referred to the complete list of plays performed by the Thespians printed at the end of this brochure. During this period the Halifax Thespians were quite famous in "advanced" dramatic circles for their use of lighting (under the charge of Arthur Coe and Wilfred Jackson) as a

Richard III
at the Y.M.C.A.,
September 1928
(Photograph:
Halifax Courier)



Adam the Creator
at the Alexandra Hall,
March 1931





Lady Precious Stream
at the Alexandra Hall,
April 1935



Jane Eyre
at Heath Grammar School,
November 1940.
(Photograph:
Halifax Courier)

scenic medium, and their modernist production technique, for which Owen Simpson designed furnishing and costumes. *1066 and All That*, in 1932, was a howling success, in which the backstage helpers had one particularly joyous moment each night. Arthur Pickles having a very quick change to make, was literally picked up and *dropped* into a coat of mail while a gummed moustache was pressed to his upper lip. *The Man Who Ate the Popomack* put over an amusing trick on the audience. In the play anyone who ate this mythical fruit was supposed to turn blue and smell of its strong scent. Two girls operating (empty) disinfectant sprays were sent down the aisles at the appropriate moments, and, coupled with the acting, this convinced the audience so strongly of the actual presence of a smell that some of them went out, nauseated! *Tobias and the Angel* was perhaps the high water mark of these Coe-Jackson-Simpson productions, with its beautiful settings and Rimsky-Korsakov ballet. Other fine productions of this period, on the realistic lines favoured by other members of the Society, were *Saint Joan*, *Wild Decembers* (at which the author, Clemence Dane, was present and wept over the performance of Edna Sutcliffe as Emily Brontë), and the big-cast *Lady with the Lamp*, produced by A. J. C. and Olga Hirst; while for the Chinese technique of *Lady Precious Stream* the producer (Clement Hoyle) had the collaboration of the author, S. I. Hsiung. For these plays our stage director was usually A. Leslie Sutcliffe and later Enid Wright. We were greatly helped in our scenic enterprise during this period by the generosity of our President, Frank Lee, J.P., which our energetic and devoted Business Managers, Henry and Hilda Harrison, used to admirable advantage.

A natural development from all this was a scheme whereby the joint Cambridge Festival Theatre and London Gate Theatre companies were to use the Alexandra Hall as a third theatre between terms. The first of their projected visits took place in December, 1932, with plays by Tchekov, Shaw, Ashley Dukes, etc. The visit was a superb success artistically, but financially too serious a failure to repeat; there were not then enough people in Halifax who cared for

plays of this type to provide audiences large enough to cover the expenses.

Indeed the Halifax Thespians themselves were faced by something of the same problem. The Alexandra Hall was too large for us. A large hall, not your own, means a large rent, and there are limits to the rent-concessions which can be made by the directors of limited companies, however favourably inclined. The balanced programme of experimental and realist plays which we presented just kept us afloat, but it was a period of continuing financial stress and struggle. We began to long for a theatre of our own, where we could make our own scenery and store it and accommodate our own rehearsals and Green Room activities and have no rent to pay.

Meanwhile, in the spring of 1934, we found premises at 17, George Street: two largish rooms with an inner communicating staircase and a tiny committee room on a higher floor. We equipped the upper room with a neat little stage and fine switchboard, bought old red velvet chairs for a few shillings from a local cinema and tricked them out with aluminium paint. The audience could only be small, of course, and restricted to members alone; but a Green Room show upstairs, with tea and biscuits in the lower room between the acts, was one of the friendliest and jolliest ways of spending an evening in the town at the time. The lower room was marked out for rehearsals with white lines showing the size of the Alexandra stage. (In these two rooms, by the way, we entertained to a sausage supper members of the Old Vic company playing in Halifax in 1941, and these same rooms figure in the film *We of the West Riding*, taken in Halifax in 1946).

Another addition to Thespian activities took place in 1937. The financial stringency in which the Society continually found itself made the question of choice of play a very crucial matter, and debates between the various schools of thought ran high. (On one occasion the Play-Consideration Sub-committee resigned *en bloc*). It was therefore proposed by one disgruntled member (myself) that in order to create an "informed opinion" in the Society a Play-Reading Circle

should be formed, whose members could read plays of genuine intellectual interest which might be thought unlikely to secure the necessary popular support if presented on the stage. The Circle meets on Sunday once or twice a month and has read many admirable plays. Recently, under the chairmanship of Margaret Barker, its activities have expanded to include other artistic fields: a gramophone recital, a brains trust, an evening of mime and poetry and prose readings on chosen themes have been well attended by the 270 members.

From 1937 onwards the project of a theatre of our own "in which all the activities of the Society may be housed" was under frequent discussion, and we had an actual building in view when in September, 1939, came the outbreak of war. At first our future prospects seemed black; the Alexandra Hall was requisitioned by the military, and our younger members would inevitably be summoned to other duties. But when the Government's ban on the opening of places of entertainment was lifted, we decided, after a long and arduous debate, to carry on. We must tend the flickering lamp of culture till it could blaze again in calmer times, thought our idealists. Those not on active service would require the dramatic art to keep up their morale, said the more practical-minded as we put up an improvised blackout. "But where could we possibly perform?" enquired the more cautious members doubtfully. "In a school, of course," replied the bolder spirits. We wrote to the Halifax Education Authority, and their kindness enabled us to begin our eight-year-long happy association with the hall of Heath Grammar School.

The war period was, of course, a period of difficulty for the Halifax Thespians. We had to struggle with the usual difficulties of blackout, alerts, wartime shortages and withdrawal of young members; in addition we lost, by death, departure and temporary absence on wartime duties, several of our older active members too. But we had been fortunate in acquiring, in the 1937-1940 years, some new acting members who also brought special talents to the Society: Barbara Starke-Jones with her admirable gift for costume, Allan

Bracewell with his interest in lighting and production, Norman Somers, so able in constructional décor. These, with members of long standing who continued their devoted work in spite of wartime preoccupations, carried on the Society's affairs with conspicuous success. To our President, James W. Sutcliffe, and our Chairman then and now, Philip Starke-Jones, all Thespians owe an everlasting gratitude for their long, steady, enthusiastic service and calm, expert guidance. I should like to mention here, too, that grand old stalwart, Joseph Smithson, whose idealism kept the Thespians on the upward track.

For during this wartime period the Thespians steadily increased their audiences. Before the war the weekly audience was round about 2,000 ; now we ran ten-day shows witnessed usually by 2,600 sometimes by as many as 3,500 people. (I say "we," though I myself was away during most of the war, but once a Thespian always a Thespian). We were genuinely necessary, genuinely valuable, to the Halifax public, which supported us strongly both in light and serious shows. Outstanding productions of this period were *Wingless Victory* (produced for us by J. R. Gregson), *Thunder Rock* (produced for us by May King, a former member) and *In Good King Charles's Golden Days* (produced by Dora Garnett), while J. B. Priestley's rollicking Yorkshire satire *When We Are Married* (Gregson) proved so popular that we gave a successful revival after a couple of years. Our production of the American Maxwell Anderson's *Wingless Victory*, by the way, was the first production in Great Britain ; a fact of which we were legitimately proud. In visits to neighbouring camps our actors played to upwards of twenty thousand soldiers, and in a week of special performances at the Grand Theatre we raised £687 for the Red Cross and St. John's War Organisation.

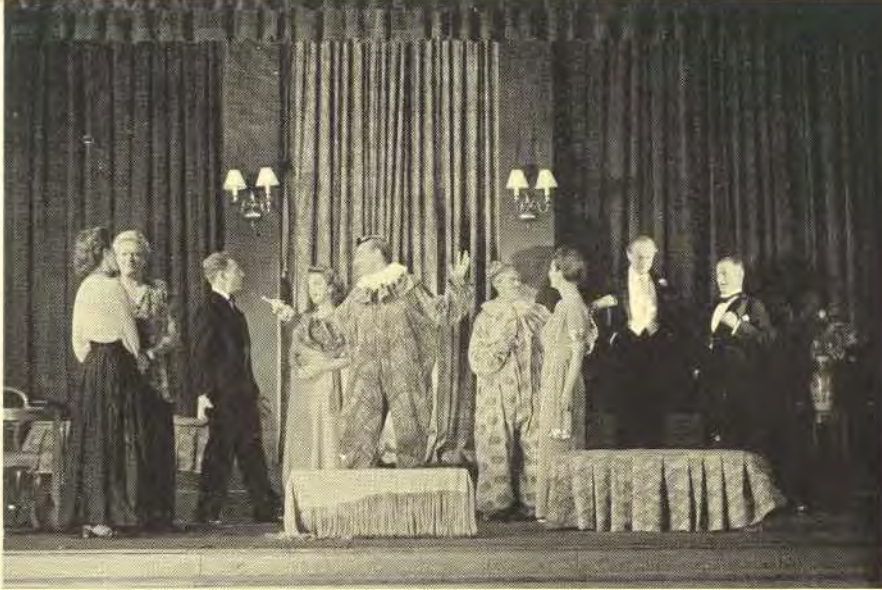
At last the war drew towards its close ; our members, men and women, began to return, and our desire for a theatre of our own revived. This desire was increased by the fact that with the resumption of normal activities at Heath Grammar School the stage and hall would, of course, be increasingly



Setting for Act I,
In *Good King Charles's
Golden Days*
at Heath Grammar School,
April 1943



Call it a Day
at Heath Grammar School,
May 1947



Music at Night
at Heath Grammar School,
November 1947

The Playhouse is Reconstructed,
Hanover Street, June 1946
Photograph: *Yorkshire Observer*



needed for the use and pleasure of the boys. So, though deeply grateful to Heath for its long hospitality, with £1,300 of our earnings in our hand we looked about eagerly for a new home.

We found it in Hanover Chapel, a building which the proposal laid before a General Meeting of Members on 12th December, 1945, describes as follows :

“ occupies an easily accessible site of some 1,200 square yards near the centre of the town, with a 90 feet frontage on King Cross Road. All those who have inspected the building believe it to be highly suitable for Thespian purposes. Its main feature is a large hall . . . A useful room to the right . . . The extensive basement, dry and pleasant because it has windows reaching above ground, containing two large rooms and several smaller rooms . . . The building is fitted with a modern tiled kitchen . . . ”

And so on and so on. The meeting unanimously approved the purchase of the Chapel at a price of £2,500, for conversion into a modern Playhouse which should form a real centre of culture in the town. It was hoped (and still is hoped) to secure visits from similar amateur playhouses in other towns, to show educational films, to hold club evenings, to offer facilities to societies in the neighbourhood devoted to other arts. We expected that eventually we should need £10,000 for purchase, conversion and equipment, and set about raising the money.

It was decided to make an Appeal to the Halifax public. An agreeable leaflet with a dashing red-white-and-black cover showing a picture of the future Playhouse, with messages of goodwill on the back from such celebrities as J. B. Priestley, Ivor Brown, St. John Ervine, James Bridie, Wilfred Pickles, etc., was drawn up and sent out to 4,800 Halifax citizens. The envelopes were addressed by Thespian volunteers and filled with folded leaflets on one hectic evening in February, 1946. The response to this Appeal, with our savings and our earnings from concerts, Thespian dances, and special shows brought the Playhouse Fund to a total of approximately £5,000. (A

further appeal will, of course, be necessary to complete the equipment of our modern stage and hall).

Our architect members, Arthur Pickles and Cyril Sunderland, began to survey the former chapel and prepare plans for its conversion.

Meanwhile during the summer of 1946 we moved into the building. The "useful room to the right"—formerly the vestry, known to us as the Emerson room from our then secretary's enthusiasm for its proportions—proved useful indeed for rehearsals; the basement harboured the Green Room, Club Room, Wardrobe, Committee and kitchen. We were fortunate in obtaining a small catering licence, so that we can give our hard-working members cups of tea and sandwich snacks.

But one great piece of ill-fortune befel us. Our acquisition of the Hanover building coincided with the post-war housing shortage, and although as good citizens we couched our eventual application for a constructional licence in most modest terms, and sent it in strongly supported by local education and youth authorities, it was refused. Our voluntary architects, Messrs. Pickles, produced a fresh scheme in which demands on labour and material were cut to the very bone. We had great hopes of this scheme, for other amateur dramatic societies in northern towns had been successful with similar applications and were already hard at work on their alterations. But we were again refused. We persisted, however; mobilised all our arguments, all our support, pointed out how small our requirements of material and manpower, since much material was already in the Chapel, and much labour would be performed by our own members. At last, on April 29th, 1948, I opened a letter addressed to me as President and uttered a shout of exultation; our licence was granted.

As I write this, in August, 1948, the work of conversion is in progress, hampered of course by all the difficulties and delays of the post-war world but going steadily forward. Any-one who doubts the stamina, enthusiasm and capacity for hard work of modern youth should visit the Playhouse some evening and watch our young men and maidens hacking timbers and handling stone.

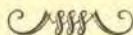
When we bought the Playhouse in 1946 we had hoped to celebrate our twenty-first birthday, September 29th, 1948, by a fine production in our new home. This will not be possible, but we hope to complete the Playhouse and begin public performances of a really striking kind there next year. Meanwhile, we continue to enjoy the hospitality of Heath Grammar School, and to present balanced programmes of the original and the well-known, the moving and the entertaining, the symbolic and the real, *Call it a Day* and *Mr. Bolffy*, *The Druid's Rest* and *Music at Night*.

I am conscious that in this brief history of the Halifax Thespians I have omitted many matters worthy of note. I have left out our growing library, the visits of the Huddersfield Thespians, the participation of members in the Halifax Pageant and other youth activities. In particular, I have spoken too little of the most important members, the actors. But going through the old programmes I have counted so many actors, men and women, recollection of whom brings a keen pleasure, that I have given up the attempt to mention them all by name. I rely on the public, to whom they are familiar friends, to retain their memory; for who having once seen them could forget?

Then, too, for considerations of space I have given the names once only of many people who deserve mention in a double or even a treble capacity. The Treasurers and Business Managers, the casting and stage directors, the play consideration representatives and publicity managers, the honorary auditors and solicitors and librarians, the stage staff and scene painters, the property mistresses (especially Gwen Maude!) and prompters, the canteen workers and programme sellers, the people who nobly spent Saturday afternoons tying cushions and numbered tickets on chairs, all these have a share in the Thespians' fine record. I beg all those whose names are not here to forgive me and to believe me when I say that you are not forgotten: you figure in the minutes and the Annual Reports, you are secure in Thespian history.

To sum up: I believe that membership of the Halifax Thespians has been for the past twenty-one years a passport

to a true comradeship in art. I believe too that the Halifax Thespians have done the town of Halifax real service, and I offer the list of our one hundred and thirty-one productions in proof of this. Our membership is now close on a thousand, our Playhouse is emerging from dream to reality; I earnestly hope the next twenty-one years of the Halifax Thespians' history will be even more fruitful than the first.



OFFICERS OF
THE HALIFAX THESPIANS.

Presidents :

Clifford Ramsden (1927-1928)
Frank Lee (1929-1934)
James W. Sutcliffe (1935-1944)
Phyllis Bentley (1945-)

Chairmen :

L. J. Hines (1927)
James W. Sutcliffe (1928-1934)
Philip Starke-Jones (1935-38; 1944-)
Phyllis Bentley (1939-1943)

Secretaries :

Arthur Coe (1927-1930)
Frank Hollway (1931-1932)
Douglass Robinson (1932-1936)
Barbara Starke-Jones (1937-1938)
Louis Emerson (1939-1946)
Tom Green (1947-)

Treasurers :

E. S. Latchmore (1927-1935)
B. L. Sutcliffe (1936)
H. T. Lea (1937-1938)
John Clay (1940-)



HALIFAX THESPIAN PRODUCTIONS

First Season (1927-1928).

The Stepmother
Riders to the Sea
The Grand Cham's Diamond
Dear Brutus
Outward Bound

Arnold Bennett.
J. M. Synge.
Allan Monkhouse.
Sir J. M. Barrie.
Sutton Vane.

Second Season (1928-1929).

Lonesome Like
Excerpts Henry VI and Richard III
E. & O. E.
The Silver Box
The Ship
Dr. Knock
The Dover Road
Sounding Brass

Harold Brighouse.
William Shakespeare.
E. Crawshaw-Williams.
John Galsworthy.
St. John Ervine.
Jules Romains.
A. A. Milne.
Phyllis Bentley.

Third Season (1929-1930).

The Crier by Night
Sounding Brass (*revival*)
Vindication
Wife to a Famous Man
The Proposal
E. & O. E. (*revival*)
The Grand Cham's Diamond (*revival*)
The Admirable Crichton
Thirty Minutes in a Street
Possession
The Man in the Bowler Hat
The Pelican

Gordon Bottomley.
Phyllis Bentley.
L. J. Hines and Frank King.
G. Martinez Sierra.
Anton Tchekov.
E. Crawshaw-Williams.
Allan Monkhouse.
Sir J. M. Barrie.
Beatrice Mayor.
Laurence Housman.
A. A. Milne.
F. Tennyson Jesse and
H. M. Hartwood.
Bernard Shaw.

Fanny's First Play

Fourth Season (1930-1931).

The Maker of Dreams
Towie Castle
The Man who wouldn't go to Heaven
Hindle Wakes
Fire of Vanity
The Return of the Soldier
The Romantic Young Lady
Adam the Creator
Clara Gibbings

Oliphant Down.
Gordon Bottomley.
F. Sladen Smith.
Stanley Houghton.
L. J. Hines and Frank King.
John van Druten.
G. Martinez Sierra.
Karel and Joseph Capek.
Aimee and Philip Stuart.

Fifth Season (1931-1932).

Hobson's Choice
Milestones
Arms and the Man
Father Noah
1066 and All That

Harold Brighouse.
Arnold Bennett and
Edward Knoblock.
Bernard Shaw.
Geoffrey Whitworth.
Michael Watts from the book
by W. C. Sellar and R. J.
Yeatman.
A. A. Milne.

The Fourth Wall

Sixth Season (1932-1933).

To See Ourselves
Rizzio's Boots
The Man who ate the Popomack

E. M. Delafield.
Hal. D. Stewart.
W. J. Turner.

Sixth Season (1932-1933)—cont.

The Bride
The World of Light
Passion, Poison and Petrification
The Rose without a Thorn
Trifles
Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure
Pinoggers

Seventh Season (1933-1934).

The Lady with a Lamp
You Never Can Tell
The Crime at Blossoms
Smoke-Screens
Mary Rose
The Road to Rome
Symphony in Illusion
Tobias and the Angel

Eighth Season (1934-1935).

The Rumour
Quality Street
The Arrow by Day
The Magistrate
Sixteen
Lady Precious Stream

Ninth Season (1935-1936).

Saint Joan
The Distaff Side
Service
Dr. Knock (revival)
The Village Wooing
Laburnum Grove
Wild Decembers

Tenth Season (1936-1937).

Abraham Lincoln
Take Two from One
Too True to be Good
Children in Uniform
A Man's House
Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary

Eleventh Season (1937-1938).

Pride and Prejudice
The Devil's Disciple
Mystery at Greenfingers
Journey's End
The Kingdom of God
Storm in a Teacup

Twelfth Season (1938-1939).

And So To Bed
Ah, Wilderness
Major Barbara
The Dominant Sex
Power and Glory
The Late Christopher Bean

Thirteenth Season (1939-1940).

I Have Been Here Before

Gertrude Jennings.
Aldous Huxley.
Bernard Shaw.
Clifford Bax.
Susan Glaspell.
Walter Hackett.
Sir Arthur W. Pinero.

Reginald Berkeley.
Bernard Shaw.
Mordaunt Shairp.
Harold Brighouse.
Sir J. M. Barrie.
Robert Emmett Shertwood.
James Wallace Bell.
James Bridie.

C. K. Muwo.
Sir J. M. Barrie.
L. J. Hines and Frank King.
Sir Arthur W. Pinero.
Aimee and Philip Stuart.
S. I. Hsiung.

Bernard Shaw.
John van Druten.
C. L. Anthony.
Jules Romains.
Bernard Shaw.
J. B. Priestley.
Clemence Dane.

John Drinkwater.
G. and M. Martinez Sierra.
Bernard Shaw.
Christa Winsloe.
John Drinkwater.
St. John Ervine.

Jane Austen.
Bernard Shaw.
J. B. Priestley.
R. C. Sherriff.
G. Martinez Sierra.
James Bridie.

J. B. Fagan.
Eugene O'Neill.
Bernard Shaw.
Michael Egan.
Karel Capek.
Rene Fauchois and
Emlyn Williams.

J. B. Priestley.

Fourteenth Season (1940-1941).

When We Are Married
Quiet Wedding
Jane Eyre

Spring Tide

Candida

Fifteenth Season (1941-1942).

Wingless Victory (First British Production)
Robert's Wife
The Breadwinner
Thunder Rock
He was Born Gay

Sixteenth Season (1942-1943).

When We Are Married (revival)
The Cradle Song
Ladies in Retirement

In Good King Charles's Golden Days

Seventeenth Season (1943-1944).

Bird in Hand
Night Must Fall
The First Mrs. Fraser
Ghosts
At the Grand Theatre for Red Cross P.O.W. Fund:
Night Must Fall and Quiet Wedding
(revivals)

Eighteenth Season (1944-1945).

The Importance of Being Earnest
They Came to a City
Living Room
Dear Octopus

Nineteenth Season (1945-1946).

The Barretts of Wimpole Street
The Corn is Green
Mr. Bolfray
Time and the Conways
This Happy Breed

Twentieth Season (1946-1947).

The Circle
Pink String and Sealing Wax
Distant Point
Poison Pen
Call it a Day

Twenty-first Season (1947-1948).

The Sacred Flame
The Druid's Rest
Music at Night
Jacob's Ladder

J. B. Priestley.
Esther McCracken.
Charlotte Bronte and
Helen Jerome.
George Billam and
J. B. Priestley.
Bernard Shaw.

Maxwell Anderson.
St. John Ervine.
Somerset Maugham.
Robert Ardrey.
Emlyn Williams.

J. B. Priestley.
G. and M. Martinez Sierra.
Edward Percy and
Reginald Denham.
Bernard Shaw.

John Drinkwater.
Emlyn Williams
St. John Ervine.
Henrik Ibsen.
At the Grand Theatre for Red Cross P.O.W. Fund:
Emlyn Williams and
Esther McCracken.

Oscar Wilde.
J. B. Priestley.
Esther McCracken.
Dodie Smith.

Rudolph Besier.
Emlyn Williams.
James Bridie.
J. B. Priestley.
Noel Coward.

Somerset Maugham.
Roland Pertwee.
Afinogenev.
Richard Llewellyn.
Dodie Smith.

Somerset Maugham.
Emlyn Williams.
J. B. Priestley.
Laurence Housman.

If you wish to join the Halifax Thespians, please communicate with
the Hon. Membership Secretary:
Rowland G. Gaskell, 9, Mayfield Drive, Halifax.
(Telephone: Halifax 4852).

