

THE QUESTORS THEATRE  
MATTOCK LANE, EALING

---

---



*present*

“GHOSTS”

by HENRIK IBSEN

---

JUNE, 1946

---

PROGRAMME

- - -

THREEPENCE

## The PLAY and its AUTHOR.

HENRIK IBSEN was born in Norway on 20th March, 1828. His first play, "Catiline," was written in 1850, while reading for his examinations at Christiania University. Towards the end of 1851 he was appointed poet and stage-manager of a theatre in Bergen, and it was no doubt there, working daily in the theatre for six years, that he learned the foundations of his art. It was there that his early (and unimportant) plays were staged. These were mostly romantic, nationalistic, historical dramas.

His first play to deal with social problems, "Love's Comedy," was not a success and raised a minor storm, and he returned to historical drama with "The Pretenders," perhaps his first really significant drama.

About this time (1863) Ibsen left Norway, with a travel allowance from the State, to travel in Denmark, Germany and Italy for the purpose of writing and broadening his theatre knowledge. He left Norway much embittered and disappointed and did not return until near the end of his writing life. Most of the plays by which he is best known to-day, including "Ghosts," were written in Italy.

"Ghosts" was written in 1881 and published in the same year, and immediately aroused a bitter storm of abuse. It was first produced in Sweden two years later, having been refused a hearing in Norway. The first London production was by the Independent Theatre in 1891, a private performance, and the censor's ban in this country was maintained for many years. That production, too, aroused violent and abusive attacks, compared with which the protests against the recent Picasso Exhibition were but a storm in a teacup. But despite this, the play has become one of the classics of the theatre, and Professor Allardyce Nicoll writes of it: "In this drama Ibsen wrote his masterpiece. Nowhere has he so succeeded in revealing at once the problem and the reflection of that problem upon the souls of his characters; nowhere has he so united profound psychological delineation with realistic appeal and interest."

### DISCUSSION.

There will be a discussion on this production in this theatre on Thursday, June 13th, at 7.30 p.m.

Refreshments will be served, and all members of the audience are cordially invited to come along and give their views and hear the views of others.

Written criticisms are also welcomed and will be read anonymously at the discussion.

# “GHOSTS”

THE CHARACTERS (in order of appearance) :

Regina Engstrand	...	...	...	DIANA RUTLAND
Jacob Engstrand	...	...	...	TOM W. FRANKLIN
Pastor Manders	...	...	...	ALBERT HOOPER
Mrs. Alving	...	...	...	ELIZABETH DIXON
Oswald Alving	...	...	...	CYRIL BOX

The Play produced by **ALFRED EMMET**

Associate Producer: **MARY CHANTER**

---

The action takes place at Mrs. Alving's house on one of the larger fjords of Western Norway. Period: about 1885.

---

**ACT I : Late afternoon.**

**ACT II : An hour later.**

**ACT III : A few hours later.**

---

The Setting designed by **ALFRED EMMET** and **HONOR O'NIANS**, and constructed by **A. W. S. Cowan**, **Alfred Emmet**, **George Mooney** and **Denis Robinson**.

---

Stage Manager	...	...	...	DENIS ROBINSON
Lighting	...	...	...	MICHAEL KELLY
Properties	...	...	...	JEAN McCONNELL LONA HALKETT
Wardrobe	...	...	...	DIANA KELLY

---

Furniture for this production has been kindly loaned by Messrs. **ELDRED SAYERS & SON, Ltd.**, Ealing Broadway, W.5, and **L. BRYANT**, The Mall, W.5.

---

There will be a 15-minute interval after Act I, and a 5-minute interval after Act II.

---

TEA and soft drinks will be available in the first interval—orders should be given to the programme sellers. Refreshments will not be served at the counter.



## EARLY DAYS.

### Historical Note No. 4.

Though the theatre had been officially opened, it was still far from ready for a full production, and those three months from October to December, 1933, were probably as feverish and frantic as any in our history. Not only had we many finishing touches to do to the stage and equipment, we also had to rehearse and prepare what is probably still the most ambitious production we have ever done. In our search for something particularly striking for our first show in our new home, we had decided on "DRAGONS' TEETH," by Shirland Quin, of which we gave the English premiere. This play, with its experimental, expressionist dream scene in the last Act, a cast list of some 70 characters, (for all of whom costumes had to be made) elaborate lighting and properties, was certainly a severe test of our resources. Doubling, trebling, quadrupling and even quintupling of parts was the order of the day, and it was a mere incident that on the day of the opening performance two members playing nine parts between them, fell by the wayside, and substitutes had to be hurriedly rehearsed while the first Act was actually in progress. Apocryphal stories are told of players who could not change their costumes in time and never appeared at all; of others who found themselves on the stage at the wrong moment. But whatever the confusion, and despite what must have been a considerable lack of smoothness in the performance, it scored a considerable measure of success, due largely to the very daring of the attempt and the adventurous nature of the play, and to brilliant costume designs by Audrey Perkins.

The theatre in those days was not the comfortable building it is to-day. The walls were of bare, stained matchboarding; the audience sat on hard wooden chairs, many of which had legs of unequal length and rocked, and which were hastily arranged in rows for a performance. If tickets went well, we did not hesitate to pack the chairs a bit tighter, and hire a few folding park chairs for the one-and-sixpennies at the back. The discomfort of our audience must have been acute, and when a little later we made a number of cushions and hired them out for a penny an evening, we did a roaring trade. Some members of the audience would take two or three, to help them see over the heads of those in front. Refreshments were served from rough trestle tables, for we had no buffet-bar in those days. Nor were there any window-curtains, and when performances started in daylight, the windows had to be boarded up with plywood from outside. It is astonishing how much our audience was prepared to put up with.

In February, 1934, we produced Pirandello's "The Doctor's Duty" for the B.D.L. Festival, earning promotion to the Divisional Final at the Scala Theatre. The second production in our own programme was Somerset Maugham's "THE CIRCLE," in March, again distinguished by designs by Audrey Perkins, who did so much to set a high standard in this respect in those early days. In the Drama Festival in April, six teams of members competed. A full programme of play-readings was also given during the season, which closed with a surplus of some £18, though we still had liabilities amounting to £20 in respect of the theatre conversion. The report for the year showed a meteoric rise in the Non-Acting membership from 27 to 81. We were beginning to find our feet.

(To be continued)

A.E.J.E.



## A CLUB MAGAZINE?

The idea of a Questors' Magazine is not a new one, but during the war years there would have been obvious difficulties in the way of starting a venture of that kind. In recent months, however, we have been feeling our way towards the establishment of a Magazine that would be designed to provide a link between Questors on both sides of the curtain. The expanded programmes and production leaflets have been our first essays, and we hover now on the brink of the decision whether to launch a real Magazine, or not.

In canvassing the idea it has been found that it commands very general support in the Club—that is comforting. But it would give the Committee concerned a greater confidence to go ahead if words of encouragement on the lips of Questor members were not so often accompanied by a coy disclaimer of any pretensions to literary talent. If there is to be a Magazine and if that Magazine is to be a success, it will be essential for Questor members to be ready to put their thoughts and experiences on paper and to offer a willing response to any request made to them to contribute. Here will be a first-rate chance for many of the non-acting members to take a greater part in the corporate life of the Club; the acting members are kept pretty busy with rehearsals and productions and may often feel it difficult to achieve the sense of detachment that is needed to write a balanced appreciation of a play or criticism of a production. But there must be many among our non-acting membership who would have the facility to do both. It remains only to discover them or for them to reveal themselves. Would any Questor reading this who would be willing to write an occasional article (e.g., a criticism of a Questor production or an original article on some topic of current theatrical moment) be good enough to let the General Manager know of their interest? This will help us to gauge the practical support on which we may count if it is decided to start the Magazine. There are, of course, other considerations with which the General Committee must wrestle, not least among them being that of cost. It is likely that opportunity will be afforded to discuss the project fully at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT THE QUESTORS \*THEATRE

---

Thursday, June 13th, at 7.30 p.m.

Discussion of this Production.

---

Saturday, July 6th

OPENING NIGHT

*of the*

## ANNUAL DRAMA FESTIVAL

---

ADJUDICATIONS

*on*

JULY 12th, 13th and 15th

---

Monday, July 22nd, at 7.30 p.m.

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

---

THE LITTLE THEATRE GUILD OF GREAT BRITAIN

*The People's Theatre*, Newcastle, the *Highbury Little Theatre* and *The Questors* were the sponsors of a meeting of Little Theatres held recently in London, when The Little Theatre Guild of Great Britain was inaugurated. The Guild has an important job to do, and an opportunity of performing much useful service to its member theatres. How it does its job is partly up to us, for *The Questors* have been appointed Secretaries of the Guild for the first year. The Chairmanship is held by our old friends in Newcastle.

We hope to give you from time to time news of the Guild's activities and of the doings of the other Little Theatre members.