

Reading Rayner Collection

Play Pictorial, 1902-1939

Accession code: UKC/PER/PLY

This is a file of play reviews and photographs of actors and productions covered by the theatrical magazine Play Pictorial from the years 1902-1939.

In the early years each issue consists of photographs of the cast in costume posed in particular scenes from the play featured, a resume of the plot, quotes from the cast giving their favourite lines from the play, and in some cases the words and music of a song featured in the play. Most of the photographs in the first volume were taken by "Messrs Bassano, Bond Street", but the copyright belonged to the editor, sometimes named as "R.B.B". In 1902 /3 the cost of a subscription to the magazine was 8/- a year. This included, for those taking a full annual subscription, a special programme supplement giving the cast of each play (and from which we have taken the list of actors, director etc.). In the bound volumes these "programme" pages have been inserted in front of each issue. Volumes 1 to 64 contained approximately 6 plays per bound edition.

The layout of Play Pictorial changed in 1934 with Volume 65. The number of plays covered increased but there were no longer comprehensive cast lists included. Descriptions of the plot and photographs of the actors in scenes from the play were retained.

By October 1939, Play Pictorial had been incorporated into Theatre World, vol..xxxii, no.177, and the editorial discussed the problems of keeping theatres open during wartime. There is a note stating:

Owing to the need for economy in the use of paper, the Theatre World in common with all other journals, is restricting its printing order to the number of copies actually ordered. To ensure receiving a copy regularly each month, therefore, readers who have not already done so should place a standing order, either direct with this office or through their newsagent.

By this time too, the paper on which the magazine is printed was of poor quality compared to that of the early issues of Play Pictorial, and indeed to that of the issues produced during the 1914-18 war.

Theatres covered by Play Pictorial

The figure in brackets shows the number of times the theatre is mentioned.

- Adelphi Theatre, Strand, Westminster, London, England (5)
- Aldwych Theatre, Aldwych, Westminster, London, England (3)
- Alhambra Theatre, Charing Cross Road, , London, England (7)
- Ambassadors Theatre, West Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (13)

- Apollo Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (16)
- Assembly Rooms and Winter Gardens, Malvern, Worcestershire, England (2)
- Cambridge Theatre, Earlham Street, Seven Dials, Camden, London, England(1)
- Coliseum Cinema, Charing Cross, London, England (1)
- Coliseum, St. Martin's Lane, Westminster, London, England (6)
- Comedy Theatre, Panton Street, Haymarket, London, England (12)
- Court Theatre (later Royal Court), Sloane Square, Chelsea, London, England (1)
- Criterion Theatre, Piccadilly Circus, Westminster, London, England (9)
- Daly's Theatre, Cranbourne Street, Leicester Square, Westminster, London, England (23)
- Duchess Theatre, Duchess Street, Catherine Street, Westminster, London, England (3)
- Duke of York's Theatre, St Martin's Lane, Westminster, London, England (9)
- Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, Westminster, London, England (2)
- Gaiety Theatre, Aldwych, Westminster, London, England (30)
- Garrick Theatre, Charing Cross Road, Westminster, London, England (11)
- Globe Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (12)
- Haymarket Theatre Royal, Haymarket, Westminster, London, England (2)
- Hicks Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (2)
- His Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, Westminster, London, England (16)
- Holborn Empire, High Holborn, Holborn, London, England (1)
- Imperial Theatre, Tothill Street, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Kingsway Theatre, Great Queen Street, Holburn, London, England (4)
- Little Theatre, John (Adam Street), Adelphi Terrace, London, England (7)
- London Coliseum, St. Martin's Lane, Westminster, London, England (1)
- London Hippodrome, Leicester Square, Westminster, London, England (6)
- London Pavilion, Piccadilly, London, England (6)
- Lyceum Theatre, Wellington Street, Strand, Westminster, London, England(6)
- Lyric Theatre, King's Street, Hammersmith, London, England (1)
- Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (22)
- New Oxford Theatre, Oxford Street, Marylebone, London, England (2)
- New Theatre, St. Martin's Lane, Westminster, London, England (21)
- Old Vic Theatre, The Cut, Waterloo Road, Lambeth, London, England (16)
- Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, Westminster, London, England (3)
- Oxford Theatre, Oxford Street, Marylebone, London, England (3)
- Palace Theatre, Cambridge Circus, Westminster, London, England (7)
- Phoenix Theatre, Charing Cross Road, Camden, London, England (3)
- Piccadilly Theatre, Denman Street, Westminster, London, England (4)
- Playhouse Theatre, Northumberland Avenue, Westminster, London, England (15)
- Prince of Wales Theatre, Coventry Street, Westminster, London, England(15)
- Prince's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Holborn, London, England (6)
- Queen's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (13)
- Royal Adelphi Theatre, Strand, Westminster, London, England (14)
- Royal Strand Theatre, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Royalty Theatre, Dean Street, Soho, London, England (10)
- Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Avenue, Islington, London, England (2)
- Saville Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (4)
- Savoy Theatre, Savoy Place, Strand, Westminster, London, England (13)

- Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster, London, England (22)
- Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, England (3)
- St. James's Theatre, King Street, Piccadilly, London, England (21)
- St. Martin's Theatre, West Street, Cambridge Circus, Westminster, London, England(9)
- Strand Theatre, Strand, Westminster, London, England (8)
- Terry's Theatre, Strand, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Theatre Royal, Adelphi, Strand, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, Catherine Street, Westminster, London, England(15)
- Theatre Royal, Haymarket, Westminster, London, England (16)
- Vaudeville Theatre, Strand, Westminster, London, England (6)
- Victoria Palace Theatre, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Westminster Theatre, Palace Street, Westminster, London, England (1)
- Whitehall Theatre, Whitehall, Westminster, London, England (2)
- Winter Garden Theatre, Drury Lane, Westminster, London, England (13)
- Wyndham's Theatre, Charing Cross Road, Westminster, London, England (22)

Prominent managers, proprietors and actors covered by Play Pictorial

- manager : Alexander, George, Sir, 1858-1918 (actor-manager)
- manager : Bouchier, Arthur, Mr., 1863-1927
- manager : Curzon, Frank, Mr., 1868-1927
- manager : Davis, Tom Buffen, Mr., 1867-1931
- manager : Edwardes, George, Mr.,1852-1915 (manager at the Savoy Theatre and then the Gaiety)
- manager : Frohman, Charles, Mr., 1860-1915 (American born manager and lessee on both sides of the Atlantic)
- manager : Gatti, Agostino, Mr., 1841-1897
- manager : Gatti, Stefano, Mr., 1844-1906 (brother of Agostino Gatti)
- manager : Greet, William, Mr., 1851-1914 (elder brother of Sir Philip (Ben) Greet)
- manager : Lion, Leon M., Mr., 1879-1947
- manager : Musgrove, George, Mr., 1854-1916 (Brother of theatre managers Harry, Arthur and Frank Musgrove)
- manager : Neilson, Julia, Miss, 1868-1957
- manager : Terry, Fred, Mr., 1863-1933 (brother of Ellen Terry)
- manager : Vedrenne, John E., Mr., 1867-1930 (theatre manager, lessee and licensee)
- proprietor : Wyndham, Charles, Sir, 1837-1919 (actor-manager)
- proprietor : Moore, Mary Charlotte, Miss, 1861-1931 (Lady Wyndham)
- actor : Asche, Oscar, Mr., 1871-1936
- actor : Clarence, O.B., Mr., 1870-1955
- actor : Clunes, Alec, Mr., 1912-1970 (actor and theatre director, father of Martin Clunes)
- actor : Compton, Fay, Miss, 1894-1978
- actor : Cooper, Gladys, Dame, 1888-1971
- actor : Coward, Noel, Sir, 1899-1973
- actor : Dale, James Littlewood, Mr., 1887-1985
- actor : Du Maurier, Gerald, Sir, 1873-1934 (son of author George L. Du Maurier)
- actor : Emney, Fred, Mr., 1900-1980
- actor : Fairbrother, Sydney, Miss, 1872-1941 (born Miss Sydney Tapping)

- actor : Fontanne, Lynn, Miss, 1887-1983 (British actress married to Alfred Lunt, born Lillie Louise Fontanne)
- actor : Grossmith, George, Mr., 1874-1935 (son of author George Grossmith and brother of Lawrence Grossmith)
- actor : Grossmith, Lawrence, Mr., 1877-1944 (son of author George Grossmith and brother of George Grossmith, 1874-1935)
- actor : Guinness, Alec, Sir, 1914-2000
- actor : Hammond, Kay, Miss, 1909-1980 (born Dorothy Katherine Standing, daughter of Sir Guy Standing)
- actor : Hearne, Richard, Mr., 1909-1979 (British actor, writer and producer famous for his "Mr. Pastry" character)
- actor : Hicks, (Edward) Seymour, Sir, 1871-1949 (actor, manager and writer)
- actor : Hignett, H.R., Mr., 1870-1959
- actor : Lane, Lupino, Mr., 1892-1959 (son of Harry Lupino and Charlotte Robinson, brother of Wallace Lupino)
- actor : Laurie, John, Mr., 1897-1980 (sometimes credited as John Lawrie)
- actor : Mills, John, Sir, 1908-2005 (husband of Mary Hayley Bell, father of Juliet and Hayley Mills)
- actor : Nainby, Robert, Mr., 1869-1948
- actor : Nares, Owen, Mr., 1888-1943 (actor and producer)
- actor : Novello, Ivor, Mr., 1893-1951
- actor : Olivier, Laurence Olivier, Baron, 1907-1989
- actor : Oughton, Winifred, Miss, 1890-1964
- actor : Pettingell, Frank, Mr., 1891-1966
- actor : Quayle, Anthony, Sir, 1913-1989
- actor : Reynolds, E. Vivian, Mr., 1866-1952 (sometimes credited as Vivian Reynolds)
- actor : Rutherford, Margaret, Dame, 1892-1972
- actor : Sim, Alastair, Mr., 1900-1976
- actor : Terriss, Ellaline, Miss, 1872-1971 (born Ellaline Lewin, daughter of William Terriss, 1847-97, wife of Sir Seymour Hicks)
- actor : Thorndike, Sybil, Dame, 1882-1976
- actor : Titheradge, Madge, Miss, 1887-1961
- actor : Tree, Maud, Lady, 1863-1937, (English actress born Helen Maud Holt wife of Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree)
- actor : Vanbrugh, Irene, Dame, 1872-1949
- actor : Vanbrugh, Violet, Miss, 1867-1942
- actor : Williams, Arthur, Mr., 1844-1915