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_Front cover:_ The village of Stiffkey, Norfolk by Edward James Buttar. Reproduced courtesy of Swindon Museum and Art Gallery. See page 9.

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Explorations in Local and Regional History and Studies in Regional and Local History: submissions always welcome

Our academic History list specialises in regional and local history (taking in historical geography and archaeology). We publish two well-respected series: Studies in Regional and Local History was set up in 2000 by Prof. Nigel Goose (University of Hertfordshire) and is now edited by Prof. Jane Whittle of Exeter University. This major series is designed to make high quality, specialist academic texts available to a wide audience at affordable prices. Additionally, we have Explorations in Local and Regional History which is differentiated from Studies by being for short-form monographs (texts of between 40K and 60K words in length). Explorations has two series co-editors: Dr Richard Jones, Senior Lecturer in Landscape History at the University of Leicester, and Dr Katrina Navickas, Senior Lecturer in History and Director of the Centre for Regional and Local History at the University of Hertfordshire.

The History pages on our website contain information about previous volumes in both series, extracts and more details about the thinking behind Explorations.

To discuss an idea for either Studies or Explorations please fill in our proposal form (available to download from our website) and email it to the Press publisher, Jane Housham (j.j.housham@herts.ac.uk) or make contact with her by email in the first instance for an informal discussion.

“The University of Hertfordshire Press is establishing a reputation for publishing some of the sharpest works in English local history” – Prof. Oliver Creighton, University of Exeter
English rural society underwent fundamental changes between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries with urbanisation, commercialisation and industrialisation producing new challenges and opportunities for inhabitants of rural communities. However, our understanding of this period has been shaped by the compartmentalisation of history into medieval and early-modern specialisms and by the debates surrounding the transition from feudalism to capitalism and landlord-tenant relations. Inspired by the classic works of Tawney and Postan, this collection of essays examines their relevance to historians today, distinguishing between their contrasting approaches to the pre-industrial economy and exploring the development of agriculture and rural industry, changes in land and property rights, and competition over resources in the English countryside.

Custom was a contested set of rules based upon historical precedent which governed the behaviour of village communities, and a key theme of Tawney’s *Agrarian Problem* was the ‘struggle between custom and competition’. This collection of essays reconsiders the role of custom in medieval and early-modern England by arguing that it often facilitated the commercialisation of rural society in this period rather than hindering it. The book has an intentionally broad chronological span, ranging from the thirteenth century to the eighteenth, exploring the interactions between custom and commercialisation during a key period in the economic development of English rural society.


**A. T. Brown** is an Addison Wheeler Fellow at Durham University.  
**James P. Bowen** is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Liverpool.
Poor Relief and Community in Hadleigh, Suffolk, 1547–1600
Marjorie Keniston McIntosh
ISBN 978-1-907396-92-2; September 2013; Paperback; £18.99/$37.95

“This remarkable local study will be of interest to a large number of both local and national historians” – Prof Richard M. Smith, Emeritus Professor of Historical Geography and Demography, University of Cambridge

Bread and Ale for the Brethren: The provisioning of Norwich Cathedral Priory, 1260-1536
Philip Slavin
ISBN 978-1-907396-63-2; September 2012; Paperback; £18.99/$37.95

“A highly complex work which interweaves theory with detailed research... This is a strongly recommended resource” – The Historical Association online

A Prospering Society: Wiltshire in the later Middle Ages
John Hare
ISBN 978-1-902806-85-3; February 2012; Paperback; £18.99/$37.95

“Not least of the many accomplishments of this masterly book is Dr Hare’s vivid portrayal of a restless society, an era of opportunity for innovative entrepreneurs, and a dynamic and fluctuating economy” – Sarum Chronicle

Out of the Hay and into the Hops: Hop cultivation in Wealden Kent and hop marketing in Southwark, 1744-2000
Celia Cordle
£18.99/$37.95

Winner of the inaugural Hasted Prize for a thesis on Kent history.
‘Ancient woodland’ is a term widely used in England for long-established semi-natural woods, shaped by centuries of traditional management. As an official designation, it describes woods which have existed since the early seventeenth century, and which today contain a distinctive range of plants which find it hard to colonise more recently wooded ground. Such woods are often assumed to provide a direct link with the natural vegetation of England, as this existed before the virgin forests were fragmented by the arrival of farming.

This groundbreaking study questions many of these assumptions. Drawing on more than a decade of research in Norfolk, the authors emphasise the essentially unnatural character of ancient woods. Their distinctive ecological characteristics only emerged after they had been enclosed from the surrounding ‘wastes’ in early medieval times, and began their career as factories for the production of wood and timber. Since then they have been dynamic environments, changing in response to wider economic trends and demographic pressures: and much of their botanical character has been forged by relatively recent history.

_Gerry Barnes_, MBE, is a researcher at the University of East Anglia, studying the history of trees and woodlands in eastern England.

_Tom Williamson_ is Professor of Landscape History at the University of East Anglia.

“*A compelling narrative, with the power to change the way you see the world around you*”
– _British Archaeology_

“In this superbly researched study, things are not quite as they seem down in the dark, dark wood...” – _Eastern Daily Press_

“Essential reading for anyone concerned with the recording and understanding of ancient woodland, as well as those interested in the history of the countryside more broadly”
– _Chartered Forester_
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John T. Baker

Cambridge and its Economic Region, 1450–1560
John S. Lee

From Hellgill to Bridge End: Aspects of economic and social change in the Upper Eden Valley, 1840–95
Margaret E. Shepherd

A Hertfordshire Demesne of Westminster Abbey: Profits, productivity and weather
Derek Vincent Stern and Chris Thornton
Vol. 1: no longer available
Joan Thirsk was the leading English agrarian historian of the late 20th century. Perhaps best known for her research into regional farming, she also wrote much about rural industry, changing tastes and fashions, and innovations in the rural economy. This book is based on a conference held in her honour (following her death in 2013) that was intended not to look back but rather to identify Joan Thirsk’s relevance for historians now, and to present new work that has been influenced and inspired by her. Some of the contributors are scholars who knew Joan, and as students were taught and supervised by her; others are younger people who know of her ideas from her publications.

Joan Thirsk’s agrarian research revealed rural England to be a rich mosaic of distinct farming regions, each with its own way of working the land. It had been supposed that, before the Agricultural Revolution, peasants were dull conservatives who resisted innovation and had to be forced into modernity. Thirsk’s work, by contrast, highlighted farmers’ ability to respond to the demands of consumers and the capacity of industries to satisfy changing fashions, such as the vogue for knitted stockings.

The contributors to this book have been inspired by Joan Thirsk’s revelation of a lively, varied and developing rural scene, and pursue themes that extend her pioneering work in new ways. Their chapters on regional differences, farming methods, conflicts over the use of land, shopping opportunities, fashion and consumption resonate with each other and present fresh insights into a world that was undergoing transformation well before the Agricultural Revolution.

Richard Jones is Senior Lecturer in Landscape History in the Centre for English Local History at Leicester University.

Christopher Dyer is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Leicester.
Further volumes in the Explorations series

From the Deer to the Fox: The Hunting Transition and the Landscape, 1600–1850
Mandy de Belin
Vol. 6: ISBN 978-1-909291-04-1; May 2013, 192pp; Paperback; £14.99/$29.95

“It is a thought-provoking collection of essays, each of which draws on different aspects of Everitt’s original thesis, presents new research and opens up further avenues of enquiry” – The Local Historian

The County Community in seventeenth-century England and Wales
Edited by Jacqueline Eales and Andrew Hopper

“It is a thought-provoking collection of essays, each of which draws on different aspects of Everitt’s original thesis, presents new research and opens up further avenues of enquiry” – The Local Historian

Thorps in a Changing Landscape
Paul Cullen, Richard Jones and David N. Parsons

“an important contribution to a recent and very welcome trend which brings together place-name specialists ... with archaeologists and landscape historians ... [a] complex and subtle body of interdisciplinary work” – Oxonensia

Deserted Villages Revisited
Edited by Christopher Dyer and Richard Jones

“Almost every paper has something challenging and exciting to say ... a valuable book for all concerned with the development of the British landscape” – Landscape History
Assembling Enclosure: Transformations in the rural landscape of post-medieval north-east England
Ronan O’Donnell
£14.99/$29.95

The landscape history of North-East England has not been studied as much as other parts of the country. This book begins to fill this gap by utilizing Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to re-assess the familiar topics of enclosure and improvement. The theory attempts to explain how actors in a network take the shape that they do by virtue of their relations with one another. It reveals the contribution of these local ‘actors’ – including landowners, tenants and the landscape itself – to these ‘processes’. In so doing it transforms our understanding of the way in which the landscape of Northumberland was created during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and carries wider implications for how we might approach enclosure in other parts of the country.

For the first time, the case studies in this book break enclosure down into its constituent processes – the abolition of common rights, the creation of ring-fence farms, the rearrangement of land-use patterns, settlement dispersal, and agricultural improvement. Each is examined in detail, showing them to be the product of particular ‘assemblages’ of local circumstances rather than the inevitable outcomes of enclosure itself. The important role played by tenant farmers is also highlighted for the first time.

Making use of rich archival sources, Ronan O’Donnell reconstructs changes to the landscapes of five townships (Learmouth, Milfield, Howick, Longhorsley and Elsdon) in unprecedented detail. In doing so, he is able to demonstrate that many events often attributed to enclosure, such as farm consolidation and agricultural improvement, were in fact more complex processes contingent upon local conditions.

The Self-Contained Village? The social history of rural communities, 1250–1900
Edited by Christopher Dyer
Vol. 2: no longer available

Landscapes Decoded: The origin and development of Cambridgeshire’s medieval fields
Susan Oosthuizen
Essex Publications

This new series aims to publish important scholarly studies on the historic county of Essex in attractive and well-illustrated volumes. The history of Essex is both long and intricately patterned, and the series will reflect that complexity by addressing both a chronologically long time span, from the prehistoric to the 20th century, and a wide variety of themes, for example social, economic, cultural, environmental, architectural and military.

Books in the series will include individual monographs, collected studies and conference proceedings. They may encompass material on the whole county of Essex or on specific areas or places, but the content and analysis will always address topics of wider historical interest and debate.

Essex Publications are available from all good bookshops in Essex as well as from online retailers and direct from UH Press.

Invitation for proposals
Potential authors are invited to complete the standard UH Press book proposal form and submit it to the Editorial Panel of the series through UH Press. Informal approaches are also most welcome and should be addressed in the first instance to Dr Chris Thornton: c.c.thornton@btinternet.com

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H. Martin Stuchfield, FSA, JP, Essex Society for Archaeology and History
Dr Herbert Eiden, Victoria County History of Essex
Dr Christopher Starr, FSA, FRHistS, Essex Society for Archaeology and History
Under Fire
Essex and the Second World War 1939–1945
Paul Rusiecki

*Under Fire* is a meticulous study of the impact of total war on the civilian population of Essex between 1939 and 1945. Paul Rusiecki examines how people coped with the immense stress caused by heavy bombing, the fear of invasion and other anxieties whilst so much was demanded of them by the authorities.

The book brings into focus the social, economic, political and religious strains caused by the war as well as the successes and failures of their own government and the actions of both allies and enemies.

The experience of war also encompasses aspects that are at odds with traditional views of wartime Britain and the so-called ‘Dunkirk spirit’. Faced with the most appalling circumstances, most nonetheless found ways of keeping their spirits up. Above all, this is the story of how the people of Essex survived the most extraordinary challenges they had ever faced, ultimately emerging with a sense of having earned the right to eradicate the gross inequalities that had marred society for so long.


The Medieval Essex Soldier: Recruitment, war and remembrance in the 14th Century
Edited by Christopher Thornton, Jennifer Ward and Neil Wiffen
New research into fourteenth-century soldiers at all social levels in the specific context of the county of Essex. Due spring 2017.

Prostitution in Victorian Colchester: Controlling the uncontrollable
Jane Pearson and Maria Rayner
This detailed study explores the lives of Colchester’s nineteenth-century prostitutes: what were the routes into and out of prostitution in this garrison town, and how did authority in its many guises approach the moral and practical issues involved? Due spring 2017.
Hertfordshire Publications

For its highly respected books on Hertfordshire history, UH Press shares an imprint with the Hertfordshire Association for Local History: Hertfordshire Publications. The list includes key works that underpin historical research in the county such as our *Historical Atlas*.
The title of this book is taken from Ebenezer Howard’s visionary tract *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. Published in 1898 as a manifesto for social reform via the creation of Garden Cities, it proposed a new way of providing cheap and healthy homes, workplaces and green spaces in cohesive new communities, underpinned by radical ideas about collective land ownership. While Howard’s vision had international impact, in this book planning historian Stephen Ward honours the special place that Hertfordshire occupies on the peaceful path, beginning with the development of Letchworth and Welwyn Garden Cities. Both were established with Howard’s personal involvement and slowly achieved most of his aims.

Stephen Ward recounts in detail how the New Towns programme was created by the post-war British Government as an alternative way of realising Howard’s vision. Although state involvement was not what Howard had wanted, the new approach overcame financial problems to allow faster development while maintaining the principle of collective (though no longer local) land ownership. Hertfordshire was once again in the vanguard with bold and imaginative New Towns that met real social needs being created at Stevenage and Hemel Hempstead as well as at Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City.

By 2011, over a quarter of Hertfordshire’s population lived in its Garden Cities and New Towns. Nowhere else in the UK, or indeed the world, came so close to Howard’s dream. And today’s politicians, faced with a severe housing shortfall and rampant property prices in London and other ‘hotspots’, are again turning to the idea of the Garden City. Howard’s vision endures.

Stephen V. Ward is Professor of Planning History at Oxford Brookes University. He is a former President of the International Planning History Society and was for several years Editor of the international academic journal, *Planning Perspectives*. He has produced several books on twentieth-century planning, including *The Garden City: Past, Present, Future* (Routledge, 1992).
An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire
Edited by David Short
ISBN 978-0-9542189-6-6; May 2011, 224pp; Paperback; £25/$50
With over eighty full-colour maps (plus a fold-out parish map) and accompanying articles, the Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire contains an immense amount of research which is invaluable to all those with an interest in the history of Hertfordshire. Arranged thematically, it guides the reader through geology, geography and topography, administrative organisation, buildings, transport and communications, demography, settlement, agriculture, industry and trade, landscape, religion, welfare, war and civil unrest.

“The atlas is first-rate. The supporting texts are excellent, frequently providing significant analysis as well as guidance to the sources. The production values are high. This work is one of the best of the county historical atlases” — Archives Journal

Hertfordshire: A landscape history
Anne Rowe and Tom Williamson
ISBN 978-1-909291-00-3; June 2013, 352pp; Pb; £18.99/$37.95
Anne Rowe and Tom Williamson have produced an authoritative new study, based on their own extensive fieldwork and documentary investigations, as well as on the wealth of new research carried out over recent decades by others – both into Hertfordshire specifically, and into landscape history and archaeology more generally. Lavishly illustrated with colour maps and photographs, this authoritative work will be invaluable reading for all those with an interest in the history, archaeology and natural history of Hertfordshire.

“a deep first-hand familiarity with Hertfordshire; sound scholarship; and instant accessibility” — Medieval Settlement Research Group

“A comprehensive analysis of the landscape of one of the country’s perhaps least closely regarded counties” — Landscapes

A Caring County?
Social Welfare in Hertfordshire from 1600
Edited by Steven King and Gillian Gear
ISBN 978-1-909291-12-6; November 2013, 368pp; Paperback; £16.99/$33.95
This comparative study gathers together new research by local historians into aspects of welfare in Hertfordshire spanning four centuries and focusing on towns and villages across the county. With chapters on madhouses, workhouses, certified industrial schools, the Foundling Hospital, pensions and medical care, the book covers a very broad range of topics through which a complex picture emerges.

“a collection of very well researched topics that go way beyond the normal scope of surveys of the treatment of the poor” — The Local Historian
Hertfordshire has an unusually rich and diverse milling heritage. As well as its long tradition of corn milling, the county once enjoyed a reputation for the milling of a variety of other products, including pioneering papermaking in the west of the county, gunpowder and small arms in the east, and also silk and cotton. There are records of 110 watermills and 71 windmills in Hertfordshire but little physical evidence of most of them remains today.

Of the few that do survive, eight are accessible to the public and offer unique insights into the past. Heavily illustrated with both historic and contemporary photographs, this book acts as an invaluable guide to these mills and also provides a comprehensive gazetteer of all known Hertfordshire mills, whether extant, in ruins or demolished. Many of the watermill sites pre-date Domesday Book, and for many centuries milling continued more or less unchanged. Then, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, radical changes took place that fundamentally altered and finally destroyed whole sectors of the milling industry.

In recounting the social and economic history of all the varieties of milling in the county, Hugh Howes focuses on key advances in technology and the opportunities brought about by improved transport. Proximity to London helped the Hertfordshire mills to thrive but also undermined them – when the major corn exchanges were established in the City of London and when vast quantities of imported grain began to arrive at the capital’s docks. The success with which individual millers were able to meet these challenges determined whether or not they survived. Moving away from the vagaries of wind and water by switching to steam power and, ultimately, electricity was one of the keys to prosperity, while up-to-date equipment and good access to both imported grain and expanding markets were also to prove crucial.

This is a highly engaging account of a long-established commercial activity that touches on many important aspects of our history, both locally and nationally.

Hugh Howes is the author of The Windmills and Watermills of Bedfordshire (2009). A Chartered Town Planner, his career has extended from local government to the Environment Agency and he has specialised in strategic planning for water.
Hertfordshire has a rich heritage of archaeology and of archaeological research. The Iron Age remains at St Albans, Wheathampstead and Braughing are well-known, as are the Roman town of Verulamium and the villa sites at Lockleys, Dicket Mead and Park Street.

The close collaboration of professional archaeologists and highly skilled avocational groups has long been a hallmark of archaeology in Hertfordshire. This volume celebrates that tradition. It grew out of the 2012 conference, Recent Archaeological Work in Hertfordshire, organised by Welwyn Archaeological Society to recognise the achievements of its founder, Tony Rook, on his eightieth birthday. The fifteen papers collected here focus on various aspects of the archaeology of Hertfordshire, from the Neolithic to the post-Medieval periods, and include a report on the important excavations at Norton, which expands our understanding of the Neolithic in Hertfordshire.

All of the papers in the volume follow Tony Rook’s example by linking a focus on the local scene with an understanding of wider issues in each period. The papers are, therefore, of importance beyond the boundaries of the county and will be of interest to scholars with wide-ranging interests.

Tony Rook and his wife Merle came to Welwyn in 1960 and, with a team of dedicated volunteers, they founded the Welwyn Archaeological Society and set to work recording and excavating threatened sites throughout central Hertfordshire. Tony ran the Welwyn Archaeological Society until 2009 and is author of many books on the county including A History of Hertfordshire and Welwyn and Welwyn Garden City Through Time.

Kris Lockyear is a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL and is the current director of WAS.
Much has been written about the men who left to fight in the First World War but what was life really like for those left behind on the Home Front? A bustling market town profoundly touched by the war, St Albans is the perfect place of which to ask this question, thanks in part to the survival of exceptionally rich archives of records from the period.

In 1914 St Albans had a population of over 24,000 people. Within days of the outbreak of war, with all the emotion and upheaval that entailed, the town also had to adjust to the arrival of more than 7,000 soldiers for whom billets needed to be found. This book considers the social changes that took place as St Albans became a garrison town for the first time in centuries.

In the early decades of the twentieth century St Albans had a diverse economy. Along with the established straw-hat-making factories and silk mills, other light industry had been introduced more recently, notably printing and clothing manufacture. There was contrasting prosperity and poverty, with slum housing conditions for many of the workers. As taxes increased and the Army ceaselessly looked to recruit more men, every enterprise fought to survive. The registers and minutes of the St Albans Military Services Tribunal, which, unusually, were not destroyed after the war, have allowed the authors to explore the conflicting needs of the military and local businesses. From early 1916, the Tribunal heard applications from 1,050 men for exemption from conscription, including 24 conscientious objectors.

As the war went on, maintaining a regular and constant supply of food for the nation became ever more challenging. Shortages and complaints about unfair distribution led to the introduction of rationing in 1918 and queues became a fact of life. How was St Albans fed?

A team of 21 historians have contributed to this book, working under the auspices of the St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society. Established in 1845, the Society is dedicated to promoting interest in the rich and diverse history of the city and surrounding district.
The Wicked Lady
Revisiting the novel and the legend

The story of the Wicked Lady remains one of Hertfordshire’s best known pieces of folklore, persisting in numerous ways. A pub called ‘The Wicked Lady’ stands today at the end of Ferrers Lane, on Nomansland Common between Wheathampstead and Harpenden – according to legend, the site of Katherine Ferrers’ fatal shooting. The story is frequently mentioned in popular accounts of local folklore and history, many of these obviously influenced by the fictionalised versions of the story. Rowland Hughes’ introduction to Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton provides readers with a detailed account of the life of the historical Katherine Ferrers, explaining why it is unlikely that she was really a highwaywoman. It goes on to discuss the life and work of the author, Magdalen King-Hall, drawing on personal interviews with her son.

The Margaret Lockwood film is revered as a classic of British cinema, arguably the best of Gainsborough’s hugely popular series of costume melodramas of the 1940s. The novel which inspired the film, however, has fallen into obscurity until now. We intend to redirect attention towards this fascinating text, shedding new light on a story that is superficially familiar to many people in the county and beyond.

To find supplementary materials to complement the reading and study of the novel, and a virtual space in which readers may interact with the editor Rowland Hughes, visit http://www.herts.ac.uk/uhpress

Book Club Offer
Get a 20% discount when you order 5 or more copies of Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton. See our website for details.
Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton
Magdalen King-Hall
with notes and an introduction by Rowland Hughes

First published in 1944, Magdalen King-Hall’s *Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton* is a historical novel set in late-seventeenth-century England. It tells the story of Barbara Skelton, a well-born young woman trapped in a loveless marriage, who finds escape from the tedium of her life by leading a double life as a highway robber. Rich in historical detail and high on melodrama, the novel follows Barbara’s infamous career of robbery, adultery and murder, without painting her entirely as a monster. Indeed, the novel’s status as a best-seller owes much to King-Hall’s sympathetic depiction of the frustrations of domestic life for an ambitious, intelligent woman with no means of self-expression.

The book was inspired by the legend of Katherine Ferrers, who reputedly terrorised the highways of the county of Hertfordshire during the 1650s. In turn, King-Hall’s novel was itself quickly adapted into the classic British film *The Wicked Lady*, produced by Gainsborough Studios in 1945, starring Margaret Lockwood, Patricia Roc and James Mason.

In his critical introduction to this new edition of *Life and Death of the Wicked Lady Skelton*, Rowland Hughes relates the novel to the legend, and to the popularity of women’s historical fiction in the 1940s. He explains the success of both novel and film by considering how a story of female empowerment, sexual promiscuity and cross-dressing spoke powerfully to a contemporary audience just emerging from the Second World War.

**Rowland Hughes** is a Principal Lecturer in English Literature and American Studies at the University of Hertfordshire. He has previously published work on American Literature, and on British and American film.
Entertainment, Propaganda, Education: Regional theatre in Germany and Britain between 1918 and 1945
Anselm Heinrich
ISBN 978-1-902806-75-4
March 2008; Paperback
£14.99/$29.95

Lilian Baylis: A biography
Elizabeth Schafer
ISBN 978-1-902806-64-8
April 2007; Paperback
£8.99/$16.95

Jinnie Schiele
August 2005; Paperback
£12.99/$24.95

Oxford Playhouse: High and low drama in a university city
Don Chapman
ISBN 978-1-902806-87-7
March 2009, 368pp; Paperback
£9.99

The Politics of the Pantomime: Regional identity in the theatre, 1860–1900
Jill A. Sullivan
ISBN 978-1-902806-89-1
June 2011; Paperback
£14.99/$29.95
The History of the Prince of Wales’s Theatre, London, 1771-1903
Richard L. Lorenzen

In 1771 a new concert hall was built on a plot of land just off London’s Tottenham Court Road. Amateur theatricals staged there soon aroused the hostility of the Patent Theatre managers, keen to protect their monopoly. The hall was refitted as a theatre in 1810 and for more than seventy years the theatre was a busy place of entertainment for the neighbourhood and beyond. It underwent several name changes but is best known today as the Prince of Wales’s.

In the early decades audiences’ insatiable appetite for variety meant bills dominated by lurid melodrama, pantomime, nautical drama and farce. Success was often elusive and changes in management frequent. In the 1860s, however, the intimate theatre proved the perfect space for the development of realistic drama and the theatre became a fashionable destination for London theatregoers. This book gives a detailed account of the hundreds of artists, including Marie Wilton, Squire Bancroft and Ellen Terry, who appeared at the playhouse as well as recording the notable variety of productions on the playbills.

“This book is a valuable addition to our knowledge of one of London’s small, but important playhouses – a theatre which had good and bad times but which also saw important nineteenth century changes within its walls” — Theatres Magazine

Lena Ashwell: Actress, patriot, pioneer
Margaret Leask

From her first appearance on stage in 1891 to the end of her life, Lena Ashwell (1869–1957) was determined to make the theatre accessible and relevant to everyone. An inspiring and strong woman, she was crucial both for the advancement of women in the English theatre and for the formation of the National Theatre.

Margaret Leask’s book skilfully presents Ashwell in the historical and cultural contexts in which she worked and which she helped to transform. Immaculately researched, abundantly illustrated and lucidly written, this biography is the first book-length treatment of its subject and will be the definitive account for many years to come.

“A great read and a thorough telling of Lena Ashwell’s career and motivations” — On-Stage: journal of Theatre Heritage Australia
Further titles from our Theatre Studies list

**Selling Shakespeare to Hollywood: The marketing of filmed Shakespeare adaptations from 1989 into the new millennium**
Emma French
ISBN 978-1-902806-51-8; February 2006, 224pp; Pb; £16.99/$29.95

“Emma French has taken on apparent opposites – Hollywood and Shakespeare – and successfully sealed them together in this richly researched book” — Melvyn Bragg

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