
THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE

Theatre history ; --- where to start ?

If you look at primitive cultures in Africa and south America you find that many civilisations have traditional dances that have been passed down from their ancestors. These are in essence a form of street theatre. In the early days of man some 3. 5 million years ago did they tell stories of how they fought the ancient crocodiles or the great battles of various tribes. The answer is we will never know. Thus we will look at the written word and the known productions in the ancient and modern theatre.

BC

- 10C bc Evidence found of Dance dramas in Egypt and the Hittite Empire while in India dance companies were being encouraged in the temples.
- 8 C bc Secular theatrical entertainment in India and drama was introduced into festivals of agriculture in Greece. The Greeks also added dance as well as drama to their religious festivals.
- 6 C bc The Greek Poet THESPIS was said to have been born at this time in the Deme district of Icaria and is considered to have been the the first actor in Greek Drama and the inventor of Tragedy. He is the first recorded thespian to stage a drama at the City of Dionysia (c534bc) and is attributed with mixing speech and musical chorus together when his character talked to the leader of the chorus (Choragus) according to Aristotle. Thespis is also credited with the first Theatrical Tour as before this time players had been at one theatre venue only and not moved from town to town with a play.
- 5 C bc Greek Plays performed at Athens. The Festival of the god Dionysus, a three day public (600 bc) festival. The plays were performed in the open air in theatres built into the side of hills, they consisted of an acting area surrounded by stone seating backed by permanent architectural settings. The festivals had competitions to decide who wrote the best plays. During the day the plays were tragedies while in the evening or late afternoon a comedy was performed. The seating of the theatre was in segments. The men of the audience sat in the main body of the auditorium with the boys sitting on blocks of seats specially reserved for them, while the women sat at the back of the seating near the top of the rake. The seating was patrolled by men with staffs as on numerous occasions fights broke out. A poor quality play would be hissed off stage along with a bombardment of fruit being hurled towards the actors. Just before the actual stage was a space known as the Orchestra. This was occupied by the chorus of about 15 men. (all cast members were Male).
- c 490 bc The earliest surviving play was written it was "The Suppliant Woman" by Aeschylus (525 -456 BC). It was about the relationship between man and the Gods. It was performed by two people and a chorus and is considered to be the first to do so as previously the plays were performed by a single actor again with a chorus. AESCHYLUS was born in Eleusis and fought against the Persians at Marathon, and he died in Sicily in 456 bc.
- c 458 bc Aeschylus produced the first three play tragedy "Oresteia". It consisted of the plays "Agamemnon", The "Choephoroi", and the "Eumenides" and were about Agamemnon's family's offences against the Gods.
- c 442 bc Sophocles (490 - 406BC) wrote Antigone. SOPHOCLES was responsible for introducing a third actor on stage with the chorus (now slightly diminished)
- c 438 bc Euripides wrote Alcestis his earliest surviving tragedy. EURIPIDES (484- 406BC) was the third of the great tragic poets the others being Sophocles & Aeschylus.
- c 425 bc Sophocles (490 - 406BC) wrote Oedipus Rex.
- c 420 bc The Romans started to put plays into their coliseums as part of the public games and gladiatorial battles. Originally they were Greek plays but soon writers like Terence and Plautus were writing plays for the Romans, based on the Greek stories. Many of the stories had the decapitation of real people in them (Usually slaves). This form of entertainment led to more of the feeding of the slaves to the lion type of entertainment rather than just the

plays.

As Roman theatres began to be built they were usually of a temporary construction and used a raised stage for the actors to appear on. They also eliminated the use of the orchestra for the chorus as more of the plays were for actors only.

With more permanent theatres being built they followed the style of the Greek amphitheatre.

The plays included masked players so that one actor could play more than one role by simply putting on a new mask or a change of costume, something else the Romans introduced..

- c 406 bc Sophocles (490 - 406BC) wrote Oedipus at Colonus which introduced the number of actors to four. He also increased the chorus to fifteen.
- 4 C bc The democratic state paid a small allowance for the poor to attend the performances
The Actors wore masks except the musician who played the "Aulos" (A Double pipe with reeds)
(all cast members were Male)
- c 330 bc Aristotle wrote his "Poetics".
- c 310 bc Greek, Menander introduces "New Comedy". His plays were unlike others in that they didn't have any links with religion and didn't have singers, dancers and a "Chorus".
- c 75 bc The Romans built a theatre at Pompeii.
- c 55 bc Julius Caesar first invaded Britain.
- c 1 to 4bc Between the 1st and 4th Century BC the first known British Actress was put onto a piece of pottery. Her name was "Verecunda" and was described on a piece of redware Pottery found in Leicester as a "Ludia" or Player. This makes her the first known British actress.

AD

- 1st C c 44 AD, The Romans built theatres in Canterbury and Catterick.
AD 72 to AD 81 The Emperor Vespasian paid for the building of the Coliseum in Rome.
At 189 x 156 Meters and 45.7 Meters High (620 x 513 feet and 150 Feet High) the building held 50,000 people who watched Gladiatorial battles and Christian slayings.
- 2nd C c 155 AD, A Roman theatre was built in St Albans and Colchester.
- 3rd C c 200 AD, Tertullian banned the theatre in Britain using the old testament as his excuse.
It was against the bible for actors to dress up as transvestism was not allowed.
- 4th C By 398 AD, Actors had been excommunicated by the whole church.
- 5th C By 410 The Roman legions were leaving Britain.
In 410 Visigoths conquer Rome and close all the Roman theatres. Many performers then take to the road as travelling entertainers. With Visigoths in charge no new theatres were built by the Romans in Europe.
By 438 the new Theodosian code limited the movements and costumes of Actors.
By 450 the Anglo-Saxons had invaded Britain.
- 6th C The Roman theatres started to close due to pressure from the Christian church who was taking over as the main religion in these areas. The Roman plays were about their Gods and so the theatre show changed, firstly with the introduction of Pantomimes by the Romans then eventually to the downfall of the Roman theatre, in favour of Christian festivals.
Theatres in Britain had been built in places like Canterbury, Colchester, St Albans (Known as Verulamium at the time), with smaller amphitheatres at Chester and Newport in Gwent.
They staged plays by Plautus and Terence as well as the early form of Pantomime (See Pantomime file).
At this time in 533 the last theatrical performance took place in Rome and the theatres closed. Many of the old buildings were converted into Gladiatorial venues. The final fall of "Rome" happened in 568 AD.
- 7th C In 605 AD a theatre was built at Yeavinger.
By 686 Christianity had finally converted the whole of England.
- 8th C The Emperor Ming Huang establishes a training school for actors in China in 720 AD, the Pear Garden.
- 8th C By 730 AD The composition of "Beowulf" was written as a poem for public performance.
- 9th C Public playhouses were established in Chinese towns. As with the 8th Century they performed plays about their Gods and ancestors with a patriotic feel to the stories.
By 816 the Council of Aachen forbids clerics to watch theatrical entertainments.
856 AD the Vikings invaded Britain.

MIDDLE AGES

- 10th C The only place in England you could see plays was in a church. Previously street plays were performed along with Pagan rituals but only on certain dates during the year. These were banned by the Church or adopted into Christian festivals like Harvest, Easter and Christmas,

The Church services in the 10th Century were all done in Latin making it impossible for the ordinary person to understand as they did not learn to speak Latin. Eventually the church decided that it should get the priests and choir boys to act out the bible stories so that the uneducated could understand the word of God. Different parts of the church were used to depict various parts of the story, Heaven, Jerusalem, Eden, and of course Hell. The plays were titled "Miracle" plays and are still being performed today in places like Chester's Mystery plays (Available in a book by Maurice Hussey).

The plays became very popular, so much so that they had to be moved outside to be performed on the steps of the church so that more people could see them. As with all things connected with the church of this time as soon as the people started to enjoy themselves they stopped the practice, but only after the population had started selling refreshments and children had started joining in with vocal comments towards the actors on stage.

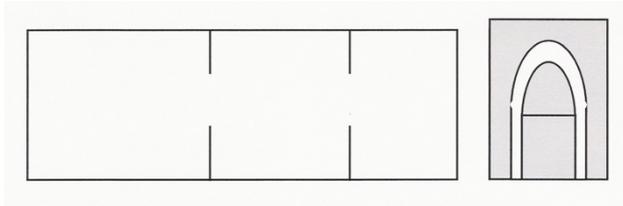
The clergy thought that they were not taking the story or the word of God seriously and dropped the idea. However Craft guilds (Early Trade Union) took over the productions and kept them going presumably to make a profit.

920 AD One of the earliest named trope's were the "Quem Queritis Trope" (Whom do you seek) in 920 AD. They presented plays during the Christian festivals. Plays such as the Easter Play and Christmas plays were becoming part of the tradition of the Church during this time. Early examples of the plays have stage directions on them. This shows that the plays were regularly performed over many years.

The "Officium Pastorum of Christmas" involved actors performing the story of Jesus in the Manger with the visit of the shepherds. The "Ordo Prophetarum of Advent" told the story of the prophets foretelling the coming of the Savior while the "Officium Stellae of the Epiphany" told of the star of Bethlehem that led the visitors of the Magi to the baby Jesus.

NORMAN (1066- 1154)

1066 onwards Norman Churches at the time were being built with a separate Nave, Intermediate chancel and Alter. Sometimes the separation was done with an Archway giving the service a theatrical look. The ceremony of Church was at the time becoming more and more like a theatrical event.



1100 In 1100 the longest surviving example of a "Non-Liturgical religious drama" written in a Norman French language was written, it was named the "Babio".

1100-1135 Henry the 1st (King from 1135) hired Rahere as the "Royal Minstrel" becoming one of the most well known of his profession.

At this time the French had set up a "School of Minstrels" or "Scolae Ministrallorum".

At various times court entertainers went to France to learn the new tricks of the trade.

During the Norman period "Jonglers" were also employed as a lesser entertainer. They wandered from castle to castle where they would recite verses to their own musical accompaniment, and performing the "Chansons de Geste" (Narrative poems dealing with stories of French family histories composed between the 11th and 15th Century). The word Juggler comes from these entertainers.

12th C In 1185 the Oxford University was established.

13 - 14 th C Structured plays started to appear in Chinese theatres. These theatres were set up by wealthy aristocratic families in the private houses and brothel districts of the towns.

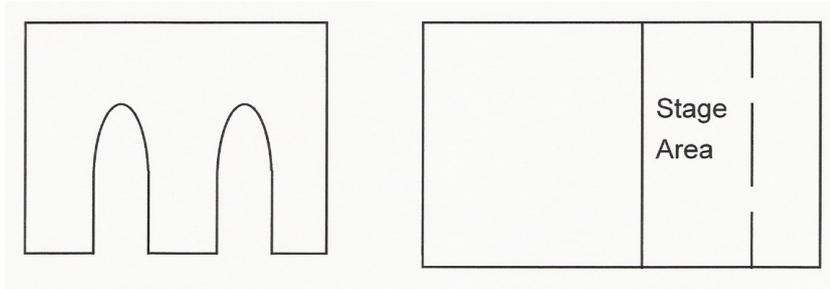
13th C The Pope decreed that there should be an annual "Feast of Corpus Christi" on which the religious plays were performed (See 10th C) An example of this would be the play about "The Creation of Adam and Eve" being performed by the plasterers guild. Each festival had a series of plays from the bible with various guilds performing their designated production on various wagon's called a "Pageant". (See also 15th C)

1290 ad At the wedding of Princess Margaret to John of Brabant, 426 minstrels were engaged to perform during the day. Some of the minstrels were brought over from France and were paid more than the English performers.

- 14th C The 1300's saw the use of "Scenery" in production to re-enact tournaments and stories. At the same time the Herald acted as a "Narrator" for the plays.
- 1300's In the 1300's the Japanese "Noh" plays were developed from Japanese rituals and consisted of Music, Poetry and dance with the actors chanting their lines while moving in a stately way, very slowly. The stage for this type of play consists of a dressing room or back stage area on the Stage Left with a ramp sloping down to the stage from which the actors descend to the acting area.
- 1350-1400 Between the years of the last half of the 1300's the Mystery plays started to appear. Performed round the town they depicted various stories from the Bible. Some like the Chester Cycle or Mystery play are still being performed today, although they were stopped for a while before being revived as a way of getting tourists back into the city. The original Cycle would have been performed on a series of carts that were taken round the town for the various episodes or acts of the production. During this time the York Mystery Cycle was written with 48 episodes each performed at a different location round the city. The Wakefield Cycle had 32 episodes, 5 of which were borrowed from the York Cycle. Chester had a cycle of 25 episode originally but one has been lost so today only 24 are performed in the town. Other Cycles were performed at New Romney in Kent, Skinners Well in Smithfield and in London. (See 1392 for Coventry Cycle & 1371 Cornish Mystery Cycle)
- 1362 In 1362 the first version of "Piers Plowman" appeared.
- c1371 The Cornish Mystery Cycle was performed in permanent theatres in the round rather than on a movable cart. Examples of this Roman like structure have been found at St Just and the Perran Round, this is 130 feet across surrounded by a 12 foot bank of seven tiers of seating, the structure dug into the ground was known as "Plen-an-Gwary" or playing place.
- 1376 In 1376 The first mention of the York Cycle.
- 1385 In 1385 Geoffrey Chaucer's (.b. 1340? .d. 1400) "Troilus and Criseyde" appeared.
- 1392 The first mention of the Coventry Cycle was in 1392. The Coventry cycle of 42 episodes could also have been a touring company known as the "Touring N-Town Cycle" (N = Nomen in Latin, or Name)
- 14th C With the newly formed Grammar Schools it was customary to study plays by the Roman dramatists Publius 'Terence' Afer (c190- 159bc), Plautus (3 - 2 bc) and Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c4 bc- 65ad) they also performed the dramas.
- 15th C During the "Miracle" plays performed during this time (See 10th C & 13th C) there were a series of "Intervals" these were still plays but they were not connected with the religious stories of the 10th Century. The interlude was a short "farce" based on real life situations. The Chester Cycle (Mystery play was first mentioned in 1422. In 1471 the first of the Roman playwright (Publius Terentius .b. c190 .d. 159 BC) Terence's plays was printed In 1476 the Caxton's press opened in Westminster.

TUDOR (1485- 1558)

- Unkn During the Reign of Henry the 8th he increased the number of Choir schools. They would sing at court and other venues. They would later stage plays about morality and Mythical Romance.
- 1494 In 1494 Henry 8th employed four "Players of the King's interludes". He also employed a "Master of Revels" to oversee plays and productions in the Court. In 1545 he made the post a permanent full time position taking in the role of censorship as well.
- 1516 John Rastell wrote the play "Utopia". (see 1526)
- 1518 By 1518 the Greek and Roman plays were being published in English editions. They were also adopted into the School and University syllabuses. Many playwrights were encouraged via the syllabus including Terence (Publius Terentius Afer; c190 -159 BC) (Staged in 1510 at Cambridge) and Plautus (.b. 3rd C to 2 C) (Staged in 1520).
- 1520 -1553 Between 1520 and 1553 many of the halls in the Great houses were being converted into Theatres with left and right entrances placed at the back of the Hall. A fine example of this is at Hampton Court, built about 1535.



- Mid 16th C The first fully professional acting company was formed in Italy. They were called the "Commedia de l'arte" and performed Improvised comic plays.
- 1525 Henry the 8th (King from 1509 to 1547) hired Will Somers as the "Royal Jester" becoming closer than anyone else to the King even more trusted than any of his wives or ministers, managing to outlive them all. He only lost his job when the King died in 1547.
- 1526 John Rastell built the first permanent stage in Finsbury Park, London, half a Century before James Burbage built the Theatre in 1576 at Shoreditch.
- 1535 Henry the 8th suppresses the Church and starts to destroy Monasteries.
- 1540 By 1540 Small schools like Hitchin had their own Dramatic Repertory Company.
- 1543 Henry VIII ordered that theatres were not allowed to perform plays about religion. This was the start of the demise of the Mystery or Cycle plays of the church. (see 1570)
- EDWARD VI (1547- 1553)
- 1550's By the 1550's Oxford and Cambridge Universities had formed their own Dramatic Repertory Company.
- 1551 Edward VI required the licensing of all plays by the King or the Privy Council.

ELIZABETHAN (1558 - 1603) / RENAISSANCE PERIOD (14th C)

- Unkn The Elizabethan theatres included an Apron Stage, where the stage area juts out into the audience area.
- Unkn Two types of theatre existed during the Elizabethan period the Public type (represented by the Globe theatre in London) and the private theatre's like the "Blackfriars" and "Whitefriars".
- Unkn Theatre performancies in the Elizabethan era were announced by a Trumpet being blasted three times from the towers of the theatre.
- Late 1500's During the late 1500's Sunday sports and other forms of entertainment were becoming Taboo. The professional play was able to be performed with the resurgence of interest of the old Roman and Ancient Greek writers.
- During the Late 16th Century Public theatres also were opened in Spain. Like the London theatres of the time the Spanish theatres had no roofs and very few seats.
- PUBLIC THEATRES**
- The Public theatres were round in construction with a yard open to the elements in the middle (No seating), surrounded by Galleries (Enclosed). The yard was for those who paid less, these people were called "Groundlings".
- The theatre also used the "Trap door" facility to allow the devil to enter through the stage. The shows were performed during the day usually starting at about 2pm.
- PRIVATE THEATRES**
- These were rectangular in shape and were more like halls with a permanent stage at one end. There were no standing areas, they had seats in all areas
- 1558 Thomas Kyd was born (1558-1594) he was a great influence on William Shakespeare and wrote such plays as "The Spanish Tragedy".
- 1559 Elizabeth 1st gave the 1551 task of regulating all plays, to the Lord Mayor, Lord Lieutenant or Local Magistrates of the area, rather than the Crown.
- 1564 Christopher Marlow born on the 6 February 1564 (1564- 1593) one of the greatest playwrights of the Elizabethan era with such plays as "The Tragical history of Doctor Faustus" which was still being performed regularly in the 1900's.
- He was murdered on the 30 May 1593 for political reasons in a Tavern brawl
- 1564 Birth of William Shakespeare in Statford on Avon on the 23 April 1564. He died on the 23 April 1616.
- (Some said that William Shakespeare did not write his 37 plays but they were written by various people using the name, including Sir Francis Bacon and Edward de Vere who had

- used the name so that his family didn't find out that he was associated with the theatre, a shameful business)
- 1569 The last performance of the York Cycle.
- 1570 By 1570 the "Mystery plays" were "Censored" out of existence starting with King Henry 8th (King from 1509 to 1547) because they portrayed the word of God and Religious teaching not what he wanted the people to believe. When Elizabeth took over she continued to put restrictions on the type of plays that were performed until they were not able to stage them.
- 1572 Ben (Jamin) Jonson born on the 11 June 1572 (.d. 6 August 1637) writer of comedy plays. He had Shakespeare in one of his original plays.
- 1572 An Act was passed for the punishment of Vagabonds, this included actors. Known as the "Control of Vagrancy act" it also protected "players" as long as they were employed by the Baron of the Realm or any other honourable personage of Greater degree (Lord of the manor etc.).
- 1572 Between 1572 and 1603 while Elizabeth 1st was on the throne women were not allowed to act on stage.
- 1573 Inigo Jones born (1573-1652). He was an English architect and stage designer. In 1605 he joined Prince Harry as his resident designer until 1613. He was the first to use revolving (A Revolving stage) screens to change scenery in seconds. He also introduced the Proscenium arch to England.
- 1573 Up until 1573 Choirs were predominantly made up of young boys. However after this time the Adults in the company started to take over as changes in attitude of the new Queen Elizabeth (Crowned in January 1559) moved away from thoughts of having children of her own to a more realistic expectancy that she will never have an infant of her own. The whole country was in sympathy with Her Majesty and thus children were a prominent part of the entertainment staged in London and the rest of the country. By 1581 the Queen who had formed the "Ipswich Intruders" (made up of children) replaced them with the "Queen Elizabeth's Men" (1st recognised in 1583)
- 1574 James Burbage and the Queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, were given a Royal "Letter Patent" allowing them to perform in London on Weekdays. This opened the pathway to a permanent "Theatre" which Mr Burbage built in 1576.
- 1575 Paul's Boys a group of singers and players found a permanent home within St Paul's Cathedral.
- 1575 Richard Farrant (Master of the Windsor Children, a church choir) started work on converting an old monastery at Blackfriars into a Theatre. (See 1576)
- 1576 The first public theatre was built in Shoreditch (Nr London) about half a mile outside the City of London. The builder was James Burbage who simply named it THE THEATRE. The building was financed by John Brayne.
- 1576 James Burbage also opened the first public theatre at Blackfriars (see Theatre list file) a few months later than his first building (The Theatre) he called it THE CURTAIN. A second building was constructed in 1596 on the same site.
- 1576 The year saw the last performance of the Wakefield Cycle.
- 1579 John Fletcher born (.d. 1625) he formed "The Triumvirate of Wit" with Shakespeare and Johnson.
- 1587 The Rose theatre was built.
- 1587 Edward Alleyn (.b. 1566 .d. 1626) became one of the "Admiral's Men" playing many of the heroes in the plays of Christopher Marlow. In 1592 he married Philip Henslowe's (.d. 1616, owner of the Rose and Fortune theatres) daughter. In 1597. He retired briefly making it a permanent rest from the profession in 1604. He was at the time one of the most popular actors.
- 1592 Francis Langley built The SWANN theatre with a 3,000 capacity.
- 1592 The Plague closed theatres all over the country for two years.
- 1593 Christopher Marlow murdered on the 30 May 1593 for political reasons in a Tavern brawl, possibly promoting atheistic opinions. One of the greatest playwrights of the Elizabethan era he was born in 1564.
- 1597 The Red Lion in Stepney London, built.
- 1597 James Burbage died in the same year that his lease on the THEATRE ran out. His son's Richard (.b. c 1569 .d. 1616) and Cuthbert used the timbers of the original theatre to build the 1st Globe Theatre in 1599. One story is that the land owner wanted the "Theatre" burnt down and James's death, so Barbage's sons secretly dismantled the building one dark December night and reconstructed it over the other side of the River Thames and renamed it

- the "Globe".
- 1597 The Privy Council proclaimed that all theatres should be destroyed by order of the act of Obscure Intent, however its order was not carried out.
- 1599 The Globe theatre built (see 1613, 1614 & 1644) at Bankside on the south bank of the River Thames. It was run by Richard & Cuthbert Burbage it was one of the earliest purpose built theatres and was based in its design on the Inn courtyard as this was where most of the plays at the time were being performed in such venues.
early performances at the Globe were shows called "Masques", these were productions there graceful movement and elegant costumes along with refined speech were considered more important than the actual words of the play.
Writers at the Globe included Ben Jonson (1572 - 1637) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616) (See 1623)
- 1600's The playbill was introduced. This was a small ticket advertising a play production posted to various houses in the 17th Century. The earliest surviving copy of a playbill comes from the 18th century. They gave the sort of details we now find in a programme. As they became larger and larger they became impractical and were dropped in favour of a smaller version of the theatre poster, advertising the very basics of the play. The modern programme was introduced to take over from the playbill in the mid 19th century. By the 1930's the theatre playbill was virtually dropped in favour of Newspaper advertisements but in recent years it has returned as a mail out format to theatre club members etc.
- 1600's The Duke's theatre in Dorset Garden London had an enclosed stage and auditorium it was the first theatre to be lit with oil lamps or candles.**
- Early 1600's The first Picture frame stage opened in Italy along with the first commercial opera house in Venice.
- 1601 A permanent stage was constructed in the Banqueting hall of the Palace of Whitehall on the orders of the Queen.
- 1602 The "Worcester's Men" were first authorised to perform, starting playing at the Rose theatre after the "Admiral's men" moved to the Fortune theatre.
- 1603 In March 1603 theatre's started to close due to the plague in London.
- 1611 William Shakespeare retired from play writing. (See 1616)
- 1613 Globe theatre burnt down (See 1599, 1614 & 1644) after a Cannon was set off during the play "Henry VIII" by William Shakespeare which set fire to the thatched gallery roof of the theatre.
- 1614 Globe theatre rebuilt (See 1599, 1613 & 1644) this time with a tiled roof.
- 1614 The HOPE THEATRE opened by Ben Jonson. It was the last of the "Open Air" or Public / Common playhouses in London. The theatre held a mixture of Bear Bating and play acting as a lot of theatres did at the time. It was rebuilt in 1616.
Previous open air theatres included "The Hope", "Rose", "Fortune", with Public houses converted to theatres like "The Bell and the Cross Keys" in Gracechurch Street, "The Bull" in Bishopsgate, "The Bel Savage" Nr Ludgate Circus, "The Boar's Head" in Whitechapel, "Red Bull" in Clerkenwell (Built in 1604).
- 1615 Cockpit theatre opened.
- 1616 William Shakespeare died on the 23 April 1616 (born 23 April 1564). Ben Jonson said a few years later that "He was not an age, but for all time".
- 1621 Fire at the Fortune theatre.
- 1622 Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière born on the 15 January 1622.
Plays included "Le Missanthrope" (1666), and "Trauffe". (.d. 17 February 1673)
- 1623 William Shakespeare's plays were published in the first folio (Book).
- 1623 1623 was also the year the Fortune theatre was built. (See 1625)
- 1625 2nd Fortune theatre built.
- 1631 John Dryden' was born in 1631 (.d. 1700) he wrote "The Indian Queen" (or "The Indian Emperor") in which Nell Gwynn appeared in at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. In 1667 Nell also appeared in the Breeches part in Drysen's "Secret Love". Between 1663 and 1694 he published about 30 of his own plays.
- 1636-37 Between March 1636 & November 1637 the theatres were closed due to a plague in London.
- 1637 Jacob Van Campen built a theatre in Amsterdam with Dress Circle and Balcony amongst its features. This influenced Christopher Wren when he designed the Dury Lane theatre in 1674.
- 1637 Ben (jamin) Jonson died on the 6 August 1637 writer of comedy plays. He was born in 1572.
- 1642 Civil war began it led to the closure of Theatres (See 1645).
- 1644 Globe theatre demolished

- 1645 HISTORY LESSON The Puritans led by Oliver Cromwell defeated the Royalists of Charles the first. When they took power they called themselves "Puritan". This meant that everything they did was thought to be for the good of the country. This included getting rid of many traditions including Christmas as they were self indulgent and sinful. This also meant that the most sinful things in life were also banned and this included THE THEATRE.
- 1647 Some public acting took place but it was mainly in secret.
- THE COMMONWEALTH & RESTORATION PERIOD
- 1649 With Cromwell in power and the King being in name only he set about banning all forms of entertainment, passing a law to get rid of the theatre. As actors were made redundant they moved from the towns and cities to remote country areas taking with them their props and costumes. Many companies kept performing plays by Shakespeare and Jonson but as it was punishable by imprisonment if you were found performing or watching a play, they had guards watching out to see if the Parliamentary soldiers were approaching. They would then give a warning and the audience and performers would disperse so they were not caught enjoying themselves.
- 1650 One of the most famous mistresses was born in 1650 her name was Nell Gwynne. In 1665 Nell (Eleanor) Gwynne (b. 2 Feb 1650 .d. 14 Nov 1687) appeared in John Dryden's (1631 - 1700) "The Indian Queen" at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane (Catherine St, London). Nell started her career as an Orange seller at the Drury Lane theatre before becoming a favourite with Charles II who had her as his mistress. She retired from the stage in 1669. The daughter of a Covent Garden Brothel madam, she had two children by the King. She was stricken by apoplexy and was partially paralysed when she died at the early age of just 37. She is buried in the Church of St Martin-in-the-fields. The service of committal was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1654 All plays were being suppressed.
- 1656 The Hope theatre was pulled down.
- 1660 With the restoration of Charles II (25 Apr 1660) after the defeat of the Parliamentarians it was thought that he would restore the theatre. He had other ideas and issued orders that limited the amount of companies in London to two "The King's" and "The Duke of York's".
- 1660 Samuel Pepys went to see the play "The Loyal Subject" by Fletcher at the "Blackfriars" theatre with Edward Kynaston (c1640 .d. 1706) as the Duke's sister.
- 1660 English women were not allowed to act on stage for many years since the days of the Roman Occupation. (see c 1 - 4 BC) However in 1660 female "Actresses" were allowed to play parts on the stage for the first time. The first name was unrecorded but she appeared in Shakespeare's Othello at a theatre in Clare Market, London on the 8th December 1660 playing Desdemona.
- 1662 In 1662 Samuel Pepys wrote in his diary about a new character from Italy called "Pollicinella" or "Punchinello". The name was soon changed to Mr Punch, this was the start of the "Punch and Judy Show".
- 1665 Nell (Eleanor) Gwynn (b. 2 Feb 1650 .d. 14 Nov 1687) appeared in John Dryden's (1631 - 1700) "The Indian Queen" (or "The Indian Emperor") at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane (Catherine St, London). In 1667 Nell also appeared in the Breeches part in Dryden's "Secret Love".
- 1670- 82 Between 1670 and 1682 Aphra Behn (b. 1640.d. 1689) the first British woman playwright produced 16 plays. She was born in Kent and brought up in Surinam. At the age of 26 she was widowed. During the Anglo-Dutch wars she worked as a spy. Later she was imprisoned for debt. While serving her sentence she started writing. Her plays included "The Forced Marriage" (1670), "The Rover" (1676), and "The Lucky Chance" (1686).
- 1672 Bridge's Street Theatre destroyed by fire.
- 1673 Jean Baptiste Poquelin Molière Died on the 17 February 1673 after the French playwright and actor collapsed on stage on the third night of the play "Le Malade imaginaire (The Imaginary Invalid)". He was taken home and died of a brain haemorrhage (Burst blood vessel). (b. 15 Jan 1622) He was however not allowed a Christian burial in France as he hadn't, according to the church, Said Sorry for being an Actor. (he was later re buried when the church changed its mind as Actors became more acceptable in society and is now in Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.
- 1674 Christopher Wren built the Drury Lane theatre with the seats arranged in a horseshoe shape with tiers like a wedding cake. It was probably influenced by a theatre in Amsterdam built in 1637.
- 1680's During the slack summer months a system of BENEFIT performances started for actors.

During this time they would stage their own choice of play with the profit from one of the performances going to the senior actor of the company named in the benefit. The award was usually given on the 3rd days performance of the show. A later addition was an authors benefit on the 6th performance and another benefit day was given on the 9th performance of the play.

The first to receive this benefit was Mrs Elizabeth Barry (c1658 .d. 1713) at the Lincoln Inn Fields.

John Rich (.d. 1761) at the Drury lane theatre is said to have given an average of 60 benefits a year between 1696 and 1704.

- 1685 John Gay was born (.d. 1732). He wrote the "Beggars Opera" in 1728 a satire on Robert Walpole's politics
- 1694 The Bank of England was formed to legally issue paper money to help raise funds for the Government and to centralise the finances of the Country. They issued their first £1 note on the 26 Feb 1797. This also meant that the Middle class were becoming more involved in the dictation of economic life including the type of productions being stages.
- 1697 Clergyman John Collier in his book "Short view of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage" wrote about the obscene and immodest changes he would like to change in the theatre. In the second part of the book he attacked the authority of the managers. With more sexual productions being produced prior to the publication of the book the Rev Collier sparked off a debate about the morality of plays, making it more difficult to stage plays like "The London Cockolds" (1681) by Edward Ravenscroft (A Sexual Farce).
- 1700's During the 1700's a paper was published called the "London Stage". Like its modern counterpart published in 1880 it included information about the plays being performed in London at the time.
- 1702 In 1702 at the Drury Lane theatre, John Weaver produced an English version of the Italian Harlequinade shows called "The Tavern Bilkers". This was a show with musical accompaniment is possibly the first true English Pantomime. In 1716 they also produced a Pantomime at Drury lane called "Harlequin Executed".
- 1707 Henry Fielding (1707- 1754) was born. By the mid 1700's his plays were becoming popular as they poked fun at the establishment especially a famous politician of the day. He is famous for creating the book "Tom Jones" but also wrote plays including "The Intriguing Chambermaid", "The Miser" and "The Tragedy of Tragedies or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb".
- 1708 The first published "Histories" of the theatre appeared. The first was called "Roscius Anglicanus" and was written by Thomas Betterton (c1635 .d. 1710) a 17th Century actor. The same year also saw the publication of "Book-Keeper and prompter" by Thomas Downes, both books were about the history of the theatre from the Restoration period up to 1708.
- 1708 This year also saw the first insertion of notices of the Day's plays in London. They appeared in "The Daily Courant" originally published in 1702 it was the first regular London paper.
- 1708 At this time the practice of BILL POSTING started in prominent places. Many early examples of these posters didn't have the year on them, this wasn't added until c1760.
- 1711 George Frideric Handel (.b. Halle in Germany 23 Feb 1685 .d. London 14 Apr 1759) performed his "Rinaldo" an Italian opera on the 24 February 1711 at the Queen's theatre (Later King's theatre) London. This was the start of the popularity of this form of production in England.
Others had staged opera previously but this production captured the publics imagination starting the theatres on the road to more opera than the plays they were previously performing.
- 1717 David Garrick born (1717 - 1779). English actor, theatre manager & dramatist. In 1741 he made his name with a production of Richard III. In 1747 he took over as manager of the Drury Lane theatre in 1774 introducing Pantomimes and other dramatic performances. He finally retired in 1776
In April 1889 W.S. Gilbert opened the "Garrick Theatre" in Charring Cross Road.
- 1720's During the 1720's theatre companies sprang up all over the country to perform plays on a circuit. "The Duke of Norfolk's Servants" and "The Duke of Grafton's Servants" did the Norwich circuit with venues at Bury, Colchester, Ipswich and Yarmouth. The York circuit included Doncaster, Hull, Leeds, Pontefract and Wakefield.
- 1720's During the 1720's actors were not paid for rehearsals. By this time writers were also finding it difficult to get their work published and performed. With no new plays available companies staged earlier pieces saving time with rehearsals and saving money in developing

- new scenery and the expense of staging and developing the production.
- 1720 Sir Richard Steele (.b. 1672 .d. 1729 Playwright) published "the Theatre" an essay on the theatre world.
- 1728 A count of all the professional actors in the country numbered 150. By 1740 there were 300 actors employed. Women numbered 25 to every 35 male actors.
- 1730 Oliver Goldsmith (1730 - 1774) was born. His first play was "The Good Natured Man" with the play "She Stoops to Conquer" in 1773.
- 1731 In the Summer of this year the "Little" theatre staged "The Fall of Mortimer" an updated play based on John Gay's "Beggar's Opera" that the Lord Chamberlain suppressed after only 15 performances, throwing the actor's in Jail and closing the theatre. The "Little" didn't reopen until January 1732..
- 1732 The Theatre Royal theatre opened in Bow Street, Covent Garden, London. It burnt down in 1808 ?
The Theatre Royal was the most luxurious in London during its day. In 1740 Peg Woffington appeared on stage as a man in the play "The Constant Couple" by George Farquhar (1678-1707) scandalising London. David Garrick appeared at the theatre. It also premiered the plays "She Stoops to Conquer" by Oliver Goldsmith and "The Rivals" by R.B. Sheridan. The theatre also included artificial lighting for the first time with candles and oil lamps. (See 1858)
- 1734 Aaron Hill founded "The Prompter" the first magazine devoted to matters of the stage.
- 1735 A new bill was passed limiting the number of London theatres. The act also abolished all playing in the provinces closing all theatres outside the capital.
- 1737 The Lord Chamberlains office was defined by statute: he was made in charge of dispensing licences for new plays and dramatic performances. All new plays and additions to existing plays had to be approved by his office before being performed. (See 1793, 1843, 1968)
It was probably Henry Fielding (.b. 22 April 1707.d. 8 Oct 1754 Writer of "Tom Jones" 1749 and various plays) who spent some time lampooning the government and the Royal family so much that the King set up the Lord Chamberlain's office to censor plays.
On the 21 June 1737 it was Sir Robert Walpole who introduced the Licencing act after reading a political play called "The Golden Rump". The act also prohibited the performance of theatricals in all area's outside London. In many areas this order was ignored.
The act terminated Henry Giffard's career at "Lincoln's Inn Fields" as well as Henry Fielding's (.b. 22 Apr 1707 .d. 8 Oct 1754) contract at the "Little".
- 1740 Peg Woffington appeared on stage as a man in the play "The Constant Couple" by Farquhar (see 1732)
- 1745 The National Anthem was performed for the first time during a performance at the Drury Lane Theatre, London on the 28th of September in response to the threat from 'The Young Pretender, Bonnie Prince Charlie'. It was then played at the beginning or the end of every performance until the end of the 1960's when patriotism started to leave the theatre profession.
Some Amateur Societies used the National Anthem right up until the 1990's before it became out of fashion.
- 1749 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (.b. 28 Aug 1749 .d. 22 Mar 1896).
German playwright who wrote "Faust" (1808) which was written in two parts the second half was completed in 1831. For a bet he once wrote a full length play in a week.
- 1744 Fleetwood tried to raise the price of tickets at the Drury lane theatre to pay off his debts. Unfortunately the public did not agree with the charges and started riots, leading to him having to revert back to the old price.
- 1750 The first permanent theatre was built in Bath (Oxford Street) despite the ban of 1737. After a lengthy campaign the theatre received a Royal Patent in 1768. With the new patent being awarded it opened the floodgates for other theatres to get Royal patronage including the theatre's at Norwich (1768) and York (1769). Over the next twenty years theatres opened in Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol and Newcastle. Royal residences at Brighton, Windsor and Richmond were also converted into theatres with a new licence from the Lord Chamberlain.
- 1751 Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751 - 1816) born . His most famous play School for Scandal was written in 1777.
- 1752 An Act of Parliament required the licensing of all sorts of entertainment, striking a mortal blow for Fairground theatres in the Metropolis. Any theatre within twenty miles of London in theory could obtain a licence from the local Magistrates so long as they didn't infringe on the

- monopoly of the Patent Houses at Covent Garden and Drury Lane etc.
 The act also hoped to stop the London theatres from becoming a "Disorderly house".
- 1761 John Rich Actor manager at Drury Lane died.
- 1766 The Bristol Old Vic opened. It is the oldest surviving playhouse.
- 1775 The word Mélodrame (Melodrama) was first used by Rousseau to describe his technique in Pygmalion.
- 1788 A new act empowered local Magistrates to grant their own licences for theatrical seasons not exceeding 60 days.
- 1793 Theatre managers were so desperate for business that they put on a 5 act tragedy, a comedy and a pantomime in one evening's entertainment.
- 1793 A licensing act was passed restricting the number of theatres in London to two "The Drury Lane" and "Covent Garden". The act also meant that all stage performances were to be censored by the Lord Chamberlains office. (See 1737, 1843, 1968)
- 1809 John Philip Kemble who had taken over management at the rebuilt National Theatre in Covent Garden was by now in financial difficulties due to the cost of the rebuild. To meet the rising costs he decided to raise the cost by putting up the price of tickets. This caused what was known as the "Old Price" Riots (or OP Riots) which took 66 days before Kemble gave in. The riots were in effect demonstrations, Patrons with special badges, Banners, Hats, an "OP" dance, and a OP version of the National Anthem all designed against the price increase. (see 1744 when Fleetwood tried to raise ticket prices at the Drury Lane theatre).
- REGENCY PERIOD (1810 - 1820)
- 1800's In the 1800's they invented the "Diorama". This was a long backcloth wrapped onto two rollers and had a continuous scene painted on it. This would then be moved from one roller to another giving the impression of a moving scene.
- 1800's The role now known as the Director of a production was known in the 1800's as the person who Stage Managed (Stage Manager / Stage Manager) the show.
- 14 Mar 1805 Master William Betty played "Hamlet" for the first time at the age of 14. His performance was so good that the Houses of Commons was adjourned to allow members to see him perform. His success was short lived and soon he was being hissed off stage.
- 1810-20 PENNY THEATRES These were London Theatres who for a small fee allowed amateurs to play the parts they wished. First known as "Dukeys" the earliest was behind the Westminster Theatre in the Broadway.
- 1810- 1860's Toy theatres started to come into vogue. They were made up of cardboard and had cut out wings and backdrops they also had cut out actors so you could perform your favourite play. Many were made during this time including some made by Benjamin Pollock's company in London a firm that continues through to 1966 and onwards. They even had some examples in their toy museum. Originals sold for one penny in black and white or if they were coloured they cost two pence.
- 1814 For nearly half a Century ticket prices were halved when entry to the theatre was at 8pm or 8.30pm during the interval. As the performances usually started at 6pm it was the rich who paid for the full show with the poor preferring to turn up for the second half only at a reduced price. By 1814 the theatres were putting on a full 4 or 5 hours worth of entertainment.
- 1817 The Drury Lane theatre used gas lighting for the first time. Firstly in the front of house area's followed in 1819 with lighting on the stage.
- 1818 The new Olympic Theatre used Gas lighting on stage for the first time.
- 1818 The Royal Coburg Theatre was built in Waterloo Road, London. In 1833 it was renamed the "Royal Victoria" and gained the nick name "Old Vic". In 1880 it was taken over by Miss Emma Cons as a temperance (Abstinence especially from Alcohol) music hall under the name "Royal Victoria Hall and Coffee Tavern". Miss Cons put on a mixture of Music, lectures, films and opera.
- In 1914 Emma Cons started a Shakespeare season with all 33 of his plays from his first folio being performed between then and 1923. The theatre became the first in the World to have staged all of Shakespeare's plays. In 1940 the theatre was bombed. The theatre's drama company continued at the New theatre, London until the "Old Vic" had been rebuilt in 1950. In 1963 The National theatre company under the direction of Laurence Olivier moved into the theatre. Negotiations with the National company led to the dissolving of the "Old Vic" Company as they joined Lord Olivier at the new South Bank theatre in 1976.
- 1819 On the 16 August 1819 during riots at Peterloo in Manchester the government troops opened fire killing 11 in what became known as the Peterloo Massacre. This attack against the poor

for trying to get better pay and conditions effected conditions through out the country, even making ticket prices unavailable to the poor causing poor attendance at all the theatres in Britain.

- 1827 A list of theatres in 1827 noted there were 41 provincial Managements on the circuit with 8 strolling companies.
- 1906 Henrik (Johan) Ibsen Norwegian playwright born on the 20 March 1828. (.d. 23 May 1906) His plays included "A Doll's House", "Ghosts" and "Hedda Gabler".
- 1830 Madame Vestris (Lucy Elizabeth Bartolozzi 1797 - 1856) Under the stage name of Madame Vestris, Lucy Bartolozzi made her first appearance on stage at the age of 20 in 1817. She made her name as a Leg actress, they were admired by all who saw them and were by all accounts in great demand especially for "Breeches Parts". With Fame came money and in 1830 she was able to take over as manager of the Olympic theatre in the Strand becoming the first woman manager of a London theatre. In 1813 she renamed it the Little Drury Lane theatre. She lost her licence soon after, falling foul of the authorities. In 1849 the theatre burned to the ground. It was then rebuilt but in 1904 it was demolished.
- 1831 With the Government coming under increasing criticism the plays written at the time reflected this mood of the people. Plays like William Thomas Moncrieff's (.b. 1794 .d. 1857) "Reform" and "John Bull Triumphant" reflected the times.
- 1833 David Wilke presented a programme of Tableaux based on Sir Walter Scotts novels, for the Duke of Wellington.
Nelson's mistress Emma Hamilton was also an famous exponent of the art of the tableaux, her interpretation of "Andromaches and Cassandras" were discreetly draped, with models frozen like classical statues in a Nude or semi-nude display.
- 1836 William Schwenk Gilbert was born on the 18 November 1836. Along with Arthur Sullivan he started the popularity of Comic Opera with shows like HMS Pinafore. He died in Harrow on the 29 May 1911

VICTORIAN ERA (1837 -1901)

- 1837 One of the plays performed in London included a troop of horses and an Elephant amongst the cast.
- 1838 Sir Henry Irving the Actor Manager of the Lyceum theatre, London was born in England on the 6 February 1838. (.d. 13 April 1905). During his life as an actor he needed to wear glasses and had a pair of almost invisible frames made so that the audience could not see his glasses while he was acting.
- 1840 The first Drama School in Britain opened at Miss Kelly's Theatre and Dramatic School in Dean Street, London. (25 May 1840)
- 1841 The VARIETY theatre is said to have begun at the Britannia Theatre in London when Samuel Haycroft Lane the proprietor opened a show on Easter Monday 1841. He presented a mixture of a melodrama, an opera, a ballet and six acts under the title "A Variety of Artists" thus the phrase was born.
- 1842 Arthur Sullivan was born. Along with William Schwenk Gilbert (1836- 1911) he started the popularity of Comic Opera with shows like HMS Pinafore (1878) .
He died on the 22 Nov 1900.
- 1843 The Theatre's Act was introduced to confirm the rules laid down in 1737 & 1793 that the Lord Chamberlains office was in charge of dispensing licences for new plays and dramatic performances. (See 1737, 1793, 1968).
Lord Conyngham was appointed Lord Chamberlain to oversee the "Theatre Regulations Act". His approach was more sympathetic towards minor theatres extending licences and demanding that Patent houses should only produce plays with spoken dialogue thus restricting the performances in all London theatres except "The Dury Lane" and "Covent Garden" where he had greater power of censorship.
The act made it easier for provincial theatres to stage productions. Any theatre could now apply for a licence from the Lord Chamberlains office to perform the spoken drama as long as they didn't serve refreshments in the auditorium. If the theatre wanted to serve food they could only apply for the new "MUSIC HALL" licence.
As well as banning food in the theatre's it also banned Smoking (now only available in the music halls).
This opened the way for new theatres, "The Britannia", Hoxton (1841), and the Grecian in Islington both turned legitimate while the first new Music hall was created, "The Surrey" (Renamed the Winchester).
- 1843 Queen Victoria appointed a "Master of Revels" to supervise dramatic entertainment's at

- Windsor Castle. As Queen Victoria set the trend others followed and subjects from the upper and middle classes flocked back to the theatre, while the lower classes enjoyed the new form of entertainment, "The Music Hall".
- 1843 By this time theatre stages were becoming different with higher areas above the stage to store scenery when it was not needed on stage. The Fly's as they were known used a pulley system to hoist the unwanted scenery above the stage.
By this time back cloths were being used for outside scenes and special effects were being introduced via the introduction of Gauze's and the new lighting systems.
Gas lighting replaced the oil lamps of the pre Victorian era.
- 1843 -1870 Between 1843 and 1870 no new theatres were built in Central London.
- 1845 Professor Keller presented his company in "Grand Tableaux Vivants and Poses Plastiques". These were naked shows where the ladies posed without many clothes on in reconstruction's of popular paintings. Later exponents of this art included Phyllis Dixie during the 1939-45 war years. (see also 1833)
- 1847 Ellen (Alicia) Terry was born on the 27 February 1847 (.d. 21 July 1928).
This English actress was a leading light of the Lyceum Theatre, London and was the first actress to be made a Dame. Her Grand-nephew was Sir John Gielgud. She was Married to Sir George (Frederick) Watts an English painter for a year.
- 1848 Charles Kean was appointed to oversee "Windsor Theatricals" for Queen Victoria.
- 1852 The first proper **MUSIC HALL** to open was the "Canterbury" in London.
In 1848 Charles Morton (.b. 1819 .d. 1905) purchased the Canterbury Hall a public house offering skittles food and of course drink. His first job was to rebuild it to provide entertainment and in 1852 he opened it as a music hall and even ran a bookmakers taking bets on various races until it was made illegal in 1853.
Charles also saw the potential of bringing women into the building and encouraged this practice even toning down the acts bawdy repertoire.
In 1852 Charles Morton charged for an entrance ticket that entitled the purchaser to one free drink and the entertainment. With the introduction of ladies entering the hall he charged 3d just for the ticket to entertainment.
- 1855 Marie Wilton had a carpet laid in the stalls of the Prince of Wales theatre.
- 1856 George Bernard Shaw (1856- 1950) born. His first play aroused a great deal of indignation due to the frankness of the social evils and injustice of the time. Other plays he wrote included, his first play "Widower's Houses" (1885), "Arms and the Man" (1894) and "Mrs Warren's Profession" (1893) (See 1925)
- 1858 Royal Opera House opened. It was designed by Sir Edward Barry and stood on the site of three previous theatres. The Theatre Royal (1732) & 1809.
- 1859 The Wilton's Music Hall was opened by John Wilton in Grace's Alley just off Cable Street in the East end of London. In 2004 it is still the oldest surviving Music Hall in England and was the first to be built in London. (see separate history file)
- 1860's 1870's The old "First Gallery" of the theatre auditorium became known as the "Dress Circle" in many theatres during the 1860's and 1870's.
At this time theatres also introduced the Matinee performance of a play or entertainment.
- 1860's In the 1860's the northern Music Halls started a "Second House" or 'Twice nightly' performance where the acts from the first show would repeat the performance for a second audience rather than the longer shows that the London and Southern theatres preferred.
- 1862 The first use of an effect called the PEPPER'S GHOST this is where an actor stands in the orchestra pit below the level of the stage so that when lit his reflection is cast onto a sheet of glass mounted between the audience and the stage thus producing a ghost like image. The illusion was invented by Henry Dircks a civil engineer. Originally called the Aetherscope it was first used in Dickens's "The Haunted House" on the 24 Dec 1862.
- 1864 Tom Robertson (Thomas William Robertson 1829-1871) wrote the play "Garrick".
He continued to write about life in Victorian London. Another favourite play was "Caste" (1867).
- 1865 On the 14 Apr 1865 Abraham Lincoln was shot in a Washington Theatre by an actor named Booth. This led to the theatre tradition of greeting an actor with the line "Break a Leg".
On the 14 April 1865 in the "Ford's Theatre" Washington, John Wilkes Booth an actor shot President Abraham Lincoln while he was watching a show at the theatre. After shooting the President the actor stood on the edge of the Presidential box and made the speech in Latin for effect "Thus ever to tyrants !" before jumping onto the stage spoiling the effect by breaking

his

- leg on landing . He then had to hobble off 'stage left', losing the effect he had wanted from his performance. John Wilkes Booth was later cornered in a barn on the 26 April 1865 outside Washington and shot dead while his accomplice, Harrauld, was captured alive.
- 1866 The play "Ours" by Thomas William Robertson (T W Robertson) caused a major furor when a pudding was made on stage. This realism in the production was not used to seeing such realistic tasks being done on stage. Plays like ours and "Society" changed the way we stage plays with set dressing and apparet "small talk" (Rhubard, Rhubarb) being used in the background designed to give a more realistic lok to the shows.
- 1876 The Brooklyn Theatre, New York (USA) was burnt to the ground killing 289 members of the audience and theatre staff.
- 1877 The first co- production by W.S. Gilbert (1836 - 1911) and A Sullivan (1842 - 1900) was performed. It was "The Sorcerer" they followed this with HMS Pinafore in 1878.
- 1877 Sir Arthur Wing Pinero (1855-1934) produced his first play "£200 a year". He followed this with successes like "Dandy Dick" (1887) and "The Second Mrs Tanqueray" (1893)
- 1878 New safety regulations were introduced to the theatre. Unfortunately this closed many of the smaller theatres while larger buildings survived.
- 1879 John O'Connor started designing one of the early "Box Sets". Scenery made into a three sided box just like a house but with the forth wall removed so the audience can see into the room.
- 1879 An annual festival was started to keep the name of Shakespeare alive. A plot of land was also donated to start a Memorial theatre in Stratford on Avon. (See 1925, 1932)
- 1880 THE STAGE newspaper was established. It is a paper for the theatrical profession giving information about shows and adverts for auditions. It was first published on the 1 Feb 1880.
- 1880 New devices appeared on stages including revolving stages (To change sets in seconds). Wooden benches were being replaced by upholstered seats, first in the Boxes, then in the auditorium and finally in the balcony area although many theatres including the Lyceum Theatre in Crewe didn't make this final change until the 1980's.
- 1880-1 The Savoy theatre in London became the first theatre to have electric lights. It was run at the time by Richard D'Oyly Carte who opened it on the 10 October 1880.
- 1881 For the production of "The Corsican Brothers", Henry Irving employed 15 Prop masters (Stage Crew), 30 Gasmen (Lighting), and 90 Carpenters (Set / Scenery Builders).
- 1885 In 1885 with the new electricity becoming available the Actor Manager Henry Irving wired up two actors who were having a sword fight by placing them on two iron plates with wires from their right shoe to the sword they were holding. With the electric on the two actors began to fight with their metal swords and every time they touched blades a spark was seen
- 1889 George Eastman introduced Celluloid roll film to Britain and started the downfall of the theatre with the introduction of "The Cinema".
- 1889 William Friese-Greene invented the Kinematograph which he patented on the 21 June 1889. He took a series of pictures on film and when you turned a handle on the projector you saw movement. This was the start of the film industry. In 1939 the house where he was born in 1855, 69 Collage Street, Bristol had a plaque erected to celebrate this achievement. (.d. 1921)
- 1889 In April 1889 W.S. Gilbert opened the "Garrick Theatre" in Charing Cross Road. It was named after David Garrick (1717-1779)
- 1890 Pierrot shows started to appear
- 1893 Arthur Wing Pinero (1855- 1934) premiered his play "The Second Mrs Tanqueray".
- 1895 Alexandre Dumas French playwright of "La Dame aux Camélias" (1848) was born (.d. 27 Nov 1875).
- 1895 The "Gaiety Girl" was first performed on the 14 Oct 1895. It is considered to be the first Musical Comedy and was presented in London by George Edwardes Company on his 38th Birthday.
- 1896 The Seagull (Chaika) Written by Anton Chekhov (1860 - 1904)
- 1896 20 February 1896 the Regent Street polytechnic staged one of the first public film shows in Britain. The film caused panic when a picture of a train came into view, turned and came straight towards the screen. The film had been made by the Lumiere brothers from France and had been screened two months earlier in Paris France.
- It moved onto the Empire Music hall in Leicester Square where it ran for 18 months.
- 1896 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (.b. 28 Aug 1749 .d. 22 Mar 1896).
- German playwright who wrote "Faust" (1808)
- 1897 An audience witnessed an underwater fight scene on stage when two actors were put into a water filled tank with a cut out ship inside that was raised out of the water to give the illusion that the actors were getting deeper and deeper.

- 1899 For the production of "Robespierre", Henry Irving employed 355 performers (Including Musicians) & 236 back stage staff (Sound, Lighting, Stage Crew etc) .
- 1902 The Lord Chamberlain introduced a control on the eating and drinking of food in the theatres and Music hall auditoriums, moving its purchase to a bar area elsewhere in the theatre.
- 1902 (Sir) Ralph David Richardson was the first of the great actors and actresses to be born between 1902 & 1907. He was born on the 19 December 1902 and died on the 10 October 1983. He was knighted in January 1947 six months before Laurence Olivier was also awarded a Knighthood. (KBE)
- 1902 A Chariot race was performed on stage using 22 real horses on treadmills to allow the illusion of movement while the horses stayed in the middle of the stage. A Moving backcloth was added to keep up the effect.
- 1903 In 1903 the Actor Herbert Beerbohm Tree was acting in Shakespeare's "Richard III" and had arranged for some soft plants to cushion his fall during rehearsals only to find that the stage crew had substituted them for some "Prickly Gorse" surprisingly the words mentioned were not written by the Bard.
- 1904 (Sir) John Gielgud was born on the 14 April 1904 like Laurence Olivier (.b. 1907), he was considered one of the best theatre actors of our time. He died on the 21 May 2000.
- 1904 (Sir) Oswald Stoll built the London Coliseum for £300,000. It was a magnificent Music hall with a £70,000 revolving stage, a tower and a roof garden.
- 1904 The acting school R.A.D.A Formed (Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts). It was founded by Beerbohm Tree at His Majesty' Theatre London before moving into its present home in Gower Street.
- 1905 The Actor manager Sir Henry Irving died on the 13 April 1905 outside a hotel in Bradford from a heart attack (.b. 6 Feb 1838). As a mark of respect Flags across the country were flown at half mast and all black cab drivers (Horse drawn) in London tied black bows on their whips. He was the owner of the Lyceum Theatre, London along with "Dracula" writer Abraham "Bram" Stoker (.b. 8 Nov 1847 .d. 20 Apr 1912)
- 1905 The "Actor's Union" formed. This was the forerunner of EQUITY (See 1929).
- 1906 Henrik (Johan) Ibsen Norwegian playwright died on the 23 May 1906. (.b. 20 Mar 1828) His plays included "A Doll's House" (1st performed 21 Dec 1879), "Ghosts" (1st staged in Chicago to an audience of Scandinavian immigrants on the 20 May 1882) and "Hedda Gabler" (1st performed 1890)
- 1907 By 1906 the variety artist in the MUSIC HALLS was becoming more organised with the start of representation by AGENTS who would get them work and of course would take a percentage of their wages or a fee for getting the work. This stronger organisation led to the MUSIC HALL STRIKE in 1907 over a dispute for payment for doing extra matinees put on by managers who contracted their artists to perform for a weekly wage rather than how many performances were done during that week.
- 1907 (Lord) Laurence Olivier born on the 22 May 1907 he was the first actor to be made a Lord (Life Peerage) on the 15 June 1970. He died on the 11 July 1989, the lights in London's West end went out for a whole hour in tribute to the Greatest actor of our time. (See 1957)
- 1907 On the 23 September 1907 The Manchester Repertoire Theatre gave its first performance. It is considered to be the first Repertoire Theatre and was founded by Miss A Horniman. (Repertory Theatre)
- 1907 (Lord) Bernard Miles was born on the 27 September 1907. Considered to be one of the great actors of modern times along with Laurence Olivier and John Gielgud he founded the Mermaid theatre in 1951. He died on the 14 June 1991 the same day as Dame Peggy Ashcroft (.b.22 Dec 1907) some 6 months his junior.
- 1907 (Dame) Peggy Ashcroft was born on the 22 December 1907. She went on to become one of the theatres best actresses being awarded "Dame" in 1956. She also appeared in the Tv Series "The Jewel in the Crown" (1984) and the David Lean film "A Passage to India" (1985). In the theatre she played alongside Paul Robeson in Othello (1930) and Sir John Gielgud in Romeo and Juliet (1932) She died on the 14 June 1991 the same day as Lord Bernard Miles (.b. 27 Sept 1907)
- 1908 The Marlow society was formed in Cambridge University to perform an annual Elizabethan or Jacobean play. (see 1564)
- 1909 The Parliamentary joint committee of 1909 under Lord Clarendon issued the following 'Proposals with respect to the licensing of plays. The Lord Chamberlain the most senior member of the Royal Household would be responsible for the licensing of a play unless he considered it to be :-

- 1) To be indecent
- 2) To contain offensive personalities.
- 3) To represent in an invidious manner a living person, or a person recently dead.
- 4) To do violence to the sentiment of religious reverence.
- 5) To be calculated to conduce to crime or vice.
- 6) To be calculated to impair friendly relations with a Foreign Power.
- 7) To be calculated to cause a breach of the peace. '

A theatre manager after 1945 would apply to the Lord Chamberlain's office for a licence. He would then pay One Guinea for a 1 act play or two Guineas for a 2 act play or more. The script would be submitted to the LC Office and would then be vetted by the LC's readers at Stable Yard, St James's Palace. (the sum of money was less during the early 1900's but the principle was the same.)

Below are the number of plays banned in this way from 1945 to 1954 (42 plays)

PLAYS BANNED BY THE LORD CHAMBERLAINS OFFICE

1945	4	1946	5	1947	2	1948	3	1949	1
1950	8	1951	7	1952	3	1953	6	1954	3

REASON FOR BAN 1945 - 1954 (42 Plays) (0 = Rule number ?)

Sexual impropriety (1)	18
The Forbidden subject (Homosexuality) (5)	14
References towards Queen Victoria (3)	4
Living People (3)	3
Political objections (7)	2

(See **Banned plays** for individual plays and the reason for the ban)

- 1911 The 1st Royal Command Variety Show was held at the Palace Theatre in Shaftsbury Avenue, London in front of King George V & Queen Mary. Unlike the later 1912 Variety show this was more for performers from the legitimate stage rather than the new Music Hall acts like Harry Tate and Vesta Tilley (See 1912)
- 1912 1st of July 1912 saw the first Royal Variety performance. It was held at the Palace Theatre in Shaftsbury Avenue, London in front of King George V & Queen Mary. The variety bill for this show was made up of music hall acts like George Robey and Harry Lauder.(See 1911)

EXTRA INFORMATION

- 1912 The British Copyright act came into force protecting authors works for 50 years after their death (1 July 1912).
-
- 1919 The "British Drama League" was formed to help Amateur Theatre Companies.
- 1925 George Bernard Shaw's (1856- 1950) play "Mrs Warrens profession" (1893) was first performed in London. It had been banned in the City by the Lord Chamberlains office since it was written in 1893.
- 1925 The Shakespeare "Memorial theatre" in Stratford on Avon was granted a Royal Charter. However it burned down in 1926. (See 1879, 1932)
- 1928 Ellen (Alicia) Terry died on the 21 July 1928. (.b. 27 February 1847). She was the first actress to be made a Dame.
- 1929 The actors union EQUITY was set up (See 1905).
- 1931 The Sadler's Wells theatre was opened by Lilian Baylis as a home for Opera and the Sadler's Wells opera company.
- 1932 The Windmill Theatre opened as a theatre. During the war it advertised itself with the phrase "We never Close" It had a mixture of "Nude" tableau performances and comedians, including Peter Sellers, Tony Hancock, Spike Milligan & Michael Bentine, who appeared in shows called "Revuedeville" which started in the late Morning and ended in the late evening, with continuous shows. This is possibly the place where the term "Blue Movie" started as the Lord Chamberlains office would only grant a licence if the naked women did not move and were in artistic poses. To get round the movement law the theatre used blue light to soften the edges of the figure so the girls can move slightly without the theatre being closed down. (see 1964)
- 1932 A new theatre, designed by Elizabeth Scott opened in Stratford on Avon. to replace the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre burned down in 1926 (See 1879, 1925)
- 1939 11am on the 3 September 1939 War was declared on Germany.
On the 3- 4 September 1939 all theatres and places of entertainment were closed by order of

- the Government. The closure was lifted after 12 days when it was thought that moral was better than the possibility of lots of people being killed in the same building.
- 1939 Arts Council of Great Britain formed. It was founded at the beginning of the second world war with the remit that it would put entertainment into factory canteens, Village halls etc. The C.E.M.A. (Council for the Encouragement of Music & Arts) as its was known was funded by the Treasury through the Ministry of education, and the Pilgrim trust. Its main job was to organise arts events in areas where people had been evacuated. From 1942 the treasury took over the finance of the fund completely and the name was changed to "The Arts Council". Its aim now is to fund non commercial events in the theatre and Arts as well as encouraging new directors, stage managers, designers and lighting designers by the setting up of training schemes.
- 1939 Phyllis Dixey was born in 1914 and was to become known as the Worlds Greatest Nude during the Second World War. When she was 16 she joined Wallace Parnell's touring company in a show called "Aliben Hassan's 'Famous Living Pictures' ". Mr Parnell dressed his young ladies in flimsy gauze's and with clever lighting made the ladies into an acceptable form of nude on stage. In 1935 Phyllis went out to Melbourne to appear in Wallace Parnells show at the Tivoli Theatre. She met 5ft Irish -American comic Jack Tracy who she married. For a few years Phyllis worked in Jack's act as the "wife" character. When in Glasgow an accident happened to change the act. Phyllis's shoulder strap snapped. Jack came up with the idea of writing a sketch where during the performance Phyllis would lose all her clothes. In November 1939 they tried out the act in Hull it was a great success. During the early 1940's she performed in her own show "All's Fair" at the Whitehall Theatre London. This type of nude show was becoming less popular in the late 1950's and Phyllis was forced to find another country to perform in . They went to Scandinavia where stage nudity was more of a novelty. Phyllis Died in 1964.
- 1943 The Citizen's Theatre in Glasgow was formed by C.E.M.A. (Council for the Encouragement of Music & Arts, See 1939).
- 1945 Joan Littlewood (b. 6 Oct 1914 .d. 20 Sept 2002) founded her Theatre workshops in Manchester as a popular theatre for working class audiences.
- 1943 Oklahoma by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein, opened in New Haven, Boston and on the 31 March 1943 at the St James Theatre, New York . It premiered in London on the 30 April 1947 at Dury Lane.
- 1946 1st Sunday in February became known as the day for a "Clown's Service". It was started as a celebration of the life of Joseph Grimaldi (1779-1837) considered to be the father of the modern day clown. Many clowns turn up at the Dalston Holy Trinity Church in East London, dressed in their best clowns outfit. The tradition started in 1946 at St James's church in Pentonville Road, London where J Grimaldi is buried but was moved in 1956 when the St James church was de-commitioned to The Holy trinity church in Dalston.
- 1946 In August 1946 The Arts Council was formed.
- 1946 Guilford Rep started.
- 1947 Pre June 1947 new regulations allowed local authorities to fund entertainment in their towns. In June 1947 Chesterfield Council became the first Local Authority to purchase a Theatre. The old Stevenson Memorial Hall (Built in 1879) became known as the Civic Theatre in 1948.
- 1947 In August 1947 the first Edinburgh Festival started.
- 1947 Ipswich Rep started.
- 1947 The 1st radio mike was devised by Reg Moores (UK) using a frequency of 76MHz. It was first used in a show in September 1949 called 'Aladdin' at the Brighton Sports stadium, East Sussex
- 1948 The "English Children's Theatre" was set up to present plays for schools.
- 1948 The Society for Theatre Research was formed.
- 1948 The Browning Version written by Terence Rattigan.
- 1949 The film "Hamlet" became the first British film to win and Oscar for its star Laurence Olivier (See 1907)
- 1951 Bernard Miles and his wife founded the Mermaid Theatre in their back garden in St John's Wood in September 1951. It was dismantled and moved to the Plaza of the Royal Exchange in 1953 for a six week season as part of the Queens Coronation celebrations. In 1956 it was granted a theatre "Charter" by the City of London. In 1957 a new building was started in Upper Thames Street in an old warehouse in an area called Puddle Dock. It was opened on the 28th of May 1959 with the play "Lock up your Daughters", and was run as a non profit

- making organisation, (by public subscription).
- 1951 On the 13 June 1951 Princess Elizabeth (Later the Queen) laid the foundation stone of the South Bank, National Theatre.
- 1951 Leatherhead, Derby and Canterbury Reps Started.
- 1952 On the 25 Nov 1952 "The Mousetrap", started at the Ambassador's Theatre in London with Richard Attenborough & Sheila Sim with Allan McClelland, Aubrey Dexter, Jessica Spencer, Mignon O'Doherty & Martin Miller.in the cast. The Director was Hubert Gregg. Based on the Radio play "Three Blind Mice" produced for the BBC in 1947. It was the BBC who wanted to celebrate the birthday of Queen Mary (.b. 26 May 1867.d. 24 Mar 1953). They asked the Queen what she would like to hear her replay was "An Agatha Christie Play". The writer decided to write what would become the longest running play in the world. It was Broadcast on the 26 May 1947.
- 1953 A company called "Theatre workshop" takes the lease of the Theatre Royal, Stratford East.
- 1953 Eugene O'Neill USA playwright died (.d. 27 Nov 1953).
- 1954 In September 1954 Kenneth Tynan became the Theatre Critic of the Observer Newspaper.
- 1955 "Waiting for Godot" had its English Premier on the 3 August 1955 and was directed by Peter Hall at the Arts theatre club in front of only 300 people. .
- 1955 During a production of "Moby Dick" the false nose of actor Orson Wells fell off, he just kicked it off stage and carried on.
- 1956 The ESC (English Stage Company) produce their first season at the Royal Court in April.
- 1956 The National Youth Theatre was formed by Michael Croft. In 1967 the company premiered the play Zigger Zagger. The Company also produced notable actors Helen Mirren, Derek Jacobi and many others.
- 1957 On the 11 April 1957 the play "The Entertainer" by John Osborne opened at the Royal Court theatre, London, with Laurence Olivier in the cast. The play included those immortal lines "Don't clap too loud the roof will fall in" (Possible miss quote). (see 1907)
- 1958 The Belgrade theatre, Coventary opened.
- 1958 The Lord Chamberlain wrote a secret memorandum on Homosexuality.
- 1959 Nottingham Playhouse Opened.
- 1960 (Sir) Peter Hall (.b. 22 Nov 1930) was appointed Director of the RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company).
- 1960 The Musical Oliver opened on the 30 June 1960 at the New theatre London.
- 1961 The Memorial Theatre Company in Stratford on Avon became the "Royal Shakespeare Company". They took over the Aldwych Theatre.
- 1962 Chichester Festival Theatre Opens.
- 1962 Victoria Theatre, Stoke on Trent opened. Founded by Peter Cheeseman he continued until March 1998 when he produced "The Tempest". Along the way Peter produced 11 documentaries on local issues called "Living newspapers" and featured stories about the coal mining, steel and pottery industries of Staffordshire.
- 1962-4 The National Theatre was formed. It had been a dream project since the days of David Garrick (1717- 1779). During the 1700's it was proposed by Garrick that the crown should sponsor a National theatre. This was not taken up and was dropped until Bulwer Lytton and Henry Irving took up the challenge. Again the idea was dropped. In 1910 Harley Granville Barker and William Archer published "The National theatre: a Scheme and estimates" (Revised in 1930 and re published by Granville Barker). This idea was put aside as many in the theatre world wanted to commemorate the death of Shakespeare (1916 the Anniversary) by building a Shakespeare memorial theatre in London. The two schemes were combined and plans were drawn up. However in 1914 the war started and plans were again dropped. They were revived again in 1930 but government funds were unavailable so they were dropped again. A fund was set up for private investors to donate to the project and by 1938 they had raised £150,000. The money was spent on securing a site for the building in South Kensington, London but as plans were being drawn the second world war took place and the building was never commissioned. In 1945-6 the committee arranged for the South Kensington land to be swapped for a plot on the banks of the Thames on the "South Bank". In 1951 the first foundation stone was laid. This was as far as the project got as the site was dropped in favour of converting the "Old Vic" (Waterloo Road, London) into a National Theatre in 1963 . The Old Vic theatre company ceased to exist and in its place a National theatre company was formed under the directorship of Sir Laurence Olivier, producing their first show at the National Theatre on the 22 October 1963. The company then prepared to move into new premises being specially built on the South Bank site when they were

- completed to the designs of Denys Lasdun in 1976.
- 1963 Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh opened.
- 1964 The Windmill Theatre closed for the last time as a theatre. During the war it advertised itself with the phrase "We never Close" referring to the continuous show it held and the fact that no bombing raid had shut it down. Opened for 32 years it only closed for 12 compulsory days in 1939. It is now a lap dancing club (2003). (See 1932)
- 1967 Octagon Theatre, Bolton Opened.
- 1967 *Homosexuality stopped being a criminal offence in Britain.*
- 1968 26 September 1968 The "Theatres act" abolished the office of Lord Chamberlain as censor of plays and performances. (See 1737, 1793, 1843)
- 1968 Maggie Wright became the first actress to appear "Nude" on the legitimate stage when she appeared in the Royal Shakespeare production of "Dr Faustus" as Helen of Troy. (First nude actress on stage 27 June 1968)
- 1968 27 September 1968 saw the first production of "Hair" which included a Nude scene at the end. This show at the Shaftsbury Theatre, was the first to take advantage of the dropping of the Censorship laws.
- 1970 26 July 1970 the play "Oh Calcutta" opened in London. The title translates as "Oh, quell Cul Tu As" or "Oh, What a lovely Bum you've Got". It included nude and sexual scenes.
- 1971 (Sir) Trevor Nunn takes over from Peter Hall as director of the RSC (Royal Shakespeare Company).
- 1971 The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield Opened. Today is more famous as a Snooker venue rather than a theatre.
- 1972 (Sir) Peter Hall took over from (Sir) Lawrence Olivier as director of the National Theatre.
- 1976 The new National Theatre on the South Bank was opened. It was designed by Denys Lasdun. (See 1963-4)
- 1976 The Royal Exchange theatre, Manchester was opened.
- 1983 The London production of Singing in the Rain opened. Starring Tommy Steele and Roy Castle it was famous for its dance routines and the water / rain scene done live on stage every night. When the production went to New York the stage was raised to reveal a dry floor while the wet floor was parked against the back wall of the theatre. In Hungary 30 cleaners were employed each night to mop up the rain soaked stage.
- 1989 The original ROSE THEATRE was revealed during construction work for a new office block in London (see 1587) It was investigated by archaeologists. Dame Peggy Ashcroft led a campaign to preserve the foundations of the theatre.
- 1989 When Laurence Olivier died on the 11 July 1989, the lights in London's West end went out for a whole hour in tribute to the Greatest actor of our time. (See 1907, 1957)
- 1996 The (New) Globe Theatre was opened on the 21 August 1996. Built as close to the original site of the 1599 theatre, it was designed as close to the original designs as possible.
- 1996 Rehearsals in London by Kurdish refugees fleeing torture in Turkey were rudely interrupted by the police as they thought the prop guns they were using for the play about Kurdish persecution, were real. The amateur actors were arrested and told not to speak in their native tongue.

LIGHTING HISTORY

PRE THEATRES

From the earliest days when man discovered fire he has been able to create lighting effects on walls, in the middle of the room and outside, enabling him to see what is to be seen in the dark. The first development apart from fire was the Oil burner. Created from burning animal or vegetable oil it gave a much longer burn than just lighting a stick.

THEATRES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHTS.

In the Roman and Greek theatres oil burners were used to light the performers during the night time productions. But as most shows were performed during the daytime lighting was not needed to illuminate the proceedings.

During the Baroque era it was thought that only natural light should be used. As more sophisticated lighting became available and more shows were being performed towards the end of the day, the development of Theatre lighting followed that of the household.

1600's **The Duke's theatre in Dorset Garden London had an enclosed stage and auditorium it was the first theatre to be lit with oil lamps or candles.**

1600 William Gilbert (1540-1603) published his book "On the Magnet" in Latin, it was

	the first major publication on science in England. He was the Physician to Queen Elizabeth and was the first to make a detailed study of the properties of Magnetism and static Electricity.
1700's	Candles or oil lamps used for lighting in homes and buildings.
Mid 1700's	Colza Oil introduced for lighting the home.
Late 1700's	Flat wicks used instead of round ones. They ran in a metal casing and were adjusted by means of a toothed wheel which gripped the wick.
1700's	David Garrick used reflectors to enhance the light and make it more directional.
1700's	Philippe Jacques de Louthembourg at the Drury lane theatre used dyed silk in front of lamps to give the light a different colour thus was the early Lighting gel (Coloured filter) invented. He also invented the effects projector by moving a silk screen painted with a cloud panorama, which he moved in front of a bank of candles.
1745	Canaeus discovered the Leyden Jar leading to a knowledge of the inductance and capacity of electricity. He made the discovery while he was working in Leyden, Holland.
1779	William Murdock gave the first practical demonstration of gas lighting (See 1792 & 1800)
1783	Swiss physician Aimé Argand (1755 - 1803) invented the burner with a tubular or circular wick which had a central draught, surrounded by a glass chimney.
1792	Scotsman William Murdock (1754- 1839) introduced coal Gas as a fuel for lighting.
1798	W Murdock (See above) used Gas to light up the Boulton & Watt's works at Soho in Birmingham, the first building to be illuminated in this way.
1800's	William Murdock used gas to illuminate the cotton mills in Manchester with the help of Clegg 1781- 1861) who solved the technical problems of gas in the mills.
1800's	Artificial lights started to appear on stage. The introduction of the proscenium arch meant that lighting could be directed from front of house and could be concealed on stage at the sides and above.
1800's	With the proscenium came the introduction of Footlights to the theatre.
c 1800 - 1827	Italian Physicist Alessandro Volta (1745 - 1827) discovered that two plates of dissimilar metals immersed in a solution of a salt or an acid remain at different potentials even when connected by a conductor, and that there is a current flow through the circuit thus constituted. This became the first battery.
1810	The Gas Light & Coke company formed to supply gas to the towns and cities.
1810	Sir Humphry Davy (1778- 1829) English chemist invented the electric light system using two carbon rods separated by a small gap which was bridged by the electric current. Because the rods burned they had to be lengthened to keep the light burning (Using a battery) thus creating the "Davy Lamp".
1817	The Drury lane theatre used gas lighting for the first time. Firstly in the front of house area's followed in 1819 with lighting on the stage.
1818	The new Olympic Theatre used Gas lighting on stage for the first time.
1819	Hans Christian Oersted (1777- 1851) discovered electromagnetism, that a magnetic field existed round a wire joining the terminals of a voltaic cell.
1819- 1880	Gas Lighting replaced candles and oil lamps.
1826	German physicist Georg Simon Ohm (1787 - 1854) published his work on the connection between current strength in a conductor and electromotive force, and the introduction of the concept of "Resistance".
1835	English physicist Michael Faraday (1791- 1867) enunciated his laws of electrolysis.
1837- 1901	VICTORIAN ERA The Victorian theatres loved the effects of moonlight during their shows.
1845	Electric lamps started to be developed.
1845- 48	Foucault, Wright, & Staite invented the Carbon Arc- Lamp which included an automatic adjuster for the carbon rods. (Ran off a large battery)
1860	Petroleum became the dominant fuel for lamps
1862	In 1862 Thomas Drummond developed a new lighting system which involved burning lime. The first uses were in "Light houses" but it was used in the theatre as a "spotlight". It gave off a very good directional beam and generated very little heat. Thus the person who was in the beam (or Spotlight) came to be known as in the Limelight. (See 1826)
1873	Scottish physicist James Clerk Maxwell (1831 - 1879) published his work on

- electricity and magnetism.
- 1879 American Thomas Alva Eddison (1847-1931) invented the Carbon Filament lamp in a glass bulb.
- 1880's **Sir Henry Irving dimmed the auditorium while the show was being performed. On stage he used "Floats" or lights in batteries to deliver different types of lighting effects.**
- 1880 British scientist Sir Joseph Wilson Swan (31 Oct 1828 - 27 May 1917 or 1929 - 1914) also invented a Carbon Filament vacuum lamp (See 1879 Eddison) in 1860 the lamp was enclosed in a glass bulb. The first successful exhibition of the lamp was in 1880. The first house to be fitted with this invention was Craigside in Northumberland owned by William George Armstrong (1810 - 27 Dec 1900) a great inventor and supporter of new inventions. He also boasted at having Electric bells, An Electric dinner Gong, Electric Fire Alarm and a Telephone.
- 1880-1 **The Savoy theatre in London became the first theatre to have electric lights.** The Savoy was run by Richard D'Oyly Carte who opened it on the 10 October 1880.
- 1826 Limelight was invented by Thomas Drummond (1797-1840). In 1861 it was tested out at the South Foreland lighthouse. It was used in the theatre and the phrase "To be in the Limelight" - to be in the full glare of public attention.
This light gives off a little heat from the burning lime caused by the combustion of oxygen and hydrogen. Also called a DRUMMOND LIGHT after its inventor.
The first to use it in the theatre was Macready at Covent Garden for the 1926 Pantomime "Peeping Tom of Coventry". The light given off by the Lime was of a Greenish colour causing problems for costume designers and for the actors (See the Green Room / Traditions)
- 1885-6 The incandescent gas mantle was introduced by Baron Von Welsbach. Made of woven Ramie fibre, cotton or Cellulose, and is impregnated with Thoria & Ceria.
- 1888 German physicist Heinrich Rudolf Hertz produced electromagnetic waves confirming Maxwell's electromagnetic theory of waves.(See 1873)
- 1900's Titanium and Tungsten filaments used with a glass bulb filled with an inert gas.
- Before 1914 Coal gas used for lighting.
- After 1918 Water Gas used for lighting or a Mixture of Coal & Water Gas was used.
- 1920's onwards Footlights started to be phased out.
- 1920 The Gas Regulation act was introduced to allow suppliers to charge for the cubic foot of gas used.
- 1928 Martin Pipkin patented the "Frosted Light Bulb" in the USA on the 16 Oct 1928.
- 1932 The Windmill Theatre opened as a theatre. It had a mixture of "Nude" tableau performances and comedians. This is possibly the place where the term "Blue Movie" started as the Lord Chamberlains office would only grant a licence if the naked women did not move and were in artistic poses. To get round the movement law the theatre used blue light to soften the edges of the figure so the girls can move slightly without the theatre being closed down.
- 1945 The introduction of the post of "Lighting director" a specialised post to create the effects needed on stage. Previously the job had been anyone available who could switch on lights and the occasional effect of moonlight.

STAGE EQUIPMENT - AREAS - TERMS

BALCONY OR "GODS"

BEIJING OPERA Not as one would suspect a company but a type of play from China that uses no scenery at all in its production. The company of actors use simple objects to represent other things like a Blue Banner for "Water", Oar to represent a whole ship, a chair representing a Hill which they then climb on toI think you get the idea. Invisible objects can also be represented like the wind is represented by a Black Flag being waved about. A dead body can also be represented by a folded red cloak.

BOAT TRUCKS or WAGON STAGES Movable platforms for scenery which could be slid onto stage using castors.

BOXES Usually at the side of the stage in the auditorium for the best seats in the house.

These are sometimes called the "Ashtrays" by artists as a reference to their shape and position at either side of the stage like in a car.

Another term for them is "Loge" (Lozh or loj / n. Box in theatre etc.)

BOX SETS In 1879 John O'Connor started designing one of the early "Box Sets". Scenery made

into a three sided box just like a house but with the forth wall removed so the audience can see into the room.

BRIDGE An area at the back of the stage which could be raised or dropped with a group of actors on it.

CIRCLE (See also Dress Circle) The first level of seating above the stalls.

DIORAMA In the 1800's they invented the "Diorama". This was a long backcloth wrapped onto two rollers and had a continuous scene painted on it. This would then be moved from one roller to another giving the impression of a moving scene (Used in film to add a moving background to a stationary horse or car in early productions). In 1823 the Drury lane theatre had paid £1,380 for such a diorama scene. In 1831 Scenic painter Clarkson Stanfield was sent to Venice to paint a realistic Diorama for "Harlequin and Little Thumb".

DOWNSTAGE The area towards the audience moving from the back of the stage (Upstage) to the orchestra pit. To move upstage or downstage is to move in this direction from your point of origin.

DISTEMPER (noun) Method of Painting on Plaster or Chalk with Powder colours mixed with Yoke or White of Egg, Size etc., instead of oil. It is used for scenic painting. When used with "size" the

paint helps to stretch the canvas used for making flats.

DRESS CIRCLE So named because Evening dress was required if you wanted to sit in these seats.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (See History of Lighting / Spotlight / Limelight / Spot / Followspot)

FLAT / FLATS The scenery used to make up the "Set" is produced by a series of temper walls called flats. These were originally made by stretching canvas over a wooden frame. The canvas was stretched using size painted over the surface. This was then painted. The canvas flats were light thus making them easier to transport or move into different configurations. Today many flats are made of plywood covered frames making them less prone to movement when doors are opened and closed. It also allows actors the chance to lean on them without falling through the wall.

FLY'S By 1843 theatre stages were becoming different with higher area's above the stage to store scenery when it was not needed on stage. The Fly's as they were known used a pulley system to hoist the unwanted scenery above the stage. The previous method of changing back cloths was to roll up the cloth on a baton and like a window blind in reverse let the lower of two poles down to reveal the scene with the upper pole staying above the stage.



FLY FLOOR The area either on the ground or above the stage where the flyman pulls up the flies. Also known as the Fly Gallery.

FLYING MECHANISM The first type of Flying system appeared in the ancient Greek theatre and was used for the appearance of the "Deus ex Machina" (God from a machine). His appearance was made possible by a "Car" of some sort that could be raised or lowered. It was a sort of crane used in the Greek theatre to give the appearance of the actor flying and was built into the "Skene" (or Scene) the building at the back of the stage (Orchestra area) where actors got dressed and the walls provided the background for plays.

FOLLOW SPOT (see also Spot)

GODS See balcony. Nicknamed because it is the place in the theatre nearest to the Greek and Roman, Gods. (Also the Christian God)

GRID The area above the stage where the flies are kept once they are flown.

KABUKI (Japan) Like the "Noh" plays the acting is not natural with actor's striking a pose at a

dramatic moment (Rather like the freeze frame at the end of a Tv series or just before the adverts) to highlight the crucial turning point of the production. Again like the "Noh" the walkway from the dressing room to the stage is important with the Backstage area at the back of the hall with a ramp or walkway cutting through the audience to the stage for the actors to make their entrance. (See Noh)

KATHAKALI (India) Performed in Indian temples as part of religious festivals. Actors perform the production with a series of body, eye and face movements with a singer performing the words to a drum accompaniment. The actors have their faces made up into various characters with a Green face representing good, Black face being evil, White representing purity and Red standing for bravery and fierceness. Once the face had been painted (It takes about an hour to apply) they add rice paper to the actor's face in a collar shape. An Aubergine seed is then placed under the actor's lower eyelid to make the eyes turn red. Originally it was only performed by men.

KENSINGTON GORE or **KENNINGTON GORE**

Another name for Fake Blood. The term in the theatrical is from the mix of "Gore" (from the old English for "Spear", "Gara") a triangular piece of Cloth or land as in Kensington (Kensington Gore). The word for Bloody "Gore" comes from the 1745 Jacobite (Supporters of James II) rising when many people opposed to the government were executed on Kennington Common (Now Kennington Park) leaving the area blood stained for many months afterwards.

Kensington Gore is not as many people think from the "Jack the Ripper" stories in London as it was in Whitechapel that he murdered 5 prostitutes.

LIMELIGHT This light gives off a little heat from the burning lime caused by the combustion of oxygen and hydrogen. Also called a **DRUMMOND LIGHT** after Thomas Drummond (1797-1840) who invented it in 1826. In 1861 it was tested out at the South Foreland lighthouse. It was however used most in the theatre and the phrase "To be in the Limelight" - to be in the full glare of public attention.

NOH STAGES (Japan) The Noh plays date back to the 1300's and were developed from Japanese rituals and consist of Music, Poetry and dance with the actors chanting their lines while moving in a stately way, very slowly. The stage for this type of play consists of a dressing room or back stage area on the Stage Left with a ramp sloping down to the stage from which the actors descend to the acting area. (See Kabuki)

OFF STAGE Any part of the stage that cannot be seen by the audience.

ORCHESTRA PIT The place where the musicians were put during the show unless they are the featured artist on stage. In 5 C bc Greek Plays performed at Athens the plays were performed in the open air in theatres built into the side of hills, they consisted of an acting area surrounded by stone seating backed by permanent architectural settings. Just before the actual stage was a space known as the Orchestra. This was occupied by a chorus of about 15 men. (See also Scene)

PEPPER GHOST An actor stands in the orchestra pit below the level of the stage so that when lit his reflection is cast onto a sheet of glass mounted between the audience and the stage thus producing a ghost like image. The illusion was invented by Henry Dircks a civil engineer. Originally called the Aetherscope it was first used in Dickens's "The Haunted House" 24 Dec 1862.

PROMPT The person who gives lines to an actor who forgets his / her words.

PROPS (Property Plot) The use of objects on stage ranging from real items to fake or made up properties. Some objects are made to look real but are essentially fake either for a cost purpose or for safety. For safety Guns are made to produce a big bang but are unable to launch a projectile or bullet, Swords and daggers are sometimes made of Rubber to stop the actor getting hurt. Daggers have also been made with retractable blades. Food and drink have also been altered either for cost or in the cast of wines and spirits to stop the actors getting drunk, although I know of a story about an actor who added Alcohol to the Tea he drank to "Enhance" his performance.

PROP

SUBSTITUTE

DRINKS

Gin / Vodka (Any Clear drink)

Water

Red Wine

Burnt Sugar and Water

Whisky / Sherry / Rum

Burnt Water (Different proportions)

Champagne

Ginger Ale (Produced by the company in real bottles for use on the stage and at ceremonies).

OTHER PROPS

Blood

Tomato Ketchup or Kensington Gore a commercial blood substitute available from any make up establishment (See Kensington Gore)

PROSCENIUM ARCH Inigo Jones (1573-1652) was an English architect and stage designer who introduced the Proscenium arch to England. It became a part of the modern theatre during the 1800s.

REVOLVING STAGE first used in England by Inigo Jones born (1573-1652). He was an English architect and stage designer. In 1605 he joined Prince Harry as his resident designer until 1613. He was the first to use revolving (A Revolving stage) screens to change scenery in seconds. By 1880 these new devices of revolving stages were appearing in new theatres. Also known as the "Revolve".

SCENE Like Orchestra the word Scene comes from the Greek theatre of the 5th Century. The "Scene" (or "Skene" in Greek) was the long wooden building behind the "Orchestra" where actors get dressed and its walls also provided the background for plays.

The "Skene" also had a crane built into it to allow actors to be hoisted into the air.
(See Flying)

SEATING In 1674 Christopher Wren built the Dury lane theatre with the seats arranged in a horseshoe shape with tears like a wedding cake. It was probably influenced by a theatre in Amsterdam built in 1637.

By 1880 wooden benches were being replaced by upholstered seats, first in the Boxes, then in the auditorium and finally in the balcony area although many theatres including the Lyceum Theatre in Crewe didn't make this final change until the 1980's.

SIZE (Check Spelling) Glue made of Horses Hooves used to stick canvas to the wooden frames of scenery. Size is also used to stretch the canvas when missed into a thin liquid and spread over the surface of the flat.

SLOAT -CUTS Scenes put behind the Bridge.

SPOTLIGHT See also Limelight. The Follow spot is also known as a "Super Trouper" as in the ABBA song from 1980.

STAGE MANAGER In the 1800's the stage manager was the person who directed the production. By the 1900's (1888 onwards) the term director had appeared and the stage managers role was given to a person who would make sure that the production ran smoothly. Along with an ASM (Assistant Stage Manager) they would cue the actors and stage crew for their entrances and scene changes.

STAGE TRAPS

- 1) **FOOTLIGHT TRAP** - This enabled the Footlights to be lowered under the stage to be cleaned.
- 2) **CARPET TRAP** - This gripped the edge of the carpet on stage.
- 3) **CORNER TRAPS** - Usually two, built into the stage to allow actors to enter from beneath the stage.
- 4) **GRAVE TRAP / CAULDRON TRAP** - Special traps (Entry points) for plays like Hamlet & the Scottish play (Macbeth)

STALLS This area is where the poor of the community were put for the performance. In various theatres it was an area that didn't have any seats and the patrons were treated like cattle thus the name stalls, after the place where cattle were kept.

SOUND EFFECTS Used to create the sound of something "On Cue". Effects like thunder have been built into the fabric of the theatre with thunder tunnels being inserted round the auditorium with a hole at each end to produce the sound effect (Closed when not in use).

EFFECT

HOW TO PRODUCE IT

Door Bell

Creaking

Drag a dry finger across an inflated Balloon.

Knocking

Fake Door Knocker (Prop).

Opening & Closing

Fake door (Prop).

Footsteps

Either

Walk your fingers through some dry rice.

"

or

Walk on a tray filled with gravel off stage.

Footsteps in the Forest

Crunch some unwound recording tape.

Footsteps in Snow

Crunch a bag of Flower.

Fire in a grate (Crackling)

Squeeze bubble wrap in your hand.

Rain Drops

Drop grains of rice into a metal dish.

Sea

Swish gravel up and down a tray.

Thunder

Rolling metal balls around a tin.

"

(See "Stealing someones thunder" under traditions)

As some of these effects are quiet they may need enhancing with a microphone and speakers. Alternatively you can always use a SOUND EFFECTS CD.

TABS Originally "Tableaux Curtains" they were drawn outwards and upwards. The term now applies to any form of curtain that opens. House Tabs - those that open to reveal the stage, used at the beginning and end of a show.

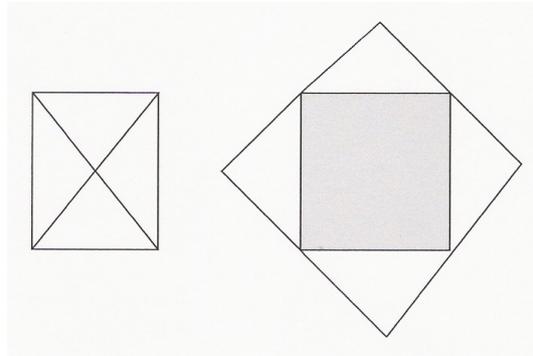
TRAP DOOR Built into the stage to allow actors to appear and disappear in the middle of the stage without being seen or it is used to allow the villain or fairy on stage during a pantomime.

Cauldron trap - Small opening to allow things to be passed into a cauldron e.g. a long extended ladder that appears out of a smaller bowl.

Corsican Trap - Used to give a ghostly appearance it allows the entrance of a wheeled cart on which the actor stands. The entrance is usually made of bristles, painted to match up with the scenery. It allows the truck to enter onto stage allowing the Ghost to glide across the stage on the truck. It was invented in 1852 for the Dion Boucicault production of "The Corsican Brothers" by Alexandre Dumas.

Grave Trap - Rectangular shape used in "Hamlet" etc.

Star Trap - A set of triangular sprung flaps that open to allow an actor to enter on stage.



Vampire Trap - This involves two springs that shut the trap as soon as an actor has moved through a wall or floor depending on the site of the trap giving the impression of a person walking through solid objects.

UPPER CIRCLE Seating area above the Dress Circle and below the Balcony or "Gods".

UPSTAGE The area away from the Audience, towards the back of the stage. (See Downstage)

WINGS The area off stage where actors wait or where scenery is stored until it is needed.

EXTRA INFO :-

In 1880 THE STAGE newspaper was established. It is a paper for the theatrical profession giving information about shows and adverts for auditions.

The play THE MOUSETRAP

25 Nov 1952 The Mousetrap, started at the Ambassador's Theatre in London with Richard Attenborough & Sheila Sim with Allan McClelland, Aubrey Dexter, Jessica Spencer, Mignon O'Doherty & Martin Miller in the cast. The Director was Hubert Gregg.

Based on the Radio play "Three Blind Mice" produced for the BBC in 1947.

It was the BBC who wanted to celebrate the birthday of Queen Mary (b. 26 May 1867.d. 24 Mar 1953). They asked the Queen what she would like to hear her replay was "An Agatha Christie Play". The writer decided to write what would become the longest running play in the world. It was Broadcast on the 26 May 1947.

13 Sept 1957 Became Britain's longest running play with its 1,998th Performance.

23 Dec 1970 Reached its 7511th consecutive performance.

25 Nov 1990 At the St Martin's Theatre (was the Ambassador's) West Street, Cambridge Circus WC2 they held the 38 th Year Celebrations the cast were, Liam Kennedy, Charles Stapley, Brian Spink, Sophie Doherty, Johnathan Drysdale, Penelope Freeman, Richard Croxford & Kathleen Byron, directed by Ian Wyatt-Smith for Peter Saunders.

CINEMA HISTOY

- 1782 Gainsborough the painter produced a "Show Box" which had moving scenes behind a small opening in a box to give the appearance of moving pictures.
- 1837 - 1901 The Victorian era made popular the Zoetrope, a series of pictures that made the object seem to move.
- 1855 Celluloid (Plastic) was invented by Alexander Parkes.
- 1868 J.A.R. Rudge of Bath invented the Bio-Phantoscope. This used photographic slides in quick succession to give the appearance of movement.
- 1884 George Eastman patented photographic film on the 14 Oct 1884.
- 1889 George Eastman introduced Celluloid roll film to Britain and started the downfall of the theatre with the introduction of "The Cinema".
- 1889 William Friese-Green showed the first film in his house in Brook Street, Holborn to two policeman who were walking by. It was of people walking in Hyde Park. This was the first public film show. Called the Kinematograph he patented it on the 21 June 1889. He had taken the series of pictures on film and when you turned a handle on the projector you saw movement. This was the start of the film industry. In 1939 the house where he was born in 1855, 69 Collage Street, Bristol had a plaque erected to celebrate this achievement. (.d. 1921)
- 1890's Short films were made available .
- 1893 Thomas Alva Edison opened the first Film Studio on the 1 February 1893 in New Jersey to make films for the Peep Machines.
- 1896 20 February 1896 the Regent Street polytechnic staged one of the first public shows in Britain. The film caused panic when a picture of a train came into view, turned and came straight towards the screen. The film had been made by the Lumiere brothers from France and had been screened two months earlier in Paris France. It moved onto the Empire Music hall in Leicester Square where it ran for 18 months.
- 1896 1st Talkie made by Oskar Messter in Berlin, Germany.
- 1900 1st talkie films shown to the public. (see 1927)
- 1901 On the 5 Aug 1901 the first purpose built Cinema opened in Britain. It was the Mohawk in Islington.
- 1906 1st newsreel.
- 1906 The Cinema Omnia Pathe opening in Paris it was the first purpose built cinema in France showing Newsreal 1 Dec 1906.
- 1908 1st Colour film. An 8 minute film by G.A. Smith "A Visit to the Seaside".
- 1909 The Cinematograph Act was brought into operation. It involved getting a licence to show films and was introduced more for safety as many Cinema's had been put up quickly due to the demand for this new form of entertainment and thus the buildings were not always safe.
- 1912 Dr Hubert Thomas Kalmus (b. 9 Nov 1881) Invented Techicolour in 1912. The first one reeler in Technicolour was "The Gulf between" (1917) and the first full length film was "The Black Pirate" (1926).
- 1914 1st full length Colour film "The World, the flesh" (Not in technicolour)
- 1927 1st full length talking feature film "The Jazz Singer" with Al Jolson. (See 1900)
- 1928 On the 12 Nov 1928 The New Oxford Theatre in Manchester opened. It was the first Picture House to be opened outside of America to show Talking pictures.
- 1946 1 Nov 1946 "A Matter of Life or Death" became the first Royal Command Film Performance. It was held at the Empire, Lester Square.
- 1949 The Film "Hamlet" became the first British film to win and Oscar for its star Laurence Olivier.
- 1962 1st James Bond film "Dr No"
- 1977 "Star Wars" hit the screens.

A GOOD BOOK TO READ ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE CINEMA IS "THE GREAT BRITISH PICTURE SHOW" From the 90's to the 70's by George Perry. Published by Hart-Davis, MacGibbon London ISBN 0 246 106545 X © 1974.

PUNCH AND JUDY (a Brief History)

During the Elizabethan and Stuart times the puppet show was quite popular especially as a fairground attraction. The stories included the Bible, Faustus, St George and the Dragon etc.

In 1662 Samuel Peyps wrote in his diary about a new character from Italy called "Pollicinella" or "Punchinello". The name was soon changed to Punch but his appearance stayed the same with his hunched back, Hooked Nose and his manor was always offensive as he would disrupt the serious plays with bawdy remarks and would occasionally Fart (The original alternative comedian).

In 1682 Punch had his own show with the daily battle between Mr & Mrs Punch who's name at the time was Joan. At this time his arch enemy was the Devil.

In 1828 journalist John Payne Collier and Illustrator George Cruikshank interviewed Punch and Judy Man Giovanni Piccini about the character and wrote down the story that he performed along with illustrations. This became the basis of the modern Punch and Judy show.

"Punch loses his temper with his own baby and kills it, fights his wife and kills her, kills a succession of characters, beats up a Policeman, tricks

Hangman Jack Ketch into hanging himself rather than Punch, finally killing the Devil".

Later characters that were added included a Ghost, Crocodile, and a Constable.

Possibly the most ambitious character was Toby the Dog who for many showmen was an actual Dog rather than a puppet.

The showman traditionally makes his own puppet with in theory that no two puppets are to be made to look the same.

The noise of Mr Punch is made with a metal device called a "Swazzle".

Today Mr Punch is usually found on the Sea front but in his early days he was found at May day festivals, and in every city.

BANNED PLAYS (see 1909)

DATE	PLAY TITLE	REASON FOR BAN
1945	The Querulous Queens	References to Queen Victoria
1945	First Thing	Black out sketch (Implying over indulgence of sexual intercourse)
1945	Outrageous Fortune	Pervert Theme
1945	Surface	Reference to Pansies
1945	Oscar Wilde (Play)	Reference to Perverts and Perversions - Homosexuality
1946	Patricia English	Management refused to change the eponymous heroine's 7 brothels into nightclubs.
1946	Getting a Flat	Problems with the words Lavatory and a misunderstanding of the word Laboratory.
1950	Street Girl	Pornography.
1950	Hiatus	Sexuality of the Husband - John is an invert
1950	Birthday Bouquet	References to Queen Victoria
1951	My Good Brown	References to Queen Victoria
1951	Third Person	Homosexuality
1952	Our Ladies Meet	References to Queen Victoria
1953	Ostrich House (Les Oeufs de L'Autruche)	Nasty Foreign practices.
1954	The Trial of Oscar Wilde	Homosexuality
1954	The Wicked & the Weak	Gay Prostitute

MUSICALS (Some of the more well known)

MUSICAL	DATE AND VENUE	
	UK	USA
Annie		21 Apr 1977 Alvin Theatre Broadway
Annie Get your Gun	1947 Coliseum, London	16 May 1946 Imperial Theatre, B/way
Anything Goes		21 Nov 1934 Broadway
Arcadians	28 Apr 1909 Shaftsbury Theatre, London	
Are You Lonesome Tonight?	13 Aug 1985 Pheonix Theatre, London.	
Aspects of Love	17 Apr 1989 Prince of Wales Theatre, London	
Babes in Arms		14 Apr 1937 Shubert theatre, Broadway
Band Wagon		3 June 1931 New Amsterdam Theatre, N. Y.
Barnum	1981	30 April 1980 St James Theatre New York
Billy (Billy Liar)	1 May 1974 Drury Lane, London	
Bitter Sweet	1929 Her Majesty's Theatre, London	
Bless the Bride	26 Apr 1947 Adelphi, London	
Blitz	8 May 1962 Adelphi Theatre, London	

Blood Brothers	11 Apr 1983 Lyric Theatre
the Boy Friend	April 1953 Players' Theatre, London.
Brigadoon	13 Mar 1947 Ziegfield Theatre New York
Buddy	12 Oct 1989 Victoria Palace Theatre, London
Budgie	18 Oct 1988 Cambridge Theatre
Cabaret	20 Nov 1966 Broadhurst Theatre New York
Call me Madam	1952 Coliseum, London 12 Oct 1950 Imperial Theatre New York
Call me Mister	18 Apr 1946 National Theatre New York
Camelot	1 Dec 1960 New York
Can Can	7 May 1953 Shubert Theatre, New York
Carmen Jones	2 Dec 1943 Broadway Theatre, New York.
Carousel	1950 Dury Lane, London 19 Apr 1945 Majestic Theatre, New York
Cats	11 May 1981 New London Theatre.
Cavalcade	13 Oct 1931 Dury Lane Theatre, London.
Charlie Girl	15 Dec 1965 Adelphi Theatre, London.
Chess	14 May 1986 Prince Edward Theatre, London
Chicago	3 June 1975 46th Street Theatre, Broadway
a Chorus Line	21 May 1975 Shakespeare Public theatre, N.Y.
Crazy for You	Dec 1991 Washington
Desert Song	30 Nov 1926 Casino Theatre, New York
Evita	21 June 1978 Prince Edward Theatre, London.
Expresso Bongo	23 Apr 1958 Saville Theatre, London
Fanny	4 Nov 1954 Majestic Theatre, New York
the Fantasticks	3 May 1960 Sullivan St, Playhouse Off B/way
Fiddler on the Roof	22 Sept 1964 Imperial Theare, New York
Fings Ain't what they used t' be	17 Feb 1959 Theatre Royal, Stratford East, London
Finian's Rainbow	10 Jan 1947 Broadway
Flower Drum Song	1 Dec 1958 St James Theatre New York
Follies	4 Apr 1971 Winter Garden, New York
Funny Face	2 Nov 1927 Alvin Theatre, New York
Funny Girl	Pre Feb 1964 New York
a Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum	8 May 1962 Alvin Theatre, New York
Glamorous Night	2 May 1935 Theatre Royal Drury lane, London.
Godspell	17 May 1971 Cherry Lan Theatre, New York
Grease	Feb 1972 Eden Theatre Off Broadway.
Guys and Dolls	1953 Coliseum, London 24 Nov 1950 46th Street Theatre, New York
Gypsy	21 May 1959 Broadway Theatre, New York
Hair	27 Sept 1968 29 April 1968 Biltmore Theatre, USA
Half A Sixpence	21 Mar 1963 Cambridge Theatre, London
Hello Dolly	16 Jan 1964 St James Theatre, New York
Irene	18 Nov 1919 Vanderbilt Theatre, New York
Irma La Douce	12 Nov 1956 Theatre Gramont , Paris FRANCE
Jeeves	22 Apr 1975 Her Majesty's Theatre, London (Re Vamped 1995)
Jesus Christ Superstar	17 Oct 1971 Mark Hellinger Theatre, Broadway
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat	
" "	March 1968 Colet Court Boy's School Production, City of London /
" "	17 Sept 1973 Albery Theatre, London
King and I	1953 Drury Lane, London 29 Mar 1951 St James Theatre, New York
King's Rhapsody	15 Sept 1949 Palace, London
Kismet	3 Dec 1953 Ziegfield Theatre, New York.
Kiss me Kate	1951 Coliseum, London. 30 Dec 1948 New Century Theatre, New York
La Cage Aux Folles	21 Aug 1983 Palace Theate, Broadway.
Les Miserables	30 Sept 1985 Barbican, London. 12 Mar 1987 Broadway Theatre N. Y.
Little Shop of Horrors	1982 WPA Theatre New York 1982
" "	(Orpheum Theatre NY 27 July 1982)
Mack and Mabel	6 Oct 1974 Majestic Theatre, New York
Maid of the Mountain	10 Feb 1917 Daly's Theatre, London
Mame	24 May 1966 Winter Garden Theatre, N.Y.
Man of La Mancha	22 Nov 1965 ANTA Washington Square off Broadway.
Me and My Girl	16 Dec 1937 Victoria Palace, London

Merry Widow	30 Dec 1905 VIENNA 8 June 1907 Daly's theatre, London
Miss Saigon	20 Sept 1989 Dury Lane Theatre, London
Oliver	30 June 1960 New Theatre, London
Pal Joey	1953 Prince's, London
Phantom of the Opera	1986
Porgy and Bess	1952 Stoll, London
South Pacific	1950 Dury Lane, London
Sunset Boulevard	1993

BOOKS USED TO HELP COMPILE THIS INFORMATION.

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