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**ISSUES IN THEATRICAL MANAGEMENT:
HOWARD AND WYNDHAM
AND THE EVOLUTION OF THE BRITISH TOURING CIRCUIT**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies
Faculty of Arts

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UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW
September 1997

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to analyse and discuss a number of key issues in theatrical management within the boundaries of a larger narrative about the history of the Scottish company, Howard and Wyndham. It considers changing shifts in leadership and policy, from actor-managers to business managers, from stock company to the rise and fall of the touring circuit, tensions between the provincial theatre and London's West End, the ground between commerce and art, the relationship of a profit-making company to subsidised theatres and the separation of theatre buildings and theatre production.

The study is divided into six chapters and a conclusion, with two appendices and bibliography. It covers a period from 1851 to 1977.

Chapter One introduces the thesis by attempting to define the role of manager in the theatre in relationship to the artform, discusses the work of earlier and famous theatrical managers, observes the historiography of theatrical managers and their work, discussing books about theatre history in which the subject is treated, at best, superficially.

Chapter Two examines the origins of the Howard and Wyndham organisation in the mid-nineteenth century, under the leadership of actor-managers at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh. It scrutinises their artistically and commercially respected enterprise, managing theatres, producing plays with a resident company and building the foundations for expansion.

Chapter Three observes the formal incorporation of the company, the rise of touring managers and their productions, further expansion in Scotland and England, its profitability and the transition from the founding Howard and Wyndham families to the Cruikshanks, another father and son partnership.

Chapter Four describes the influence of business managers, the move of head office to London, expansion towards theatrical monopoly and the company's relationship to primary producers through an interlocking myriad of directorships with West End theatres.

Chapter Five is an assessment of the company's detailed management operations, explaining how a sophisticated and profit oriented administration served its large chain of theatres.

Chapter Six considers the decline of the company and weighs internal causes leading to its closure with external influences wrought by the ebb of touring theatre.

The conclusion comments briefly on the Howard and Wyndham experience in its entirety, highlighting its striking characteristics and discussing its particular merits and shortcomings.

Appendices comprise a glossary of terms used in theatre management and touring as well as an examination of key contracts.

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CHAPTER ONE

THEATRICAL MANAGERS

Before 1970, when professional training for arts managers began in Britain¹, books dealing with theatre management were a rare curiosity.² Now, however, it has become increasingly apparent to laymen and professionals - and equally apparent to both incipient and established arts organisations themselves - that the business of organising, funding, managing, selling and sustaining almost any kind of theatre requires management of a special kind. This study examines key aspects of the history of one management, Howard and Wyndham. It is an examination of Scotland's longest-running theatre organisation, highlighting its changing methods, and conflicts and tensions associated with their several managers, including discussion of its actor-managers, touring managers, business managers and theatre buildings. It is a good time to ponder the theatre industry from an organisational and structural point of view - precisely because it is changing - and to ask what is the legacy of Howard and Wyndham. Indeed, could theatre today be managed in their once pioneering way?

Within western culture, and apart from early theatrical associations with religious observances, there has always been a commercial side to the theatre. Therefore, the work of a manager has been one of the ingredients of theatrical performance, and there has always been a need to manage this. For the playwright, whose goal is the presentation of his work before an audience, the person whose attention he must first win is someone, who though usually not an artist himself, stands in undeniable relationship to the artform. The function of manager is neither to write plays nor to act in them, but to bring those who do so together and, further, to bring the product of their joint efforts before the audience: the meeting of performance and audience is the manager's purpose.

To some workers in the theatre the word manager means money. The tradition has, at times, been one of mistrust by actors and stage staff, because the manager is the person supplying the funds of enterprise, taking from the public and handing to the artists. To other workers the manager is the person who controls the policy of the playhouse; the one who holds the drama in his hands and sways the destinies of individual artists. That is why throughout the history of the stage, certain artists, resentful of outside control, have been seeking to be their own managers, to guide the theatre in their own way.

Much of the best work in theatre from its earliest days has been done with the artist in control. For example, Jean-Baptiste Molière (1622-1673), actor and playwright, was his own manager. More than any other person, he was the founder of the Comédie Française, and from his company of “comedians” was born, when it merged with the troupe of the Hôtel de Bourgogne theatre in 1680, the longest-living theatrical management in Europe.

The first theatre manager in Britain, however, was not an artist but a businessman. Philip Henslowe (c.1550-1616) was a theatrical landlord, impresario, entrepreneur and banker, described as “the most enterprising manager of theatrical affairs of his day”.³ He was the financier of the Rose Playhouse and managed a minor group called the Admiral’s Men. The fashionable belief that an artist is not a good business person is not proved by facts. Sir William Davenant (1606-1668) was manager of the Cockpit Theatre and Duke’s Playhouse in London as well as being poet laureate, civil war general, opera director and playwright. His opera *The First Day’s Entertainment* and play *The Playhouse To Let* each contain references to company organisation.⁴ With Thomas Killigrew (1612-1683) of the Duke’s Playhouse, another playwright but less successful manager, Davenant secured a monopoly patent to set up the King’s company, using the patent to close down all other theatres except their own.

David Garrick (1717-1779) managed the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane during the time he was England’s greatest actor. His success and that of the theatre was continuous during his long spell in office from 1747.⁵ The playwright and parliamentarian Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816) was also principal manager of Drury Lane from 1776, when he bought Garrick’s interest, and went on to share the management of the King’s Theatre, Haymarket, from 1778, though some claimed that he was “financially incompetent”.⁶ Sir Henry Irving (1838-1905) held his own managerial reins from 1878 to 1899 at the Lyceum Theatre in London, albeit with the assistance of an able acting-manager, the novelist Bram Stoker (1848-1912).⁷ The Scottish actor-manager Sir George Alexander (1858-1918) had charge of the St. James’s Theatre for over twenty years and was responsible for staging many of the best plays before the First World War. Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1853-1917) and Sir Charles Wyndham (1837-1919) also reigned long as actor-managers in the theatres under their command, providing London with a continuous diet of new plays.

Some of the most astute business people in theatre have been among those contributing to its artistic health, such as Sir Charles Cochran (1872-1951) and Hugh (Binkie) Beaumont (1908-1973) who were part-time but influential Directors of Howard and Wyndham in production activities. Some of the lay managers, those interested in financial results only, and insistent that the theatre must pay for itself before it looks to art, have achieved the biggest failures. The issue is whether the theatre is better controlled by artists or by business people. Without doubt it should be by the former, the proviso being that the person must have business ability or be able to employ somebody else with that ability to co-ordinate the practical aspects of production. Any one of the artistic powers, dramatist, actor or producer, can take command, make decisions and guide the policy of a theatre, but after Henslowe and until the end of the First World War, the theatre in Britain was invariably run by *artist-managers*, combining the talents of acting or playwriting with administration.

Most facets of theatre - architecture, scene design, literature, acting and stage techniques - are well documented historically and in terms of contemporary practice. Comparatively little has been published about the history and practice of theatre management and producing. The memoirs of a few dozen eighteenth and nineteenth century English actor-managers, chronicles that record production casts and statistics and information that can be gathered from playbills, contracts, advertisements and programmes comprise a meagre library on the history of theatre management in Britain.

The first such work in Scotland was John Jackson's *The History of the Scottish Stage* (1793), which contains "A Distinct Narrative of Some Recent Theatrical Transactions", including his management of the first permanent theatre in Glasgow and of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh: especially his dispute with another manager, Stephen Kemble, and his steady search for reputation, reward and respectability. Under Jackson the stock company system became established in Scotland. He defined the manager's role as that of landlord, though he was himself also an actor, producer and impresario:

Managers should ensure the observance of propriety and decorum in the conduct of the stage, thus will they expunge the rooted prejudice against the sons of Thespis, as it is stronger in Scotland than in her sister kingdom....The heritable right of the manager as proprietor, when fortified and extended, must proceed by lineal descent or purchase, to future heritors, without possibility of a diminution of the manager's powers, unless by his will and consent.⁸

Jackson's work encompassed the principal activities of theatre management as it functions today. He represented "money" to his theatres: not necessarily in the sense of funding theatrical productions himself, but of securing the money by having access to credit or by attracting investors. That part of Jackson which was impresario sold the plays he had funded. He excited public attention in order to advertise his plays. In his role as impresario, or entrepreneur, he acted as a catalyst, transferring his acting companies from Glasgow to Edinburgh and on tour elsewhere in Scotland, and he brought actors and writers together in new collaborations, all of which is similar to theatre management today. Jackson's book is not so much a history of Scottish theatre, more the memoir of his organisation and, perhaps more indirectly, an insight into management.

Shortly after Jackson's work, in 1795, Tate Wilkinson (1739-1803), manager of the Yorkshire circuit, published *The Wandering Patentee*, another major work of reminiscence packed with information about theatre organisation, including his brief management of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, in 1781:

My own eagerness for variety, and high opinion of the proprietor's judgement, experience and veracity, made me anxious to manage the Theatre without recourse to the condition of the theatre, or the wardrobe, scenery, &c. I agreed with him at four hundred pounds rent for the year, and entered pell-mell to raise a regiment of comedians for Edinburgh, exclusive of my company at York. This northern expedition was undertaken at a time when sterling coin was truly scarce; and *wit without money* will never *ensure success*, either for the Church, the State or the *humble Stage!*

The wish for superior sway is inherent, more or less, in the human breast, than is fairly acknowledged in every class. The player wishes to be the manager (who is a despot); the manager is not contented but prays devoutly for something more permanent, superior, and more lastingly secure. And with such visionary objects we beguile our imaginations. Edinburgh holds out great temptation, and I might have had it two years after, in preference to Mr. Jackson, a manager who became an implacable and dangerous enemy.

A fatality has attended Edinburgh by its seldom having persons of probity as the managers to ensure its credit; though on successful seasons the treasury receives astonishing sums. Yet when the day of retribution arrives, it plainly appears in theatrical receipts. All is not golden that dazzles. Bad houses made the campaign very disagreeable, hazardous and fatiguing. The rent pushed me as hard as any blast of that severe weather in the north.⁹

Wilkinson was, unlike Jackson, a kind manager and his memoirs suggest no illusions about the art of management. They convey a consistent enthusiasm for the theatre over thirty-four years as a manager, continuing to greet new actors off the stagecoach and welcoming the audience front-of-house. Charles Beecher Hogan describes this management style as the

“practice of an innocent manager who knew no envy but had a simple, straightforward respect for the integrity of his profession.”¹⁰

In nineteenth century Scotland the main works about stage history were J.C. Dibdin's *The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage* (1888) and Walter Baynham's *The Glasgow Stage* (1892)¹¹, both containing hard core information and reference material on many managers, their buildings, plays and actors, but no definitions about the actual job. For a “person specification”, one turns to London where Percy Fitzgerald's essays on *The Drury Lane Managers* (1887) include:

The office of managing a theatre has always had a sort of fascination, and has drawn on for persons, qualified or unqualified, to ruin or prosperity. The attraction seems to lie in the feeling of absolute control, hundreds (and occasionally thousands) of persons being dependent on the will, humours or caprice of the administrator....In the instance of a really capable man there is the confidence that his powers will ensure him a certain success, while the knowledge of the public taste often tempts him to make the bold *coup*. There must be fortitude of the highest order, not be daunted or checked by reverse, and which will consider failure in a few ventures as inevitable accidents, which may delay, but must not alter, the larger policy which he is carrying. Disastrous as may be the prospects of the stage, plenty of new candidates for the duty of management are not wanting...We find fresh, eager hands, of the usual *bizarre* character.¹²

In twentieth century Scotland, there have been few studies of individual theatre managers or management and administration. Histories of the Gateway Theatre seasons in Edinburgh, the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh and the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow contain surprisingly little analysis of what being a “manager” involved in those organisations, and even here it is necessary to search carefully for commentary about the business of theatre.¹³ This study aims to recover some of the marginalised history of theatrical management, as an attempt to examine how theatres were run, or why in just that way: to examine how the touring theatre has got to be the way it is today.

More widely in the twentieth century the “director”, a comparatively new breed in the theatrical menagerie, has become the subject of studies almost as extensively as the actors with whom he works. The playwright needs no general definition at all. But to call a person a “manager”, in the theatre, is to cast only a vague light on a man or woman essential to the life of the theatre. The manager is actually no longer called that any more, being known as the “producer”, meaning “of the play”, whereas the word “manager” refers to the person working in the company that performs it or in the theatre where it is staged. Producers

produce plays - managers manage theatres.¹⁴ Job titles changed rapidly in the twentieth century, reflecting the intricacy and structure of a company. The director of a play was successively known as "Stage Manager", "Producer", and "Director" (an American term from the late 1940s). When directors joined the staffs of companies, they were known successively as "Resident Producer", "Director of Productions" and "Artistic Director". When the senior manager's role became administrative, the person was contracted as "Manager", "Theatre Manager", "General Manager", "Administrator", "Theatre Administrator", "Administrative Director", "General Administrator", "Managing Director", "General Director", "Theatre Director", "Executive Director", "Administrative Producer" and, in a self-regarding and pompous effort to align the subsidised theatre's business methods with those of industry in the 1990s: "Chief Executive". To complicate matters, the American term "producer", which is now used in British theatre, means manager. Job titles are usually inflated in subsidised theatre to compensate for low wages and reflect the tension between artistic and managerial interests in theatre. The descriptions are labels, but excite surprising passions, especially among those whom they purport to name.¹⁵

For the purposes of this study, it is also important to note that, by the 1890s, the word "manager" also included the role of "lessee", because the two functions are often given the same name. Owning a theatre and leasing a theatre are to be distinguished, as emphasised by Tracy C. Davis, as:

analogous to a shopkeeper owning the premises from which business is carried out as against a mere stallkeeper renting a space in the open marketplace. A theatre's manager might be the sole artistic director in complete control of the wares she hawked but she owned nothing. The distinction has not typically been a subject of concern to theatre historians, but it is a topic of considerable consequence ...and should be a central point of enquiry in our discipline.¹⁶

Within the theatre there is often resistance to the very idea of management, because some managers believe not just that their work thrives on chaos, but that there is a certain organisational benefit in this approach. The close integration of the administrative and artistic can dispel the notion that management is a subject in itself, rather than an efficient way of making theatre available and attractive to the theatregoer. This study offers discussion of changing issues in theatrical management, using Howard and Wyndham as a case study of practice, especially from a Scottish perspective, delving into their organisation to suggest its value to the current world of business skills and cultural administration for today's subsidised theatre. The experience of the company stands

testimony to the pressures and contradictions of trying to wrestle the ground between commerce and art, and this tension ebbs and flows through its evolution. To write a "history" of Howard and Wyndham would be a daunting topic, especially as most of their records have been destroyed. This study is not that, but rather a discussion of key issues within the boundaries of a larger narrative about provincial theatrical management.

¹ In 1963 the Arts Council revived and developed an in-service training scheme for people wishing to work as theatre managers in subsidised theatre companies. The first theoretical training course began at the Polytechnic of Central London in 1970. See *Training Arts Administrators: Report of the Committee of Enquiry*, Arts Council of Great Britain, London, 1971, p.12.

² The first British book dealing exclusively with this subject was Elizabeth Sweeting, *Theatre Administration*, Pitman, London, 1969. This examined management from the perspective of contemporary theatre, emphasising the contribution made to performance by the organiser in the subsidised theatre. Examination and understanding of the tension between commercial and funded theatre was addressed in John Pick's several works, especially *The Theatre Industry: Subsidy, Profit and the Search for New Audiences*, Comedia, London, 1985.

³ C. Walter Hodges, *The Globe Restored*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968, p.116.

⁴ Mary Edmond, *Rare Sir William Davenant*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1987, pp.159-178.

⁵ A chapter about Garrick's management style appears in Leigh Woods' *Garrick Claims the Stage: Acting as Social Emblem in Eighteenth Century England*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1984. In 'Managing the Theatre, Managing the World', Woods describes how Garrick's acting represented composite features of society, whilst his thoroughness as a manager embodied the self-reliance and pragmatism which were leading features of the Enlightenment. The hallmark of his management style was an accurate judgement and uncanny anticipation of public taste and this was satirised in his play *A Peep Behind the Curtain* (1767), in which an actor-manager named Patent mimicked his own style as an "outsider" in relation to the theatrical establishment.

⁶ See Curtis Price, Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume, *Italian Opera in Late Eighteenth Century London, Vol. I: The King's Theatre, Haymarket, 1778-1791*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995, p.56. This work is a full account of the decade between Sheridan's take-over of the King's Theatre and the fire in 1789, covering every aspect of his management, finances and artistic policy. His play *The Critic* (1779) is, in part, a burlesque on his management of Drury Lane, including the character of Dangle who mocks his own management (Act One, Scene One):

My power with the Manager is pretty notorious; but is it no credit to have applications from all quarters for my interest?—From lords to recommend fiddlers, from ladies to get boxes, from authors to get answers, and from actors to get engagements.

His wife, Mrs. Dangle, retorts:

Yes truly, you have contrived to get a share in all the plague and trouble of theatrical property, without the profit, or even the credit of the abuse that attends it.

⁷ Audrey Keith asks and answers the question of whether Bram Stoker was the first theatre administrator in the contemporary sense. See *The Business of Management at Henry Irving's Lyceum: An Individual Who Calls Himself Bram Stoker, Who Seems to Occupy Some Anomalous Position Between Secretary and Valet, or the Forefather of Theatre Administrators?* Unpublished M.Litt. thesis, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, 1992.

⁸ See John Jackson, *The History of the Scottish Stage*, Peter Hill, Edinburgh, 1793. p.232.

⁹ See Tate Wilkinson, *The Wandering Patentee*, published for the author, York, 1795: Vol.II., pp.81-84.

¹⁰ See Charles Beecher Hogan, *The London Stage, 1776-1800*, Arcturus Books, Carbondale, 1968, pp.lxxxvi-lxxxvii.

¹¹ J.C.Dibdin, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, Richard Cameron, Edinburgh, 1888. Walter Baynham, *The Glasgow Stage*, Robert Forrester, Glasgow, 1892.

¹² Percy Fitzgerald, 'The Drury Lane Managers', essay in Clement Scott, (ed.), *The Theatre*, Vol. IX, Carson and Comerford, London, 1 January 1887, p.28.

¹³ See *The Twelve Seasons of the Edinburgh Gateway Company 1953-1965*, St. Giles, Edinburgh, 1965; Joyce Macmillan, *The Traverse Theatre Story 1963-1988*, Methuen, London, 1988; Michael Coveney, *The Citz: 21 Years of the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre*, Nick Hern Books, London, 1990.

¹⁴ Colley Cibber, one of three actor-managers at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane from 1710, set down the duties of a manager in his *Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber*, Watts, London, 1740:

A Menager (*sic*), is to direct and oversee the Painters, Machinists, Musicians, Singers, and Dancers; to have an eye upon the Doorkeepers, under-Servants and Officers, that without such care, are too often apt to defraud us, or neglect their Duty...

Percy Fitzgerald, in 'The Drury Lane Managers', (*op.cit.* p.80), suggests that in adopting as a first principle the aim to make the theatre "pay", Cibber may have literally applied the arts of "management" - the French word *ménagement* to his theatre - furnishing the origin of the term.

¹⁵ See Asa Soderburg, *New Theatre Words*, Swedish OISTAT Centre, Stockholm, 1995, p.100, and Martin Harrison, *A Book of Words: Theatre*, Carcanet, Manchester, 1993, p.149. Perhaps it will not be long before the German title, "Intendant", is imported to Britain or even the recently fashionable title, "Curator", now used in the United States for managers who programme arts centres.

¹⁶ See Tracy C. Davis, 'Management and the structures of industrial capitalism', essay in Michael R. Booth and Joel H. Kaplan, (eds.), *The Edwardian Theatre*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, p.116. Despite the tendency to muddle theatrical terms for a manager, an excellent entry on the subject appeared in Charles S. Chetham, (ed.), *The Dramatic Year Book and Stage Directory, 1892*, Trischler, London, 1892, pp.674-680. This categorises nearly 500 managers as Proprietor, or Sole Proprietor; Proprietor and Manager; Lessee; Lessee and Manager; General Manager; Manager; Business Manager; Managing Director; Secretary and Director. Messrs. Howard and Wyndham are listed variously, according to the nature of their relationship to each theatre.



THE THEATRICAL MANAGER.

How's the house to-night?

CHAPTER TWO

ACTOR-MANAGERS, 1851-1894

This chapter describes the origins of Howard and Wyndham in Edinburgh as an actor-management, where they became an artistically and commercially respected enterprise, developing a stock company and repertoire, managing theatres and building the foundations for commercial expansion.

R. H. (Robert Henry) Wyndham (1813-1894), founder of this management, was a skilful actor and manager from Salisbury; a man of unusual enterprise and vision. He began his career as a member of Macready's company at Covent Garden and first came to Scotland to play at the Adelphi Theatre in Glasgow. William Murray (1790-1852), long serving manager of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh, saw him perform there and brought him to join his company in Edinburgh in 1846.¹ Wyndham became Murray's last assistant manager and, on Murray's retirement, Wyndham took the lease of the Adelphi Theatre in 1851.²

From 1853 to 1859, after a short lease by the comedian W. F. Lloyd, Wyndham became the last lessee of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh (responsible for the ground rent and the theatre building itself), where he made his headquarters. A few years before he had married Rose Saker, the daughter of a low comedian. A talented actress, with a gift for training children in ballet, she became his working partner for a long and successful career. At the end of his life he could claim to have laid the foundations for what was to become, after Moss' Empires, the biggest theatre-owning, play-presenting and touring management in Britain: a chain of theatres that was run, firstly, by his son Fred and his Irish-born business partner and fellow actor, J. B. (James Brown) Howard (1841-1895)³, and then by the Cruikshanks, another father and son partnership.⁴

During his early career Wyndham had outshone Charles Kean (1811-1868) with the splendour of his productions of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 1857 he engaged Henry Irving, straight from a debut in Sunderland, to be a juvenile lead. The future first Knight of the British theatre was given four hundred and twenty eight roles in Wyndham's Edinburgh's stock company. The business of producing theatre in Edinburgh was closely tied to winning official recognition and public approval. The Wyndhams kept a jealous eye on the credit and reputation of their company so that, for the first time in Scotland, actors were highly respected citizens. In a speech to the



J. B. HOWARD.

Edinburgh University Students' Union in 1891, Irving told its members that he "was a member of a University at Edinburgh" - Wyndham's old Theatre Royal:

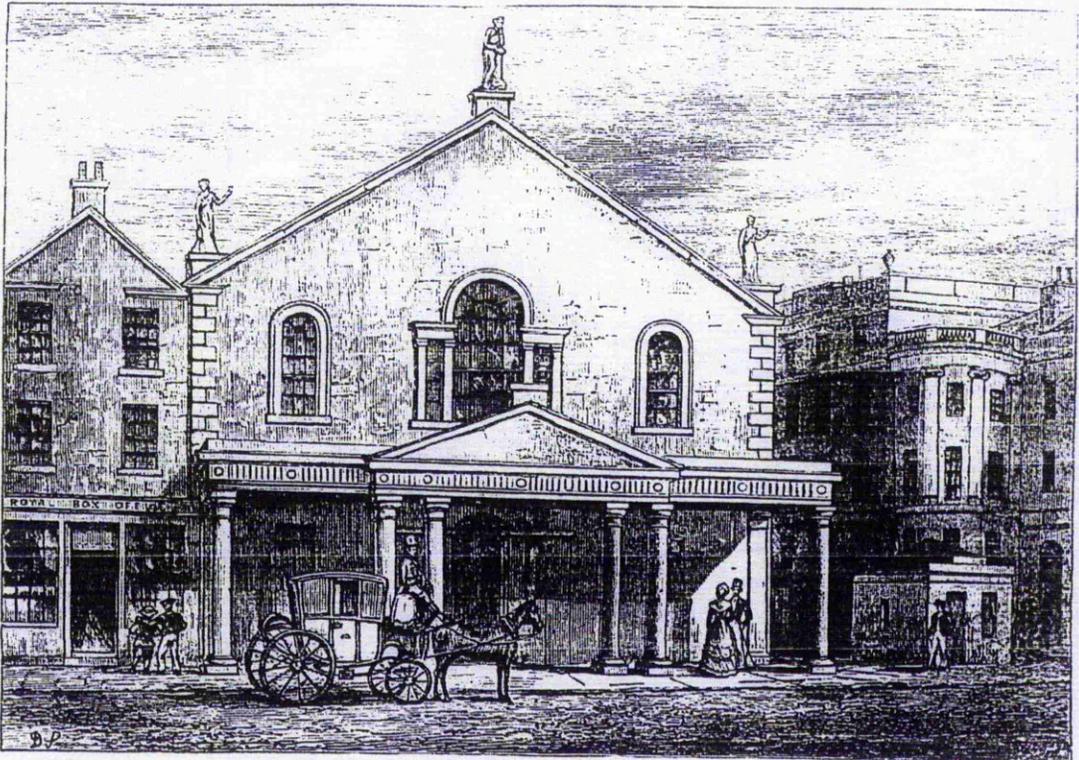
I studied there for two years and a half my beautiful art, and learnt the lesson that you will learn, that: deep the oak must sink its roots in earth obscure, that hopes to lift its branches to the sky.⁵

When Murray retired, his Edinburgh monopoly was divided for a short-time, with Lloyd at the Theatre Royal and Wyndham at the Adelphi Theatre. There was, rather like the Festival Theatre and King's Theatre in the 1990s, much speculation in the press as to the success of the two competing theatres. Wyndham renovated the Adelphi, adding a new stage, redecorated the auditorium, enlarged the pit, with, for the first time in Scotland, upholstered the orchestra stalls in front of the pit benches. The alterations cost him £4,000 which was recovered from profits in his first year.⁶ His opening production was *The School For Scandal* (Richard Brinsley Sheridan, 1777) in which he played Charles Surface. His wife was Lady Teazle and, keeping family ties to the fore of the company, his brother-in-law, Mr. Saker, played Moses. In order to compete with the Theatre Royal, Wyndham reduced prices. The Dress Circle was 2s.6d., pit (or orchestra stalls) 2s., pit 1s., gallery 6d., half-price (at half-time) 1s.6d. and 1s. The prices were, on average, 6d. less than those charged by Lloyd. There were frequent clashes of repertory between the two theatres: Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Rob Roy*⁷, and *The Corsican Brothers* (Dionysus Boucicault, 1852) could often be seen in both theatres in the same week. Despite rivalry the two managers were friendly to each other:

We were particularly gratified with the enthusiastic reception given to Mr. Wyndham, the manager of the rival theatre, whose attendance at the Theatre Royal evinced the existence of cordiality and friendship between those whose position tends to produce estrangement. The whole Theatre rose on his appearance, and for several minutes the huzzas were absolutely deafening. To these tokens of esteem and regard Mr. Wyndham feelingly responded.⁸

The short period of Lloyd's management at The Theatre Royal quickly became over-extended financially, unable to cope with the wage costs of over one hundred members of the stock company. Wyndham took over the management, reducing the payroll to thirty five actors, until he was forced to sell the theatre in 1859 to the government, for construction of the General Post Office.⁹ He transferred operations to the Queen's Theatre and Opera House, one of the many earlier theatres on the site of the present Festival

Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.



THE OLD THEATRE ROYAL. (From a Drawing by T. H. Shepherd, published in 1829.)

Theatre. His seasons included many revivals of the National Drama, the dramatised Waverley novels. Wyndham always lived in a flat above his theatres, and it was at the Adelphi in 1853, four days before the fire, that his son, (Frederick) F. W. P. Wyndham (1853-1930), was born.

During 1869, Wyndham senior took leave of theatrical affairs and leased the theatre to J.B. Howard for a summer season. This younger actor, who came from western Ireland, had become a star of the company, principally through playing the title role in revivals of *Rob Roy* and *Guy Mannering* (Sir Walter Scott, 1816)¹⁰. He inspired one critic, writing under the name Thalia:

Mr. Howard exhibited a superiority of acting seldom witnessed on our boards. He gave an importance and effect to Rob Roy Macgregor to which we were strangers....His triumph over the audience was complete, and electrified the house with all the delicious luxury of woe, and crowned the conquest of the actor with drama's chaplet.¹¹

J. B. Howard's management of several summer seasons led him into partnership with Wyndham, until the founder retired in 1876, when a new Theatre Royal opened at the top of Leith Walk. Howard wrote in the opening night programme:

When entering on such an important undertaking as the Management of the new Edinburgh Theatre Royal, I beg to assure the inhabitants of the Capital that I do so with a due appreciation of the difficult and responsible task that lies before me. The history of the Drama in Edinburgh is an eminently brilliant one. Among its founders was Allan Ramsay, the author of the most delightful pastoral comedy in the language,¹² and when Home wrote his *Douglas* the Edinburgh theatre was already an important and flourishing institution. It is needless, today, to enumerate the long list of great names which have been associated within the present century, with the Drama in this city. In its earlier years Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey and Lord Cockburn were its steady and unfailing patrons; while, for actors, not to speak of the frequent visits of Mrs. Siddons, Edmund Kean and Charles Young, we had Mr. Murray and Mrs. Mackay, Mrs. Renaud and Miss Nicol. In our own time Mr. Wyndham and I have not lacked the support of distinguished living citizens; and if the stage has been less peculiarly national than it was when under the direction of Mr. Murray, it has least been the unfailing mirror of our time, giving back to society its own lights and shadows, its gleams of mirth and its passages of pathos. This splendid tradition it is the fond and anxious hope of my management to perpetuate and maintain. I am the more fortified in this hope by the knowledge that the Edinburgh public are ever eager to reward earnest effort, and the culture which distinguishes every class of the Modern Athenians, links them, in a peculiarly close manner, to those higher walks of the Drama with which the Theatre Royal, under my management, will be altogether identified.¹³



Macready, as is well known, used to shake a ladder violently before going on as Shylock, for the scene with Tubal, in *The Merchant of Venice*; and Liston used to "curse and sputter to himself" while waiting to appear in a scene of comic rage. Phelps had the same habit; and Mr. J. B. Howard, the famous representative of Rob Roy, swore so terribly before his entrance in an energetic scene, that a female super protested that it "made her flesh creep."

THEATRE-ROYAL EDINR.

SOLE LESSEE, R. H. WYNDHAM, 95 PRINCES STREET

FINAL CLOSING

OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

To-Night, 25th May 1859.

The Public is respectfully informed that a Committee of Gentlemen, Friends of the Drama, have kindly undertaken to make arrangements for imparting to the performance of This Evening a marked and interesting character, with a view to recall and perpetuate, as far as possible, the many delightful recollections connected with the history of the Scottish Stage, which are inseparable from the Building; and for the purpose of shewing, as the Committee have been kind enough to say, "the respect they entertain for Mr. and Mrs. WYNDHAM, and their high approval of the manner in which the theatrical amusements of Edinburgh have been conducted under their management."

The Box Plan will be exhibited at Mr WOODS ROOMS, 49 George Street, where applications for Seats must be made.
BOXES AND STALLS. 5s: PIT, 2s: LOWER GALLERY. 1s: UPPER GALLERY. 6d.

The Performance will commence with the Favorite Comedy, Written by Tom TARTAN and GEORGE KEITH, Esq., entitled

MASKS & FACES

Mr Charles Penderer by Mr WYNDHAM.

Triplet by Mr EDMUND CLOVER, Lessee of the Theatre-Royal and Princess Theatre, Glasgow, who has expressed a desire to appear on this occasion
Ernest Vase by Mr F. D. LYONS—Colley Cakes by Mr FOOTE—Cris by Mr ESSER JONES—Scent by Mr FISHER.

Call Boy by Mr E. SAKER—Lyons'shus Triplet by Master JONES—Fropsey by Master THOMPSON.

Sequel by Mr IRVING—Hundred by Mr WANDENHOFF—Cotelder by Mr WALLACE—Burdock by Mr CARROLL.
Fog Wellington by Mrs WYNDHAM.

Kitty Olive by Miss M. DAVIS—Mrs Triplet by Mrs E. JONES—Hoselash by Mrs M. FOOTE—Maid by Miss THOMSON.
Hotel Vase by Miss SOPHIE MILES.

M. WYNDHAM will deliver

A FAREWELL ADDRESS

To be followed by the Lachlan's Fare of

HIS LAST LEGS

Mr Felix O'Callaghan, a Man of Genius in His Last Legs, by Mr WYNDHAM.

Charles by Mr IRVING—Mr Rivers by Mr ESSER JONES—Dr Banks by Mr FOOTE—John by Mr E. SAKER—Thomas by Mr DAVIS.
Mrs Mantago by Miss NICOL—Julia by Miss JONES—Mrs Beals by Mrs E. JONES—Betty by Miss S. DAVIS.

After which the National Drama of

CRAMOND BRIG

James, King of Scotland, by Mr GEORGE MELVILLE.

Jack Howison by Mr FISHER—Dicks of that 24 by Mr T. ROGERSON—Murdock by Mr WALLACE—Oscar by Mr ROPER.
Crime by Mr I. OUGLAS—Tom Maxwell by Mr DAVIS—Page by Miss S. DAVIS.

Libian Howison by Miss NICOL—Martin by Miss M. DAVIS, in which Character she will sing the Incidental Song of

"A KISS AHINT THE DOOR."

To conclude with a Moving and Be-Moving

VALEDICTORY SKETCH

Mr Wyndham by HIMSELF.

Spirit of the Past by Miss NICOL—Spirit of the Future by Miss M. DAVIS

Mrs Wyndham by HERSELF.

The Music selected and arranged by Mr Wm. HOWARD.

A new Patent Safety Envelope, modelled expressly for the occasion, by Mr PATTERSON.

SCENE. STAGE OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

Tableau 1. Meeting of Bailie Nicol Jarvie and Rob Roy in the Glasgow Tolbooth.

TABLEAU 2. FOREST of FONTAINBLEAU.

Deadly Encounter between Louis de Frenchi and Chateau Renaud.

TABLEAU 3. PALACE AT BRIDEWELL.

Interview of Cardinal Wolsey with Queen Katherine, surrounded by her Maids of Honour.

TABLEAU 4. PANTOMIMIC COMBINATION.

The whole of the Performances terminating with

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM!

BY THE ENTIRE STRENGTH OF THE COMPANY.

REID, Printer, Nottingham Place, Edinburgh.

This period was an era of great prosperity for legitimate theatre in Edinburgh, before being challenged on all sides by other forms of live, popular entertainment such as minstrel shows and variety acts. Despite the negative influence of the Theatres' Licensing Act of 1737, which had confirmed the restriction of legitimate theatre performances to two patent houses in London, the legislation had encouraged pressure for the theatre's artistic and social development outside London. Edinburgh had long theatrical traditions dating back to medieval times. Because it was a capital city it regarded itself, as did Dublin, as less provincial than other cities of comparable size. Edinburgh was the first city outside London to win protection for its theatre, by a Royal Patent in 1767, which repealed the Licensing Act of 1737. The work of William Murray (1790-1852), manager of the Theatre Royal for thirty six years to 1851, had established a good climate for expansion. This manager had won the theatre public approval, largely overcoming a vigorous anti-theatrical prejudice prevalent in Scotland. Wyndham continued to run his theatres with a stock company, exercising discipline to maintain its social respectability, as distinct from the many more haphazard and irregular strolling companies. He was the first manager in Scotland to employ all actors on a salaried basis (usually starting at 3s. per week) rather than the share scheme used by Murray, but continuing to engage them according to "lines of business" to play particular ranges of parts, such as walking gentleman, leading lady, low comedian or Harlequin. The "stock" was the standard range of plays that Wyndham had in repertory, to be played whenever required, often at short notice and with little rehearsal. The main "business" of the play was traditionally stereotyped and when an outside "star" actor of the play was engaged, he looked after himself, only giving a few instructions to the company on arrival in Edinburgh. All the plays and the casting of them were recorded in the "Stock Book", which was a vital tool for forward planning.

Many future luminaries served their apprenticeship in this system under Wyndham: the actress and pioneering manager, Lady Bancroft, *née* Marie Wilton (1839-1921), the international star John Laurence Toole (1830-1906), the actor-manager Edward Compton (1852-1918) and playwright Sir Arthur Wing Pinero (1855-1934).¹⁴ The company used the same actors for a year or more of different productions. It was a self-sufficient ensemble, capable of producing old and new plays with the same nucleus of actors, augmented in many weeks by a visiting star. Wyndham was often the leading man, and travelled as talent scout to recruit new actors. Toole wrote of his debut with Wyndham's company:

I was with Dillon in Dublin where Mr. Robert Wyndham, of the Edinburgh Theatre, saw me and offered me an engagement at 3s. a week, which I accepted. On the 9th of July 1853, I made my first appearance on the Edinburgh stage as 'Hector Timid' in the play *The Dead Shot*. I had travelled from Dublin to Edinburgh in the afternoon, very tired and weary. I put up at Milne's Hotel in Leigh Street, and after a rehearsal went to bed, fairly worn out. I left instructions with the landlady to call me and bring me a cup of tea at a certain hour, which would give me plenty of time to get to the Adelphi Theatre; but she forgot her instructions, and I was still sleeping soundly when a messenger arrived from the theatre to inquire for me. The curtain was up. I was in a terrible fright. I sprang out of bed, dressed, rushed to the theatre, and was just in time to scramble upon the stage and take up my cue from Wyndham! In entering, I stumbled over a mat and fell on the manager, and this so worried and upset me that throughout the whole piece I was nervous and wretched. Next day, however, I was agreeably surprised to find the critics unanimous in their praise of my acting, specially pointing out how 'appropriate to the character of "Hector Timid" was the uneasy manner and faltering gait of the young comedian.' Everything, you see, had happened for the best, even the carelessness of my landlady, my accident, my nervousness, all my disasters and the forgiveness of Robert Wyndham.¹⁵

A characteristic of Howard and Wyndham's management in this period was decentralisation. Their Theatre Royal was run as an independent entity, for under the stock company system with its own company of actors, albeit with occasional visiting stars, there was little inducement for the actor-managers to establish business relationships with other theatres beyond Edinburgh. Having its own, permanent, resident producing company meant that they had nothing to gain from alliances with other theatres or other producing companies and, in turn, these had nothing to offer Howard and Wyndham. It was entirely self-sufficient. They had their own actors and were under their own management, both in administration and production. They owned their sets, properties and wardrobe. They did not even have to look for plays to produce, for besides the standard classical Scottish and English dramas that were in the repertoire, they could, in the absence of adequate copyright legislation, readily obtain, at low cost, pirated versions of newer successes.

As "manager", R. H. Wyndham's work encompassed a great deal more than his late-twentieth century successors. He was primarily an actor, whose duties included play selection, casting, directing (at least to the extent that directing existed in those days), designing, publicity, building management and looking after finances - all functions which, especially with the advent of subsidy, have today become specialised and individualised. His supremacy was won by playing the great Shakespearean roles, but unlike the actor-managers in London who chose mainly plays that fitted their personality, Wyndham was not jealous of his standing, and engaged stars from London who were often other actor-



THEATRE ROYAL

PROGRAMME.

No. 39. PRICE ONE PENNY.

LESSEE ... MR J. B. HOWARD
 Acting Manager. ... MR F. BARNARD

LAST SIX NIGHTS
 OF MR JOSEPH

JEFFERSON

IN HIS WORLD-RENOUNDED IMPERSONATION OF

RIP VAN WINKLE.

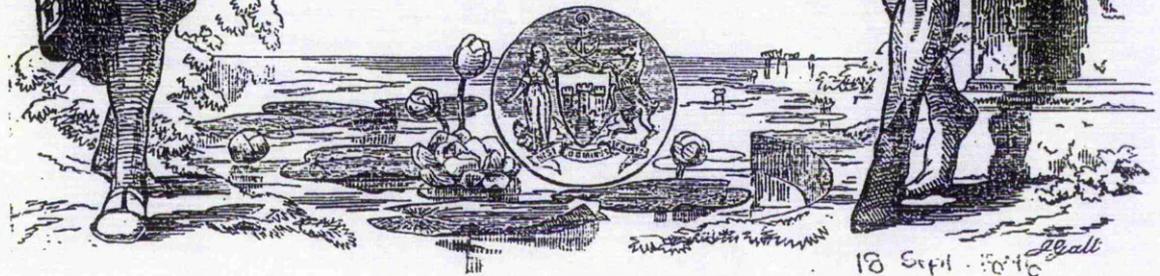
Scenic Artists, Messrs F. C. ELLERMAN and W. MORGAN

REFRESHMENTS

May be obtained in the Saloon of the Dress Circle
 Littlejohn's Ices, 6d each; Ginger Beer, Lemonade,
 Potash and Soda Waters, Lime Juice Cordial,
 Confections, &c., may be had of
 the Attendants.

Stage Director, - - - - - Mr J. H. SLATER
 Musical Director, - - - - - Mr E. W. JENKINS

Doors Open at 7-15, to Commence at 7-45.
 Saturdays Half-an-Hour Earlier. Children in Arms not Admitted.



18 Sept. 1876 J. Ball

managers. Nonetheless, he was so popular and able a performer that he was able to dictate the policy of the theatre, whereas his counterpart today has often relinquished the business and promotion functions to administrators:

We all know that the effect of the actor-manager system at the Theatre Royal is to impose on every author who wishes to have his work produced in first-rate style, the condition that there shall be a good part for Messrs. Howard or Wyndham in it. This is not in the least due to the vanity and jealousy of our actor-managers: it is due to their popularity. The strongest fascination at a theatre is the fascination of the actor or actress, not of the author. More people go the Theatre Royal to see Mr. Howard or Mr. Wyndham than to see the plays. If Mr. Wyndham were to produce a tragedy, or Mr. Howard a comedy, in which they were cast as walking gentlemen, the public would stay away; and the author would have reason to curse the self-denial of the actor-managers.¹⁶

Wyndham and Howard, operating as actor-managers without subsidy or the regular private backing of "angels", ran a theatre sustained by a tension between "art" and "commerce", and these extremes were to continue through their successors' work, up to the closure of the company a century later. This is illustrated in a variety of ways, from the small dramas of the mid-nineteenth century compared with the spectacular melodramas of the same period, to the subsidised theatre's prejudice against the popular theatre of writers such as Noël Coward and Terence Rattigan, whom Howard and Wyndham presented in revivals up to the 1970s. Managers have always been forced into a stance where they must negotiate this tension in order to survive. Since even relatively successful regional theatres today are only able to earn approximately 50 per cent of their expenses at the box office, new funding strategies are constantly being tested in order to ensure that "art" has a "commercial" market to appeal to the government funding bodies. The uneasy landscape between art and commerce characterised much of the repertoire in Edinburgh, as suggested by their five hours' bills which mixed serious drama with sketches, addresses, musical interludes and excerpts from other favourite plays.

In addition to the tension between high art and low art, there was also a tension between what theatre was staged in Scotland and what was happening in London. In the eighteenth century, John Home's *Douglas* (1756) had entered the London repertoire, whilst in the nineteenth century, the National Drama was occasionally exported to Covent Garden and Drury Lane at the two Theatres Royal, but after these stage adaptations of Sir Walter Scott's novels, examples of Scottish written work transferred to London were few and far

between. Edinburgh became, under Wyndham, mainly an extended English stock company circuit, built into the big business of a touring theatre chain by his successors. Historically, theatre in Britain has been perceived largely as a history of the London stage, despite the fact that there was a vast amount of activity elsewhere. The tension of London domination versus the provincial supplicant, or West End versus the "regions" as they are known today, is illustrated by Howard and Wyndham's use of visiting stars from London, engaged at their Theatre Royal stock company in the fashion begun in the 1790s. However, the company was one of the few that did not have to depend on stars exclusively, for the managers were local stars in their own right. The rivalry between London and Scotland, and between London and the English provinces, continued between stock companies and touring companies and this tension led eventually to the move of Howard and Wyndham's headquarters from Edinburgh to London. The founding actor-managers had settled for kingship in Scotland, whereas their business manager successors made London the summit of their ambition.

Provincial theatres were used by the profession as the natural places to obtain the training and the experience needed to work in London. Wyndham's contribution to the training of actors before the advent of drama schools was acknowledged by Irving:

In a country where there is no Academy the only professors of acting are the actors, and the only true school of acting is a well-conducted playhouse. For the first years of my early stage life, I was engaged by Mr. Wyndham at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, an actor who took pleasure in imparting to the younger members of the company, as well as circumstances permitted, much of his own knowledge and the rudiments of his art. I then spent some years in another theatre, under the management of a proprietor not an actor. During the whole of these later years I missed grievously the kind advice of my old actor-manager, Mr. Wyndham, and I had to grope my way as well as I could without his counsel and friendship. Such was my own experience of the system in Edinburgh and I owe him a lasting debt of gratitude. I make no attempt to argue the question as to the right and proper people to become the managers of theatres. This is a matter which the public decide for themselves. I speak from an experience of over thirty years, and of this country only; and I can say, without hesitation, that the managements which have benefited and advanced our calling and added vastly to the intellectual recreation of the people have been those of actors.¹⁷

John Laurence Toole, foremost low comedian of the nineteenth century's last decades, also acknowledged his training in Edinburgh:

Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham were for many years two of the most indefatigable workers in the theatre profession. Both of them excellent actors, they managed together the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, with a thorough knowledge of their profession. Many distinguished actors began their careers under their management, who have in their retirement the great satisfaction of receiving and being received by ladies and

gentlemen who, mere beginners in their Theatre, are now in the foremost ranks of the profession, more than one or two having won a world-wide celebrity. Edinburgh was hard school in the good old days of stock companies; it paid small salaries and it exacted laborious service, but its discipline and its traditions made or marred theatrical reputations; it was a school in which the fittest survived and the incapable came to grief.¹⁸

Wyndham was entertained at a banquet at the Balmoral Hotel in 1879, to mark his achievements "in the community, during a long career as a theatrical manager in Edinburgh". Sir Alexander Grant, Principal of Edinburgh University, presided and, in response to his complimentary speech, Wyndham said:

My earliest theatrical aspiration was directed towards Edinburgh, and in order to prepare myself for any contingency that might arise, I thought that the proper thing to do under the circumstances was to study the character of 'Young Norval' in the tragedy of *Douglas*, which I accordingly did, and selected at the same time a wide field for the operation, for I committed the words to memory among the cloisters of Stonehenge, in the middle of Salisbury Plain. I think it was somewhere about the years 1836 or 1837 that I first made my appearance in the good old town of Salisbury; but I was not very successful, for the local critic of the day stated that he did not think the young gentlemen who appeared last night in the character of 'Young Norval' was ever destined to set the Thames on fire. This was very severe, considering, as Sir Alexander has stated, that I paid the manager 20s. for the right to make a fool of myself for one night. I, however, worked steadily on, undergoing at times all the vicissitudes inseparable from the early career of most professional men, till after many years of probation, I found myself announced to appear in Birmingham in the character of 'Romeo' to the 'Juliet' of Miss Ellen Tree, afterwards Mrs. Charles Kean. This was perhaps the most successful engagement I ever played in my life, for it was there that I first met my wife. Subsequently I had the honour of appearing before Louis Philippe at the theatre in the Tuilleries in the comedietta of *A Day after the Wedding*. At length my time came for appearing in Edinburgh, and never shall I forget the impression made upon me when I first beheld this magnificent city. Coming as I did from Glasgow, where it sometimes rains, I could scarcely fail to be impressed by the sight before me. The castle, with its green slopes, the Scott Monument, Calton Hill in the distance, with the fine old town, as it were, keeping watch and ward, felicitously illumined with a spring sunshine, filled me at once with admiration at the brilliant sights before me, and with awe to think that I was soon to appear before an Edinburgh audience, distinguished at once for its high culture, great intellectual refinement, and critical acumen. I made my first appearance on a rather ominous day - the 1st of April in the year 1845, which date counts so far back that my friends frequently joked me, and said I was out in the '45 - the character which I played being 'Sir Thomas Clifford' to the Julia of Miss Helen Faucit, in Sheridan Knowles' play of *The Hunchback*, and I believe that on the whole I was tolerably successful. I then laboured hard in my vocation, and upon the secession of Mr. Murray and Mr. Lloyd from the Theatre Royal some friends insisted, against my will, that I should undertake the management of the Theatre Royal, assisting me at the time not only with money, but what was, if possible, of equal importance, their hearty goodwill and co-operation. Since then their kindness has known no bounds. They have presented me with everything the heart of man could wish for, and now as culmination of that kindness they have invited me to this grand banquet, so that now I fear there is nothing left to

present me with unless the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Council should come to my rescue and present me with the freedom of the city.¹⁹

One month later, Wyndham was indeed given the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh, the first actor to receive the accolade and the last, until Sean Connery in 1991.

When the revolutionary political, social and artistic changes in Scotland brought about a loss of home-grown stock companies in the 1880s, theatregoing assumed a class division with the escalation of urbanisation. Music halls began and managers could make big money on smaller outlays in variety theatre. The new railway network brought entire touring companies into Scotland, making the stock companies redundant and London dominant. Touring began to break the traditions of Wyndham (senior) and Howard. The breakdown of their stock company system and its replacement by touring changed the character of theatre management as completely as the advent of power machinery and the evolution of the factory system had changed the character of manufacturing industry. It is, therefore, possible to speak of an "industrial revolution" in the theatre, since this term suggests all that is implied by the shift from stock to touring. Howard and Wyndham fought on, with a resident company at the Theatre Royal and, later, at the Lyceum, with summer seasons by the Howard and Wyndham Players. The backbone of the repertoire continued to be the Waverley dramas, often new versions commissioned from members of the company such as Robert Buchanan and Charles Webb. Edward Moss began business in a music hall in Chambers Street, Edinburgh and was later to build his chain of Empire Palaces. The most Scottish aspect of the theatre became the pantomime, when casts often exceeded 250 people.

In 1883 Howard severed his connection with the Theatre Royal, and brought Wyndham out of retirement²⁰ to share the building of the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. Wyndham wrote to Henry Irving in March 1883:

Notwithstanding the increasing prosperity of the drama for several seasons past, and many hopeful and new prospects for the future, which now began to show themselves, I will not return to my charge of manager without feelings of the deepest anxiety. A long and hard service in the acting line, aided by the generous approbation of the Edinburgh public, has elevated me to a respectable rank in that department, notwithstanding it has been pursued with occasional disadvantages of rivalry. Many of the difficulties, incident to our course, have driven me to retirement from so thorny a path. A gleam of hope would urge me on, and a feeling of honest pride forbade me to withdraw under any circumstance which might give to my retirement the least aspect, either to myself, Rose, J.B.H. or the public, of my having withdrawn in any

way defeated. I hoped that a point of respectable mediocrity might be confessedly attained, when a graceful retirement from the profession could be effected. So gradual was a progress to this point, that I actually reached my humble wish before I perceived it. When I did, a new delightful feeling of the possibility of fame, in addition to pecuniary advantages, has combined to beckon me in a pursuit of a new theatre for Edinburgh and a return to the stage for which I have never felt any romantic partiality. I will now return to the career of management, and surely no aspirant, excepting you, ever entered upon this duty with fairer prospects, public or private.²¹

Howard was soon joined by Wyndham's son as the junior partner. Edinburgh born and bred, he was, like Howard and the elder Wyndham, an actor who had played all over Britain, including London. Acting, however, was not his forte. Whereas Howard was an actor who knew how to manage, Wyndham junior was a manager who could be relied on to give a competent performance when required. In the years that lay ahead, it was primarily F.W.P. Wyndham who laid the foundations of the Howard and Wyndham empire. Nonetheless, he was never simply a business person, but rather an artist whose art was theatre management, and was the third actor-manager of the business. His first major business transaction was to become, with Howard, joint lessee of the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, in May 1883.²² This theatre held £200 at ordinary prices.²³ The famous male impersonator of the music-hall, Lady de Frece, *née* Vesta Tilley (1864-1952), recalled working with the company in Newcastle as a principal boy:

Very happy, too, were the several pantomime engagements I played at the Theatre Royal with Messrs Howard and Wyndham; the biggest theatre proprietors in Scotland. Both were very charming men to work for, and they were also very popular actors, touring their own theatres with plays of mostly Scottish appeal. I saw them in *The Lady of the Lake*, in which Mrs. Howard also appeared, and a very fine show it was. Howard played Roderick Dhu and Wyndham Marmaduke, and their broadsword combat was a thing to be remembered.²⁴

As lessees, Howard and Wyndham maintained a delicate and strained relationship with the Newcastle landlords. The Theatre Royal was in need of technical refurbishment to cope with the bigger touring companies, which needed greater earnings. The financial capacity of the box-office was of crucial importance and the success of the Scottish lessees led to demands for this theatre to be seen as more prestigious. Safety requirements, too, were now demanded by licensing authorities, anxious to prevent fires. Insurance premiums were high and proprietors could no longer fall back on the monopoly to maintain their position in what was now a highly competitive business. The basic conditions of the lease related to the use of the building in exchange for rent. If the proprietors wanted to increase the rent, or if the lessee wanted an improvement in the working conditions or box office



R. E. Ruddock,

F. W. WYNDHAM.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.

capacity, a difficult negotiation ensued. Such a situation occurred in 1894. Despite a renovation of the Theatre Royal in 1867, it had remained virtually unchanged since construction in 1837. Howard and Wyndham were playing newer theatres in Scotland and they could not make ends meet in a dilapidated theatre. Their request for renovation was declined by the proprietors and so in 1895 they took over the larger Tyne Theatre and Opera House instead.²⁵ The Theatre Royal was, meanwhile, leased to their former Glasgow staff member, Robert Arthur. Both Mr. and Mrs. Howard²⁶ and Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham appeared frequently on stage in Newcastle and produced their own pantomimes that were rotated in successive years to Edinburgh and Glasgow.²⁷ That year, perhaps out of spite to the Theatre Royal, Howard announced, from the stage, that the subject of the forthcoming pantomime at the Tyne Theatre would be *Aladdin*:

Singularly enough, Mr. Arthur had fixed upon the same subject for the Royal. While it would be wiser for one or other of the rival managers to give way in the choice of subject, not only for their own interests but for the sake of the public it will, nevertheless, be interesting when *Aladdin* is produced at both houses to witness the different treatment adopted. Apropos the Tyne Theatre engagements for the season as announced by Mr. Howard, who, I am glad to say has recovered from his nervous attack, it is to be said that every company of first class note is on the list. Mr. Arthur will have to hurry up at the opposition house in Grey Street to keep pace with the formidable combination against him at the Tyne. It is just as well that we have healthy competition in the way of theatrical management, for without it, the manager is predominant; with it, the public call the tune, as they ought always to do as the payers.²⁸

This reporter touched upon key issues in theatrical management: the manager's relationship to the public, competition and buildings. The company's experiences in Newcastle suggest that "bricks and mortar" or "real estate" management was becoming, from an economic point of view, the dominant factor in their business. At various times in the history of theatre management the balance of power shifts between the bricks and mortar interests and those of the producer. Without attempting to indicate an order of their importance, the reasons for this are pertinent at this point in the evolution of the company. The first reason why bricks and mortar may be the dominant interest is that a theatre building is relatively permanent while the production is of very short duration. Theatres do not, of course, last forever (and, as has been noted, frequently burnt down in the 1800s), but they usually remained in existence for perhaps thirty years, on average, and in many instances a much longer time. On the other hand, a year was a long life for a touring production, and longer runs in London have always meant an exceptional old age. Occasional instances of revivals

do not count, because each revival is, essentially, a new production from a manager's standpoint. In short the stability of the theatre is, as against the instability of the production, the first factor in favour of bricks and mortar. When Howard and Wyndham's stock company system finished, the relative security and continuity of a resident company was replaced by a new focus on theatre buildings. The second reason is concentration of control: the new Howard and Wyndham circuit was attractive to investors and threw the balance of control in their favour as the circuit expanded. A No.1 theatre in a big city called for a large investment of capital, while a big production required a relatively small amount of investment. A theatre building was considered to be a more stable investment than production, and for that reason attracted capital more readily, but there were counteracting factors to steer capital to productions. In the first place, a production held out the promise of a tremendous profit in relation to the investment. After the Copyright Act in 1911, and the rise of cinema, live theatre held out the possibility of picture rights, foreign rights and overseas touring rights in addition to the profit of the original production. Big successes were rare, but they were always possibilities to lure the investor. Moreover, it has always been the production and not the theatre building, which holds the glamour. The natural tendency for buildings to dominate the theatre business is, however, often interrupted by market conditions. Howard and Wyndham had to be careful to check an over-supply of theatres in relation to the supply of productions, for there might then be not enough good (meaning popular) attractions to fill all their theatres. A theatre that is dark is like a factory that stands idle. It brings no profit to the owner and runs at a loss. The theatre manager is, consequently, always anxious to have a production in the building, even if it only brings a little more than the additional costs of a theatre when it is occupied. In the 1880s and 1890s, Howard and Wyndham could hold the whip hand over producers and the balance lie in their favour for building new theatres.

It was in this context, therefore, that Howard and Wyndham commissioned the architect C.J. Phipps, the first of the great Victorian theatre specialists, to build the Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, for £17,000: he had remodelled the Theatre Royal, Dumfries, in 1876, rebuilt the second Theatre Royal, Edinburgh and had recently rebuilt the third Theatre Royal, Hope Street, Glasgow (1880). The isolation of each part of the building was a special feature: the proscenium opening of the Lyceum contained the "first iron curtain that has been erected in any theatre in the United Kingdom, constructed of boiler plate iron in two distinct screens, raised by hydraulic power".²⁹ The new building illustrated the trend towards greater care in

NEW LYCEUM THEATRE
EDINBURGH.

Designed by

Proprietors & Managers:
MESSRS HOWARD & WYNDHAM.

C.J. Phipps, F.S.A.

Opening Night,
10th September.

1883.

"MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING"
By
W. Shakespeare.

TERRY IRVING

CAST.

<i>Benedick, a Young Lord of Padua</i>	Mr HENRY IRVING
<i>Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon</i>	Mr S. JOHNSON
<i>Don John, his Bastard Brother</i>	Mr J. CARTER
<i>Claudio, a Young Lord of Florence</i>	Mr ARCHER
<i>Leonato, Governor of Messina</i>	Mr LOUTHAN
<i>Antonio, his Brother</i>	Mr HARBURY
<i>Balthazar, Attendant on Don Pedro</i>	Mr ANDREWS
<i>Borachio, follower of Don John</i>	Miss K. BROWN
<i>Conrade, follower of Don John</i>	Miss MILLWARD
<i>Friar Francis</i>	Miss HARWOOD
<i>Beatrice, Niece to Leonato</i>	Miss L. PAYNE
	Miss ELLEN TERRY
<i>Acting Manager & Secretary</i>	Mr R. SYME
<i>Musical Director</i>	Mr W. SUTNERLAND
<i>Leader of the Orchestra</i>	Mr W. HENDERSON
<i>Scenic Artists</i>	Messrs F. DANFIEL and C. H. FRAMPTON
<i>General Manager for Mr Irving</i>	Mr H. J. LOVEDAY

Don Pedro, Prince of Arragon Mr W. TERRISS

Don John, his Bastard Brother Mr HAVILAND

Claudio, a Young Lord of Florence Mr N. FORBES

Leonato, Governor of Messina Mr T. WENMAN

Antonio, his Brother Mr H. HOWE

Balthazar, Attendant on Don Pedro Mr J. ROBERTSON

Borachio, follower of Don John Mr F. TYARS

Conrade, follower of Don John Mr LYNDALE

Friar Francis Mr MEAD

Beatrice, Niece to Leonato

Dezberry, Two City Officers

Verges, Watchmen

Seacole, Watchmen

Oatcake, Watchmen

A Sexton

A Messenger

A Boy

Hero, Daughter to Leonato

Margaret, Gentlewoman attending on Hero

Ursula, Gentlewoman attending on Hero

Master Carpenter

Property Master

Gas Engineer

Messrs F. DANFIEL and C. H. FRAMPTON

Mr H. J. LOVEDAY

G. F. Alkott, del.

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design and construction: it was the most sophisticated theatre yet built in Scotland. It was named to echo Irving's Lyceum in London. Howard and Wyndham brought Ellen Terry and Henry Irving to open the theatre as Beatrice and Benedick in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* - with Irving's own company from the Lyceum Theatre in London, for twelve nights. The performance played to 2,500 people on opening night, 10 September 1883, and held £209 at ordinary prices.³⁰ Irving appeared in all twelve performances. His repertoire also included Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hamlet* and *The Bells* (Leopold Davis Lewis, 1871). He gave a donation of £1,000 towards the cost of the new theatre. Howard and Wyndham were now the star entrepreneurs of theatre in Scotland: their partnership had created a strong team that was to dominate the legitimate touring circuit for nearly a century: soon after opening the Lyceum they began expansion beyond Edinburgh by taking the lease of the 2,000 seat Royalty Theatre, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow in 1884 (built in 1876), which held £170.³¹

Prologues and epilogues given at opening performances on special occasions were by now written as addresses, declaimed by the pair as duologues to cement the bond between the actor-managers and city, management and community, as on the opening night of the Royal Lyceum Theatre. Theatres have always had unpredictable personalities, reflecting the popularity of the current attractions playing in them. The reputation of a theatre, like that of the actors who performed in it, was subject to change without notice, and Howard and Wyndham's natural intention was to earn a lucky reputation for their new house. The following ornamental prologue invested it with magic and a sense of theatre history, whilst communicating directly to the first-night audience:

Mr. Howard: The spell is wrought - my chafing is all spent -
 "Now is the winter of my discontent
 Made glorious summer" by the sunshine here
 Of faces well remembered, now more dear.
 Welcome, kind friends; my heart is brimming o'er,
 For in your smiles and laughter, as of yore,
 I read the words that grace the good old song -
 "Rue, true is the liking that likes for long;"
 There's something good in everything that's old,
 An old acquaintance never can grow cold.
 'Twas Shakespeare in his keen and witty way,
 Who asked "what's in a name?" - To say him nay
 Were rude, but in a loved and honoured name
 Is sorcery - a hostage 'tis to fame -
 And in its own deep melody is charm
 To keep traditions in our heart more warm.

It was a wise philosophy that knew
 The groves of *Lyceum* old³²; but in the new,
 From out whose shrine we steal Promethean fire
 The ancient Thespis³³ with new life t'inspire,
 A wizard hand has writ in letters golden -
Mankind to our loved heart is more beholden
Than to philosophy! Irving, 'tis thine
 To shed new magic over Shakespeare's line,
 And with the wit that genius can devise
 Conjure up worlds before a world's proud eyes.
 "What's in a name?" The *Lyceum* lives for aye,
 For 'neath its shade art grew to deathless day,
 Tended, when fading from th' ungrateful light,
 By these bright souls we gladly greet to-night.
 This is the *prologue* to the chapter new
 Of our own fortunes; and the aim is true, -
 To flood with rosier colours all our part,
 To picture out fresh glories, and to cast
 A brighter sunshine o'er our Scottish stage
 That boasts its thousand heroes; every age
 Is thronged with mem'ries, braver groan with years,
 While rivalry with generous fire appears
 To feed the sacred flame. Proud of our prize,
 One in the fight before your very eyes,
 Brighter garland still we'd fain disclose: -
 Our own endeavours are thy green, the rose
 Is *Wyndham*, while forget-me-nots entwine
 For old acquaintance sake; with trophies fine
 As these, I see a vista spreading bright
 Down through the future's forest, and the light
 Is ever in your smiles. Irving we've here,
 Loved of two worlds, with Ellen Terry, dear
 To every pulsing heart; Toole soon will yield
 His mirthful wand, to which all sorrows yield,
 While Clarke,³⁴ as *Wellington de Boots* will come,
 To prove himself the Toole³⁵ of Yankeedom,
 And merrier than of old; Ristori³⁶, too,
 Will on these boards make us for ever rue
 Macbeth's foul deed: anon Miss Wallis³⁷ sweet
 And gracious in her presence we shall greet,
 While Wilson Barrett bears a New Year's gift,
 A new-born play³⁸, that will his name uplift
 To honours fresh; again in Protean guise
 Old Pantomime will dance before your eyes,
 Taking his cue amid his merry fits
 From woman's lips and woman's happier wits -
 At Mrs. Howard's nod chanting with glee
Red Riding Hood's immortal history.

Mr. *Wyndham* - (advancing, addresses *Mr. Howard*).

As Falstaff says - "Fine words, brave words,"³⁹ my friend!
 And to their fairness can I nothing lend

(*To audience*) - Saving in this - I am my father's son;
 If rugged Time from out your hearts has won
 The treasures of the Past, for me 'tis full
 Of dreams and mem'ries sweet; yours was the school
 Where first I strutted on the mimic scene -
 Alas, poor boards, we say that they have *been*
 And are not! - 'Auld lang syne' is here to-night;
 The sunshine of the olden days is bright
 Upon our hearts as when my father played;
 I' sooth these happy times can never fade -
 They'll prove to us a never-failing guide
 Upon you affections!

Mr. Howard -

Our hearts are wide,
 And, like our pockets, gaping for your love,
 Which to entice, this merry plan we've wove.
 Mercy is yours, ye critics when your wrath
 Flashes its lightning o'er our smiling path;
 Be to us tutors kind, e'en wen severe,
 And may your lightnings quicken, never sear!
 Thus with your cheers ringing a happy chime,
 In loving answer to our limping rhyme,
 We crave the boon that friends must ever crave,
 Forbear when we have trespassed; we'll enslave
 Our very will that all our thoughts may sing
 In perfect music with your own; everything
 Smiles on us now, and of your own sweet grace
 Smooth all the furrows in Dame Fortune's face,
 That *Lyceum* still may prove another name,
 For what is best - of wit, success, and fame!⁴⁰

Despite its conversational and witty tone, this prologue was clearly designed to bolster the mystique and wonder of live theatre, without which it might lack personality: such colour and soul has usually been ignored by latter-day municipal theatre proprietors. These introductory poems had been used in the theatre since Euripides, and later by the Elizabethans through the Chorus. Together with an epilogue, they were frequently used by the authors of plays at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, during Murray's management, often conveying information about the setting of the plays before the advent of scenery. They began to disappear with the five hours' bills of curtain raiser, play and afterpiece.⁴¹ Where Howard and Wyndham were increasingly occupied with responsibilities of bricks and mortar, the theatres were home to the ghosts of the past and spirits of the future. Although the buildings were secular, they promoted their theatres as if they were sacred. Matters had to be less romantic back-stage, where the theatre would be run according to a strict set of rules. The comparatively ad hoc and laissez-faire method of doing business during Howard and Wyndham's early years was changing:

The DISCIPLINE that governs every *first class theatre*, will be observed in this establishment, and the co-operation therein of ALL employed is most earnestly solicited.⁴²

Discipline for Howard and Wyndham included the exercise of good staff relations and they embraced the Victorian ethos of self-help and charity. Following the initiatives of the Royal General Theatrical Fund in London and the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund in Scotland, they staged occasional charity matinees to help members of the profession in distress, as well as helping other local charities with fund-raising banquets. These were enlivened with after-dinner speeches, as reported in Glasgow:

With J.B.Howard, of Messrs. Howard and Wyndham, as chairman, the joint staffs of the Royal and Royalty Theatres in Glasgow sat down to supper in the Alexandra Hotel, Bath Street. About 100 ladies and gentlemen were present. The chairman was supported by ex-Bailie Simon, Councillor Angus Campbell, Mr. Osmond Tearle, Mr. Edgar, at present fulfilling an engagement in *Faust* at the Royalty Theatre, Dr.Brodie, Mr.B.Simons, Mr.S.Simons, Mr. Frank Sephton, Mr.H.Cowlard, Mr.J.T.Fyfe &c. After supper, the chairman proposed the usual loyal toasts, which were duly honoured. Councillor Campbell submitted "The Drama", remarking that in Mr.Osmond Tearle they had an ideal tragedian, who, more than anyone he knew, could dispose with the adjuncts of the stage, the services of the stage carpenter, &c. Mr. Tearle, in replying, spoke of the advances which the drama, and those who were engaged in it, had made in public appreciation within recent years. He proposed "the Staff" and in so doing spoke of the highly effective service in which they and Mr.Howard rendered putting plays upon the stage, for Glasgow. Mr. Sephton replied briefly, and ex-Bailie Simons afterwards proposed the toast of "Howard and Wyndham", which was suitably acknowledged by Mr.Howard, chairman. Dancing was afterwards engaged in. The dinner raised £120 for Glasgow charities.⁴³

The theatre has always offered a precarious livelihood to those who work in it, though Howard and Wyndham had become wealthy individuals from their work as actor-managers. Their assistance to colleagues and charities would have been a dignified professional duty, and the presence of civic fathers at this dinner points to the elevated social status and professionalism of Howard and Wyndham's management by 1891.

In this chapter, the genesis of Howard and Wyndham at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, has been traced, charting their rise as a family business run by actor-managers who were so able and popular as performers that they were able to dictate the policy of their theatre and expand to other theatres in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Newcastle. They won their reputations by playing leading roles in their own stock company which was self-sufficient and decentralised, training new actors and presenting a repertoire across a broad spectrum of

“high” art and “low” art, from classical plays to pantomimes. They helped to escalate the movement towards stardom by importing visiting luminaries from the London stage. The nexus between manager and theatre architecture has been discussed, especially the construction of the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, and the new responsibilities and opportunities of multiple theatre ownership, together with the concurrent closure of the stock company in favour of touring companies. Touring was brought about by the access of the railways, which helped to secure the dominance of London over provincial theatre, rather than by the machinations of business people, and by the audience tiring of seeing the same faces in a limited number of productions. Touring changed the character of theatre management, destroying Scottish isolation and independence and bringing about the separation of the function of theatre owning from that of play producing.

¹ See William Charles Macready, *The Diaries of William Charles Macready*, ed. William Toynbee, Chapman and Hall, London, 1912. Vol. II, p.327.

² Confusion with an unrelated theatrical Wyndham family should be avoided, especially Sir Charles Wyndham (actor, manager and playwright, (1837-1919). Wyndham was his *nom du théâtre*, real surname Culverwell); and Howard Wyndham (manager, born 4 April 1865, son of Sir Charles) for many years associated with the Criterion, Wyndham's and New Theatres, London. See *Who's Who in the Theatre*, Eighth Edition, Pitman, London, 1934, p.1655: 'Hereditary Theatrical Families: The Wyndham Family', and Wendy Trewin, *All on Stage: Charles Wyndham and the Alberys*, Harrap, London 1980. The J.B.Howard of Howard and Wyndham should not be confused with J.B. (John Bannister) Howard (1867-1946), general manager for Ben Greet's No.2 touring companies, lessee and manager of the Crystal Palace Theatre, proprietor of Comic Operas (1915) Limited and manager of summer seasons on the Isle of Wight, but who was no relation of J.B.Howard. See *Who's Who in the Theatre*, Sixth Edition, Pitman, London, 1930, p.516. J.B.Howard's first son, W.Howard, was first violinist at the Edinburgh Theatre Royal resident orchestra, and promoter of concerts at the Waterloo Rooms, Edinburgh. See J.C. Dibdin, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, op.cit., p.502. Confusion should also be avoided with Bronson Howard, dramatist, (1843-1908) and G.B.Howard, dramatist (1884-1922). See 'Theatrical Obituaries', *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Sixth Edition, 1936, p.1426.

³ J.B.Howard was the stage name of Michael Hoban. He was married to the actress Sara Lewis (d.1912), whose second husband was the actor William Morgan; his brother was J.H.Slater (actor) - whose sons were Stanley Hoban (scene painter) and Lilian Hoban (actress). These relatives were all members of the company at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, and are listed in Dibdin. Several other actors descended from the marriages, including Henry Kendall and William Kendall. See 'The J.B.Howard Group' in 'Hereditary Theatrical Families', John Parker (ed.), *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Eleventh Edition, Pitman, London, 1952, p.1574.

⁴ Wyndham could also claim to have had four Scottish theatres burned under him, a record for a theatre manager in Scotland. Fire was a constant hazard for nineteenth century theatre managers. The Adelphi, where R.H.Wyndham made his Scottish debut in 1844 in *The Hunchback* scorched in 1853; the second Edinburgh Theatre Royal also burnt but was re-built in 1865, only to burn again in 1875; The Queen's Theatre and Opera House, Edinburgh, which he ran from 1857, also burnt in 1865. A list of theatre conflagrations to 1879 appears in Percy Fitzgerald, *The World Behind The Scenes*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1881, pp.30-34. Six theatres burnt in Edinburgh between 1853 and 1879; eleven theatres burnt in Glasgow between 1780 and 1870. The fire at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh killed six people backstage, started when lighting gas battens. Wyndham was in London at the time, and had sub-leased the theatre to his brother-in-law, Edward Saker. See also John Earl and John Middlebrook, 'Death in the Audience', *Theatrephile*, Vol.3 No.9, p.30, Cheshire and McCarthy, London 1984 and Edwin O. Sachs and A.E.Ernest Wodrow, *Modern Opera Houses and Theatres*, Vol. III, Supplement II, 'Record of Fires', Batsford, London, 1898, pp.87-119.

⁵ See William Archer, *Henry Irving: Actor and Manager*, Adams & Co., Hamilton, 1883.

⁶ See J.C.Dibdin, *The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, op.cit., p.434.

⁷ There were at least five stage adaptations of Sir Walter Scott's novel, *Rob Roy*, in the 1800s. The playwrights are generally unknown because theatres often employed hack playwrights, there being little or no copyright protection. In 1833 a Copyright Act was passed, giving some protection to writers, though it needed a second Bill in 1842 to enforce this. Novelists could not protect their work, without resort to complex means, until The Copyright Act of 1911. Most playbills of the 1800s do not credit the playwright and Wyndham would not have paid royalties to authors. See Bernard Weller, *Stage Copyright at Home and Abroad*, The Stage, London 1912 and, particularly, Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Late Nineteenth Century Drama, 1800-1850*, Cambridge University Press, 1946, Vol. II, 'A Handlist of Plays Produced', p.518. Nicoll lists the first staging of *Rob Roy* at the Pantheon, Edinburgh, in 1818, three more versions at the Caledonian Theatre, Edinburgh, and further productions in London. See also Philip H. Bolton, *Scott Dramatized*, Mansell, London, 1993. This work lists 970 distinct productions of *Rob Roy* between 1810 and 1900, accounting for one-fifth of Scott's work on stage, excluding *Rob Roy MacGregor*; or *Auld Lang Syne* (1818), another version with songs and lyrics by Scott, Burns and Wordsworth also revived by Wyndham. This version was by Isaac Pocock with music by J. Davy. (Nicoll, op.cit., p.372). The second most popular Scott work listed by Bolton is *Guy Mannering*, with 860 productions; eighteen are listed in Edinburgh during Wyndham's management.

⁸ *The Theatre*, 25 November, 1851.

⁹ Wyndham experienced considerable difficulty in negotiating a price to be paid by the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works to the Trustees for the proprietors of the Theatre Royal. At the time of purchase Wyndham was paying £1,000 annual rent. Dibdin reports that "the Crown offered £25,871 10s. for the theatre, being £9,000 less than paid by the owners to John Jackson's estate. The owners wanted £49,600, in addition to 50 per cent for the sale being a compulsory purchase, making in all nearly £75,000", p.469. They were forced to accept £30,000.

¹⁰ See Nicoll, op.cit. p.387. Although Nicoll lists this adaptation as written by Scott, it is doubtful whether he dramatised any of his novels.

¹¹ *The Companion*, 4 September 1852, Edinburgh, p.4.

¹² *The Gentle Shepherd*, (1725).

¹³ See *Re-opening of the Old House*: pamphlet, Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, 27 January 1876. This was the first Howard and Wyndham commission to the architect C.J. Phipps (1835-1897), whose first work in Scotland had been to design the Tivoli Theatre, Aberdeen (1872). This Theatre Royal stood at the top of Leith Walk and Broughton Street and was a complete re-build, after fire, of the 1873 Theatre Royal. It held 2,300 persons.

¹⁴ Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, dramatist, (*The Magistrate*, *Trelawny of the "Wells"*, *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray* etc.) joined Wyndham's company in Edinburgh at the age of nineteen, making his stage debut in *The Woman in White* on 22 June 1874. He was a company member for seven months, playing in *Grimshaw*, *Bradshaw and Bradshaw-Bradshaw*, Stephen in *The Hunchback*, John in *If I Had £1,000 a Year*, Lord Lumley in *Lord Darnley* and Count Tiptopa in *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The next reference to Pinero playing in Edinburgh is with Henry Irving's Lyceum Theatre company at Wyndham's third Theatre Royal and at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. He made several visits in 1888, as Claudius in *Hamlet*, Doctor Zimmer in *The Bells*, Oliver le Dain in *Louis XI* and as Baradas in *Richlieu*. His play, *Trelawny of the "Wells"* (1898) can perhaps be criticised as being a charming if sentimental picture of the mid-Victorian theatre, but its theatrical characters can be interpreted as drawn from Sadler's Wells Theatre and, possibly, his first experiences in Wyndham's company. See *The Weekly Scotsman*, 14 August 1947: H.M.Parker, 'Stars of Theatre and Concert Hall' and Theatre Royal playbills in the Edinburgh Room collection, Edinburgh City Libraries.

¹⁵ Joseph Hatton, *Reminiscences of J.L.Toole, Related by Himself*, Vol.I., Hurst and Blackett, London, 1889, p.157. Toole was a friend of Henry Irving: the famous friendship began in Edinburgh in 1857 when Toole played the Artful Dodger and Irving Monks in an adaptation of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, at the Theatre Royal.

¹⁶ *The Scotsman*, Edinburgh, 8 November 1871, p.4.

¹⁷ Henry Irving, *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol.27, Chatto and Windus, 1890, pp.1040-1058. In the nineteenth-century, training for actors was usually obtained within a working theatre company, where newcomers learnt their craft by the example of older actors, sometimes augmented by private tuition. Herbert Beerbohm Tree founded the Academy of Dramatic Art, London, in 1905 and Elsie Fogarty founded the Central School of Speech and Drama, London, in 1908. See Michael Sanderson, *From Irving to Olivier: A Social History of the Acting Profession, 1880-1983*, Athlone Press, London, 1984. This book contains a chapter on 'The Training of the Actor Before 1914'. Scottish actors often developed their careers in London rather than by staying in Edinburgh or

Glasgow. The first vocational training for actors in Scotland did not begin until the College of Dramatic Art was founded in 1950 as an integral part of the Scottish Educational Department; this merged with the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in 1968, to become the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. See also Michael Baker, *The Rise of the Victorian Actor*, Corm Helm, London, 1978 and Adrian Cairns, *The Making of the Professional Actor: A History, an Analysis and a Prediction*, Peter Own, London, 1996.

¹⁸ Quoted in *Reminiscences of J.L. Toole*, op.cit., p.167.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, reproduced in pp.170-171.

²⁰ R.H.Wyndham died in 1894, leaving £56,460 in his will. See 'Theatrical Wills' in John Parker (ed.), *Who's Who in the Theatre*, Eleventh Edition, Pitman, London, 1952, p.2008.

²¹ Letter by R.H.Wyndham to Henry Irving, 4 March 1883. See file on Howard & Wyndham Limited in possession of The Theatre Museum, London.

²² See Harold Oswald, *The Theatres Royal in Newcastle Upon Tyne: Desultory Notes Relating to the Drama and its Homes in that Place*, Northumberland Press, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 1936, p.124.

²³ See C.S. Cheltnam (ed.), *The Dramatic Year Book and Stage Directory for the United Kingdom*, Trischler, London, 1892, p.434. 'Held' meant the cash capacity of the auditorium.

²⁴ Quoted in Lady de Frece, *Recollections of Vesta Tilley*, Hutchinson, London, 1934, p.178.

²⁵ This theatre held 3,000 persons (licensed for 1,150 seats in 1997); the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, held 2,200 persons (1,292 in 1997).

²⁶ After Howard's death in 1895, his widow married William Morgan who was resident librettist for Howard and Wyndham pantomimes. Unlike many nineteenth century actresses and despite being financially advantaged, she did not succeed to her husband's managerial role. She died in 1912. Vesta Tilley (quoted in Lady De Frece, op.cit.) wrote:

Mrs. Howard was a splendid business woman and ruled the theatres with a rod of iron. She was most kind to me, and I frequently visited here after she had retired, on her husband's death, and came to reside in London.

²⁷ Their pantomime circuit (Newcastle, Edinburgh and Glasgow), became a Howard and Wyndham legacy and continued after local authorities purchased the theatres: it continued until 1994, when Newcastle and Glasgow withdrew from the agreement led by Edinburgh District Council, because of the other cities' perceived decline in production values at Edinburgh.

²⁸ J.B.Radcliffe, 'Stage, Land and Strand', article in *Tyneside*, Newcastle, March 1895, p.94.

²⁹ See 'Opening Announcement' in the programme, Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, 10 September 1883. Editorial, other than cast lists and credits, was rare in nineteenth century theatre programmes but was invariably written to coincide with openings of new theatres or refurbishments. The claim about the safety curtain in Phipps' Lyceum Theatre is exaggerated, for he had installed an identical double screen iron at his Gaiety Theatre, Dublin (then part of the United Kingdom), in 1871.

³⁰ C.S.Cheltnam (ed.), *The Dramatic Year Book and Stage Directory*, 1892, op.cit., p.496.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p.411.

³² Refers to the Lyceum Theatre, London, the theatre linked with Henry Irving.

³³ Refers to the semi-legendary Attican dramatist who won the Dionysian contest, 534 BC.

³⁴ John S. Clarke, an American actor, born in Baltimore, who appeared in London with great success in 1867 as Major Wellington de Boots: "an exuberant militia major, a sort of English Tartarin - which he had acted in America over a thousand times." Quoted in Frederic Whyte, *Actors of the Century*, George Bell, London, 1898, p.156.

³⁵ Since working in Wyndham's company, John Laurence Toole had gained an international reputation, especially on tour in America.

³⁶ Adelaide Ristori (1822-1906), an Italian actress who toured to the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, as Lady Macbeth in the opening season, before her retirement in 1885.

³⁷ Played Juliet in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in the opening season.

³⁸ Wilson Barrett's *The Silver King* (1882), a domestic melodrama in which he starred as Wilfred Denver as well as directing himself: the production toured to the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, February 1884.

³⁹ In Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part One*, Act III, Scene 3, line 112 Falstaff actually says "Rare words! Brave world!" but the line was changed in Henry Irving's acting edition used at this time.

⁴⁰ Opening night programme, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, 10 September, 1883.

⁴¹ Dibdin, *The Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, op.cit., includes the Prologue for the opening of the first Theatre Royal, Edinburgh on 9 December 1769, written by James Boswell, an address by Mrs. Siddons on 4 November 1828, a farewell address by Sir Walter Scott spoken by Mrs H. Siddons on her farewell benefit on 29 March 1830 and the valedictory sketch delivered by R.H.Wyndham at the closing of the Theatre Royal on 25 May 1859. See pp .493-494 and 467-8.

⁴² See *Royal Lyceum Theatre: Rules and Regulations*, Howard and Wyndham, Edinburgh, 1883.

⁴³ See *The Professional Gazette and Advertiser*, Glasgow, 7 March 1891. In 1854, shortly after becoming manager of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, Wyndham senior had opened unsuccessful negotiations for the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund, of which he was Patron, to merge with the Royal General Theatrical Fund, London, (founded in 1839). The Scottish fund was famous for its anniversary dinner in 1827, when the authorship of the Waverley Novels, which had been an open secret, was officially revealed by Sir Walter Scott. These funds were also used as pension schemes for contributing artistes.

CHAPTER THREE

TOURING MANAGERS: 1895-1930

As Howard and Wyndham became more established, and their standards higher, their running became more costly and administratively burdensome: the operation of the Lyceum became a good, and, in general, reliable investment. Therefore, J.B. Howard and Robert Wyndham's son, Fred, moved to corporate ownership. This chapter describes the period from incorporation in 1895 to the end of the founding family direction and influence in 1930, a period which embraced further expansion in Edinburgh and Glasgow, during which it remained a Scottish based management.

The company was registered with share capital of £100,000, which was increased to £150,000 in 1904:

The floating of the company took place last week, and in a few hours the whole of the capital was subscribed in Edinburgh and Glasgow....Many friends and admirers of Mr. F.W. Wyndham will regret to learn that he is about to change his residence from Newcastle to Glasgow, in order to give his full time to the direction of the new company in Scotland. There will be a big blank in Newcastle society when Mr. Wyndham is gone, for he is the most loveable and generous of men, and endowed with the true spirit of a gentleman. However, the dark prospect is relieved by the knowledge of the fact that he will occasionally pay a flying visit to the "cannie toon" in which he has spent so much of the past eleven years building up his North British theatre circuit.¹

Howard and Wyndham kept the controlling stock of the new company under the control of the Directors, who owned the company, using the public stock issue to raise cash with non-voting debentures. The new company gave them the advantage of limiting their collective and individual responsibility for debts arising from any bankruptcy of the business of any Directors. They now owned (or ran) five theatres: the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, the Royalty Theatre, Glasgow (leased) and the Tyne Theatre and Opera House, Newcastle (leased). Incorporation for theatre companies was a relatively new development. The first such venture to adopt joint stock status had been the National Opera Company Limited in 1855, followed by the Alhambra Company in London in 1865. There had been similar ventures in the provinces, notably the Theatre Royal Company in Manchester (1875) and the Grand Theatre and Opera House in Leeds, whose first lessee was the playwright and actor-manager Wilson

Barrett (1846-1904) from 1878 to 1895.² Most theatres had been privately owned and managed, because the highly speculative nature of the business attracted individual exploitation by people with money to lose and willing to take great risks. This had tended to exclude the participation of others. The Companies Acts of 1855, 1862 and 1867 gave the advantage of a wider population from which to raise investments. Howard and Wyndham Limited was the first theatrical company listed at the Edinburgh Stock Exchange. In 1895 there were only thirteen theatrical companies listed at the London Stock Exchange: Irving's Lyceum Theatre in London did not reorganise until 1899, though this venture was unsuccessful, leading to his return to provincial touring. But the form rapidly expanded, so that by 1916 twenty four undertakings were listed.³

Soon after incorporation, on 10 May 1895, Howard died from a stroke in his office at the Royal Lyceum in Edinburgh, aged fifty-four.⁴ After Howard's death the policy of a stock company was, as indicated previously, abandoned. Each production became a separate enterprise, with actors hired only for the run of the show because of the intermittent status of home grown attractions. The company concentrated its operations on touring and the expansion of its touring circuit into England. Under the new system theatre managers rarely produced plays, and the producers, for the most part, no longer managed theatres. A distinguishing feature of the touring system was the organisation of a company of actors for a single play. When the tour finished its run, the life of the company was ended. So where the stock company of the founders was a continuous producing organisation, Howard and Wyndham were now dealing with ephemeral products. The touring companies' connections with their theatres were infrequent and casual, although good relations with the main London producers were fostered in order to create loyalty and return visits. In other theatre managements at this time, there might be no organic link with the producers, but in the case of Howard and Wyndham they nonetheless maintained artistic links by producing their own pantomimes and variety seasons. Even so, when Howard and Wyndham returned to the simultaneous function of producer and theatre manager (as in pantomime production), the roles were only superficially integrated. They rigidly differentiated between the two functions. Their theatres charged the production for their use, so that sometimes they lost money on the production whilst making money on the building investment. Theatre management and ownership was one business; play producing was another. The two were complementary yet competitive.

As the structure of the company changed, so did the control - from the powerful actor-managers to the touring managers who organised the growing circuit. The entrepreneurial Victorian ethos of great personal endeavour was waning and the individualism of the actor-manager was finished, in favour of big new ventures. This was a symptom of industry throughout Britain, for railway companies were merging, banks combining and other industries amalgamating.

Howard and Wyndham began an aggressive expansion in theatre ownership and leaseholding. After incorporation, their second Glasgow venture was to acquire the Theatre Royal, Hope Street in 1895. They commissioned C. J. Phipps to build a 2,294 seat house from the ruins of his 1880 re-build.⁵ The theatre was opened with Herbert Beerbohm Tree's company from the Haymarket Theatre, London, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Trilby* (Paul M. Potter, 1895). It has been noted that in 1896 the Tyne Theatre and Opera House, Newcastle, was leased for twenty one years, after relinquishing that city's Theatre Royal to Robert Arthur. In 1900 the property adjoining the Theatre Royal at Cowcaddens Street, Glasgow, was acquired. In 1901 the property adjoining the Theatre Royal at St. James Place, Edinburgh, was acquired for extensions to the stage. In 1903 a property at West Port, Edinburgh, was acquired for scenery and property building workshops. In 1904 the King's Theatre, Glasgow, built in only nine months during 1903-4, was opened on 12 September. This was Howard and Wyndham's only commission to the architect Frank Matcham (1854-1920), arguably the greatest British theatre architect, who designed over 150 theatres between 1879 and 1912, over twice as many as his rival, C.J. Phipps, and nearly a quarter of all the theatres built in this period.⁶ The King's cost £50,000 and its seating capacity was, originally, 2,265 persons: very large for a drama theatre.

In 1906 Howard and Wyndham took over the contract for the building of the King's Theatre in Edinburgh. In securing this theatre they acquired the Cruikshank family as well. They now ran three theatres in the capital: their Theatre Royal became associated with music hall and variety (until sold in 1934: a timely transition as this theatre was later destroyed by fire), the King's with pantomimes and the Lyceum with straight drama, opera and the more sophisticated artforms. The three houses held a capacity of over 7,500 seats. The enthusiasm in the theatre industry for gambling, speculation and expansion was not confined to Howard and Wyndham, for big touring theatres were built all over Britain. Ellis Brammall and William Bennett, of Glasgow, were other provincial touring managers who

shared in a boom for theatre building, but they knew less about the theatre world than Howard and Wyndham and often cared less for the art of the theatre. Where the actor-managers had grown rich in an expanding circuit, their wealth attracted the speculative desires of ambitious new managers who drove the phenomenon of the actor-manager out of business. Howard and Wyndham were well placed to gain from this transition by using their experience and continuity to exceed the ambitions of new rivals.

The new touring system gave rise to a tendency towards centralisation, just as inevitably the nineteenth century stock system had made for decentralisation. Because of its origins in Edinburgh, the company was headquartered at the King's Theatre, which had been built by William Stewart Cruikshank, founder of the construction firm W.S.Cruikshank & Son, Lower Gilmore Place, Edinburgh. The architects were Messrs. James Davidson of Coatbridge and J.D. Swanson of Kirkcaldy. Victor Glasstone describes the King's in terms that could equally apply to the company's new management style:

The art of not disclosing too much too soon was well understood by Edwardian theatre architects. From the outside, the King's could be any sort of commercial building, an insurance company, for instance, but hardly a theatre. It is dour and solid, though prosperous, and is more suited to Glasgow's canyons of Victorian commercial acumen than Edinburgh's graceful propriety. Inside the main entrance, foyers and staircases mellow slightly into the good taste of a gentlemen's club. But once inside the auditorium! An Aladdin's cave of Viennese Baroque, swathed in all the plush and gilt of *la belle époque* at its fruitiest.⁷

The foundation stone was laid by Andrew Carnegie and the theatre was then run as a family business by Cruikshank's son, A. Stewart Cruikshank (1877-1949), who opened it in 1906; the programming was undertaken by Howard and Wyndham, with full integration after Cruikshank was appointed managing director of Howard and Wyndham in 1928 when the company bought the freehold. The appointment of Cruikshank suited the company, which needed a reliable, shrewd leader with a knowledge of finance. At the opening night of the 2,225 seat house the following prologue was given, less informative than the topical, theatrical and personal verses spoken by Howard and Wyndham at the launch of the Royal Lyceum Theatre, but nonetheless written to promote sentiment in the new theatre as a shrine for the whole community:

When days are lang an' nights are short,
Whaur is't when tired o' outdoor sport?
We seek a canty oor tae court?-

The King's.

When days are short an' nights are long,
An' nocht gaes rict, an' a gaes wrang,
Whaur is't oor sighin's changed tae sang? -
The King's.

When Spring returns wi' clouds o' stoor,
An' mak's life what we scarce can 'dure,
Whaur is't we find enjoyment pure? -
The King's.

In Summer when the sun abune
Mak's us fu' fain tae turn within,
Whaur is't we gaun relief tae fin'? -
The King's.

When Autumn comes wi' russet goon,
An' draws her mantle roun' the toun,
Whaur is't we settle snugly doon? -
The King's.

When Winter comes wi' icy blast,
Wi' angry tempests roun' the toon,
Whaur is't we find a warm contrast? -
The King's.

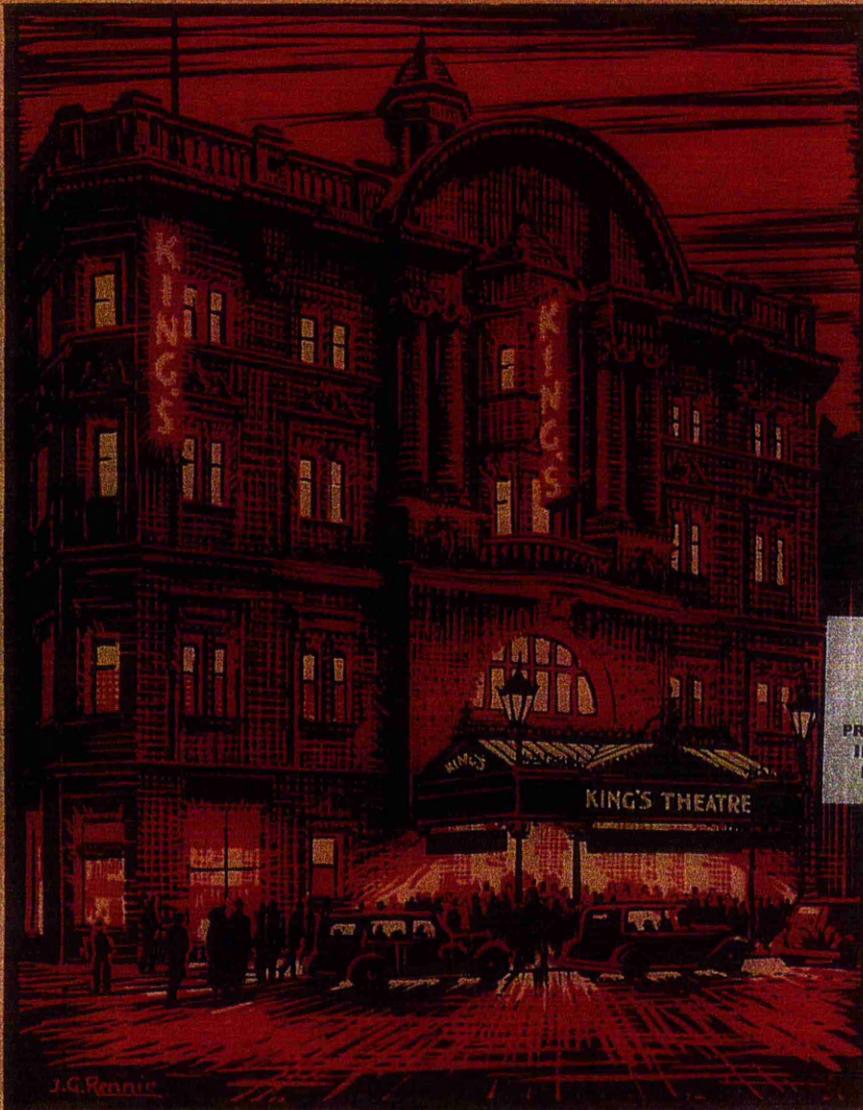
Frae Januar' first tae Hogmany
It stands a landmark, nicht an' day,
A welcome rest on Life's rough way -
The King's.⁸

The verses were later used to advertise the King's as a comfortable theatre for all seasons and a welcoming host for the stage-struck, encouraging them into conversation with the building itself. Or probably only the *public* parts of the theatre, for upstairs there were large rooms which been fitted out as the administration centre for the new system of presentation which had created the problem of booking, meaning the scheduling of productions on tour,⁶² so that each of the theatres could offer a continuous flow of attractions, with each production travelling an unbroken route of theatres to visit. At this time, the company ran its theatres with a discernible programming policy. *Table 1* shows a schedule of attractions at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow in 1904-5, contrasted, in *Table 2*, with engagements at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh for 1916. The character of repertoire on tour did not shift significantly within these ten years and, clearly, the Theatre Royal was promoted as an up-market drama and opera house for the prosperous new middle-classes of Glasgow whereas the King's Theatre was programmed offered a mixed fare. The programming does not reflect any social difference between the two cities: for the Royal Lyceum Theatre was the



MANAGING DIRECTOR
A. STEWART CRUIKSHANK

PROGRAMME

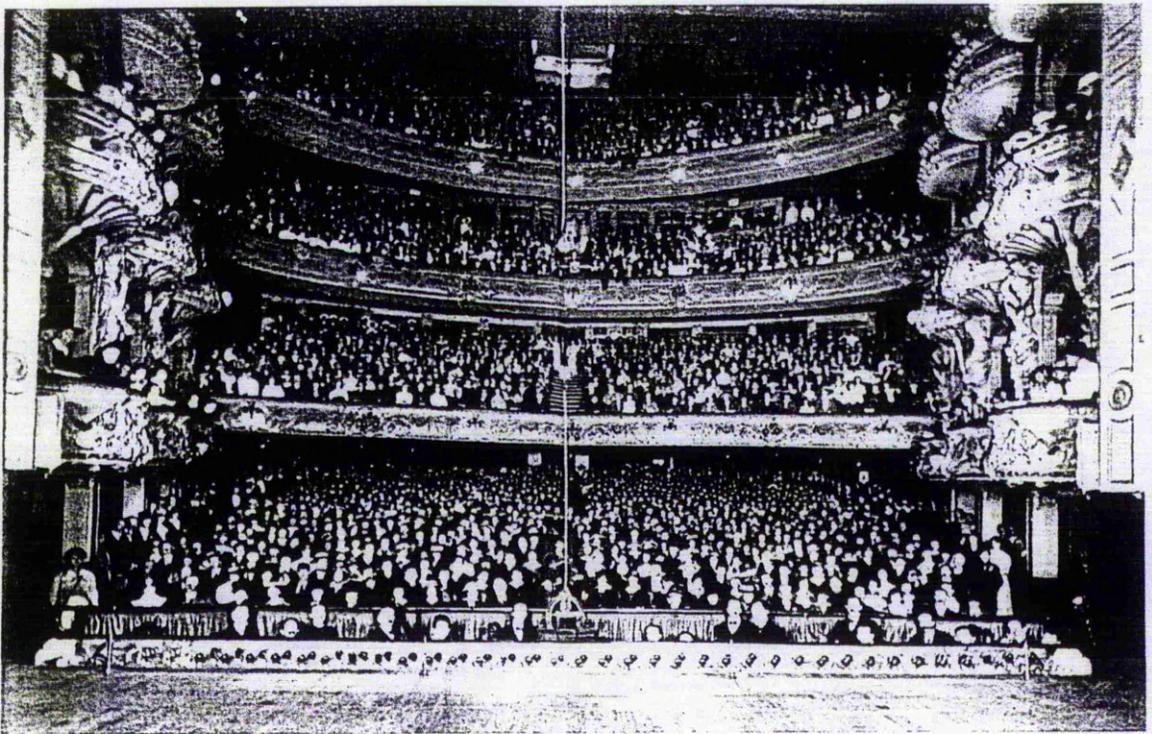


6^{D.}
PLEASE
REFUSE
PROGRAMME
IF SEAL IS
BROKEN

KING'S THEATRE EDINBURGH

MESSRS HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LTD.
Managing Director: Stewart Cruikshank

King's Theatre, Edinburgh: Auditorium from the stage, 1906.



up-market house in Edinburgh and the King's Theatre was the company's "family" theatre in Glasgow. As with other aspects of culture during this period, theatres reflected the split between the intellectual and the "popular". The two up-market houses were also smaller than the "popular" venues and, though each auditorium was sumptuously decorated, the foyers, rest rooms and refreshment areas were distinguished by more sumptuous decor and comfortable furnishings in the up-market theatres.⁹

The attractions at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, include "vaudeville" engagements. This term, though usually synonymous with "variety" in Britain, began in the United States¹⁰ but was used by Howard and Wyndham in their press advertisements in this period.

Table 1.

ANATOMY OF ATTRACTIONS: THEATRE ROYAL , GLASGOW, 1904-5

Source: *Programmes, Theatre, Royal, Glasgow, 1904-5.*

Key: Op=Opera; M=Musical Comedy; P=Play; Pa=Pantomime.

Presentation	Author		Performances
Ellen Terry in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1596)	P	Five
Ellen Terry and Matheson Lang in <i>Mistress of the Robes</i>	Clotilde Graves (?)	P	Two
Edward Compton Comedy Company in <i>David Garrick</i>	T.W.Robertson (1864)	P	Two
<i>She Stoops to Conquer</i>	Oliver Goldsmith (1773)	P	One
<i>A Reformed Rake</i>		P	One
<i>School For Scandal</i>	R.B.Sheridan (1777)	P	One
<i>To-morrow</i>		P	One
<i>The Rivals</i>	R.B.Sheridan (1775)	P	One
Charles Frohman's Company in <i>Quality Street</i>	J.M.Barrie (1902)	P	Seven
Charles Wyndham's Company in <i>Mrs Gorrings Necklace</i>	H.H.Davis (1903)	P	Seven
Herbert Beerbohm Tree and Company in <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1596)	P	Three
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1594)	P	Two
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1600)	P	Three
<i>The Man Who Was</i>	F.K.Peile/ Kipling (1903)	P	afterpiece
Moody Manners Opera Company in <i>Carmen</i>	Georges Bizet (1845)	Op	One
<i>Lily of Killarney</i>	Julius Benedict (1862); from Boucicault: <i>The Colleen Bawn</i> (1860)	Op	One
<i>The Daughter of the Regiment</i>	Gaetano Donizetti(1840)	Op	One
<i>Lohengrin</i>	Richard Wagner (1850)	Op	One
<i>Mignon</i>	Ambroise Thomas(1866)	Op	One
<i>Faust</i>	C-F. Gounod (1859)	Op	One
<i>Bohemian Girl</i>	M.W.Balfe (1843)	Op	One

Henry Irving and his Company in <i>Becket</i>	Lord Tennyson (1893)	P	Five
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1596)	P	Four
<i>Waterloo and The Bells</i>	Leopold Lewis (1871)	P	Three
<i>Louis XI</i>	Dion Boucicault (1855)	P	Two
Janet Achurch in <i>A Doll's House</i>	William Archer (1889)		
	from Henrik Ibsen	P	Eight
Fred Storey in <i>Rip Van Winkle</i>	Dion Boucicault (1865)	P	Seven
Sarah Bernhardt in <i>La Dame aux</i> <i>Camellias</i>	Dumas fils (1848)	P	One
E.S. Willard Company in <i>The Professor's Love Story</i>	J.M. Barrie (1894)	P	Seven
<i>The Middleman</i>	Henry Art. Jones (1889)	P	One
Olga Nethersole and Company <i>Magda</i>	Louis Parker (1896)	P	Two
<i>The Second Mrs. Tanqueray</i>	A.W. Pinero (1893)	P	Three
<i>Sapho</i>	Clyde Fitch (1902)	P	Two
Charles Wyndham and Mary Moore in <i>David Garrick</i>	T.W. Robertson (1864)	P	Three
<i>Mrs. Gorrings's Necklace</i>	H.H. Davies (1903)	P	Two
<i>The Case of Rebellious Susan</i>	Henry Art. Jones (1894)	P	Two
<i>Madame Sherry</i>	Hands and Felix (1903)	M	Seven
John Hare and Company in <i>Little Mary</i>	J.M. Barrie (1903)	P	Seven
James Welch in <i>The New Clown</i>	H.M. Paull (1902)	P	Eight
Martin Harvey in <i>The Breed of the Treshams</i>	John Rutherford (1904)	P	Seven
George Dance Company in <i>A Country Girl</i>	Lionel Monckton (1902)	M	Seven
Duke of York's Company (Charles Frohman) with H.B. Irving and Irene Vanburgh in <i>Letty</i>	A.W. Pinero (1903)	P	Seven
Mr. and Mrs. Kendal and Company in <i>A Scrap of Paper</i>	Palgrave Simpson (1861)	P	One
<i>The Elder Miss Blossom</i>	Ernest Hendrie (1898)	P	Two
<i>Still Waters Run Deep</i>	Tom Taylor (1855)	P	One
<i>Dick Hope</i>	?	P	Four
Forbes Robertson and Gertrude Elliott in <i>The Light That Failed</i>	adapted George Fleming (1903) fr. Kipling	P	Seven
Henry Irving and Company in <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Wm. Shakespeare (1596)	P	Two
<i>Becket</i>	Lord Tennyson (1893)	P	Two
<i>Waterloo and The Bells</i>	Leopold Lewis (1871)	P	Two
<i>The Lyons Mail</i>	Charles Reade (1877)	P	One
Julia Neilson and Fred Terry in <i>Sunday</i>	Tom Raceward (1904)	P	Seven
<i>Alone in London</i>	Robert Buchanan (1885)	P	Seven
<i>The Forty Thieves</i>	F.W. Wyndham (1904)	Pa	Eighty Six

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 Managing Director, . . . Mr. F. W. WYNDHAM.
 Acting Manager, . . . Mr. PERCY HUMPHREYS.

1904.

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CHARLES WYNDHAM,
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 Musical Director, - - - - Alfred Carpenter

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Table 2.

ANATOMY OF ATTRACTIONS: KING'S THEATRE, EDINBURGH 1916.

Source: *Classified Newspaper Advertisements*, The Scotsman, 1916.

Key: O=Own Production; V=Vaudeville; M=Musical Comedy; R=Revue; F=Farce; P=Play; Op=Opera; B=Ballet; A=Amateur; Pa=Pantomime.

Presentation	Author-Description		Performances
Rob Roy	version unknown	O	Once Nightly
Jeanie Deans		O	Once Nightly
Seymour Hicks in <i>Broadway Jones</i>	George M. Cohan (1914)	F	Twice Nightly
<i>Girl in the Taxi</i>	Flynn & Wimperis (1912)	M	Twice Nightly
Short and Sweet		R	Twice Nightly
Godfrey Tearl in <i>Tina</i>	Rubens & Graham (1915)	V	Twice Nightly
Harry Lauder		V	Twice Nightly
<i>Girl in the Train</i>	V. Lean & L.Fall (1910)	F	Twice Nightly
The Buccaneers		R	Twice Nightly
George Robey in <i>The Bing Boys are Here</i>	comic vocalist	V	Twice Nightly
Madame Pavlova	Russian ballet star	B	Once Nightly
O'Mara Opera Company		Op	Once Nightly
Circus Queen		R	Twice Nightly
<i>Rose of Persia</i>	Arthur Sullivan (1899)	M	Twice Nightly
<i>The Girl Behind the Counter</i>	Leedham Bantock (1906)	M	Once Nightly
Afgar		R	Twice Nightly
Seymour Hicks in <i>Man in the Iron Mask</i>	T.J.Serle (1832)	P	Once Nightly
Amateur Opera Company		A	Once Nightly
Henry Ainlie in <i>Under the Greenwood Tree</i>	H.V.Esmond (1907)	P	Once Nightly
Pins and Needles		R	Twice Nightly
National Opera Company (Three Weeks)		Op	Once Nightly
Maurice Moscovitch in			
<i>The Jewish King Lear</i>	after William Shakespeare	P	Twice Nightly
Come on Steve		R	Twice Nightly
Bransby Williams in <i>David Copperfield</i>	Character impersonator	P	Once Nightly
Mdle. Tamara Karsavina in	J.M.Barrie (1911);	V	Twice Nightly
<i>The Truth About Russian Dancers</i>	commission for Russian <i>premiere danseuse</i>		
G.P.Hunley		V	Twice Nightly
Be Careful, Baby	Salisbury Field (1915)	F	Twice Nightly

Table 1 records the pantomime *The Forty Thieves*, which was staged "Under the Personal Direction" of F.W.P.Wyndham" for eighty six performances.¹¹ It was a revival of the production first produced in Glasgow in 1889-1889, then repeated at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, in 1895-1896. Like all Howard and Wyndham pantomimes, these Christmas extravaganzas were the backbone of the company's profits and original work. They developed a big reputation, so that Sir Lewis Casson (1875-1950) said: "The National Theatre of Scotland is Pantomime".¹²



Pantomimes met the demand for comic and fabulous idealised spectacle and they provided Wyndham with great scope for localisation, not only by incorporating Scottish references, random jibes and caricatures, but by hiring Scottish variety stars. Howard and Wyndham's range of pantomimes was much broader than today's narrow choices. Books such as *Blue Beard*, *Little Bo-Peep*, *Little Jack Horner*, *Little Miss Muffet*, *Old King Cole*, *The House That Jack Built*, *Goody Two Shoes*, *The Invisible Prince*, *Mother Hubbard* and *The Queen of Hearts* are rarely staged today, but Wyndham's scripts were published as souvenir programmes and offer scope for further research, some updating and potential revival.

The company continued to nurture the careers of its employees, but now that the firm was a theatre management rather than producer, those it helped tended to be other managers. The first prominent example was Robert Arthur (1856-1929), engaged as acting manager at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow. He went on to produce at Her Majesty's Theatre in Dundee, afterwards preceding the expansion of Howard and Wyndham as lessee of the Theatre Royal, Wolverhampton, Her Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, the Theatre Royal, Nottingham and the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, forming the Robert Arthur Theatres Company in 1897. Howard and Wyndham, we have seen, left this Theatre Royal for the Tyne Theatre and Opera House, which they leased jointly with the London manager Sir Augustus Harris (1852-1896).¹³ Their move to the other Newcastle theatre never bore the fruits of their enterprise, and competition with Robert Arthur was intense, with both theatres conducting enterprising programming, star casting and highly successful pantomime seasons. Howard and Wyndham probably had the edge on booking shows, but Robert Arthur made a significant error by plunging into London. After short leases of the Prince of Wales and Princess's Theatres in the West End, he built his own suburban theatre: the Princess of Wales in Kennington, London (1898). This completed what was known as the "Arthurian Round Table"¹⁴ of his six theatres. The plan was to provide suitable bookings for all theatres from the London foothold, and rotate the pantomimes round the circuit. Disaster struck one year later, when fire destroyed £4,000 worth of pantomime scenery and properties and caused £20,000 damage to the Theatre Royal, Newcastle. Arthur was uninsured and responsible for the damage under his lease. The other Newcastle theatres announced benefit matinees in aid of those members of Arthur's company who had lost valuables in the fire - although the managers must have relished the thought Arthur's lavish productions would no longer compete with theirs. Howard and Wyndham housed his production of *Aladdin* at their theatre whilst Arthur commissioned Frank Matcham to re-build the Theatre Royal. The

expense of the refurbishment, coupled with his re-building of His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, cost him dear. The accounts in *Table 3* reveal the trading position:

	Robert Arthur Theatres Limited
	Profit/(Loss)
	£
1906-07	7,714
1907-08	4,482
1908-09	5,279
1909-10	(81)
1910-11	580
1911-12	(4,174)
1912-13	5,895 <i>Howard and Wyndham take-over</i>
1913-14	568
1914-15	5,884
1915-16	724

Source: Lionel Carson (ed.), The Stage Year Book, 1917, Carson and Comerford, London, p.17.

To cut his losses, Arthur entered into an agreement with Howard and Wyndham for the joint management and booking of both the Tyne and the Royal. The arrangement was superseded by Howard and Wyndham taking over the management of Robert Arthur Theatres Limited in September 1912, after Arthur lost £4,174 and was forced to resign from the company. Howard and Wyndham now returned to the Theatre Royal and had complete control of this Newcastle theatre until 1972, when they sold it to the local authority. Arthur had failed because of his rapid capital expansion, particularly in the suburbs of London where the economic circumstances turned against him,¹⁵ and because however good his casting abilities and production standards, he could not compete against the growing titans of the business. To contemporary theatre managements, Arthur's profits would be respectable, even allowing for inflation to the 1990s, but comparison with results for Howard and Wyndham and other theatres in the same period, as shown in *Table 4*, underscores the wealthier context of his competitors' fortunes, as well as the richer Moss' Empires results and, furthermore, the comparison of provincial with London theatre profits. Moss' Empires Limited was incorporated in 1899 as an amalgamation of the theatres run by Sir Edward Moss (1854-1912), Richard Thornton (1839-1922) and Sir Oswald Stoll (1866-1942) which aggregated a chain of ten separate companies with fourteen theatres and music halls.

Table 4.

	Howard and Wyndham Limited	Moss' Empires Limited	Theatre Royal Drury Lane Limited, London	London Coliseum Syndicate Limited
	Net Profit/(Loss)	Net Profit/(Loss)	Net Profit/(Loss)	Net Profit/(Loss)
	£	£	£	£
1906-07	5,523	92,591	4,447	-
1907-08	12,611	139,843	17,235	-
1908-09	7,632	70,448	7,111	6,345
1909-10	7,401	52,669	33,837	12,266
1910-11	10,848	55,730	14,061	17,261
1911-12	9,597	42,217	7,340	13,496
1912-13	11,893	86,187	9,509	16,754
1913-14	13,323	90,145	22,046	15,904
1914-15	4,086	46,234	(9,542)	20,247
1915-16	7,546	87,108	5,276	24,187
1916-17	12,001	92,336	11,762	26,222

Source: Lionel Carson, (ed.), *The Stage Year Book, Carson and Comerford*, pp.72-74.

In the 1910s, Moss' Empires was the forty-fourth largest company in the United Kingdom.¹⁶ Howard and Wyndham now ran twelve theatres, had doubled in size in twenty years and continued to expand until, by the time of Fred Wyndham's retirement in 1928, there was hardly a city in Britain in which they did not have an interest. In 1931 the Opera House, Manchester, was acquired, introducing the company to the largest theatre city outside London. Nonetheless, they were not as large an operation as the unprecedentedly bigger, monopolistically ambitious and cut-throat Moss' Empires which, in the years of these accounts, ran twenty five theatres directly, though the operation had divided from Stoll in 1910¹⁷ who, as a result of this division, ran a further fifteen theatres himself, including the London Coliseum. Stoll built this theatre independently of his amalgamated chain in 1904, but the profits failed to materialise: after losing £84,269 he re-floated a separate company in association with the rest of the chain in 1907 and, as the table indicates, went on to make very large profits for one theatre.

For the eleven years 1907-1917, Howard and Wyndham profits totalled £102,461, yet Moss' Empires was over eight times more profitable at £855,408 and even single London theatres could be more profitable: the London Coliseum made profits of £152,682 in the nine years after its re-launch. Even a theatre which was not part of a syndicate, the Theatre

Royal, Drury Lane, run by Arthur Collins, made significant profits of £128,624 in this period.

In this chapter, the incorporation of Howard and Wyndham as a limited company has been discussed, followed by its further expansion into England by their take-over of Robert Arthur Theatres Limited. The co-founder, J. B. Howard, barely survived the formation of the company, but Wyndham lived until 1930, though he gave up his joint-managing directorship in 1928, on the arrival of A. Stewart Cruikshank. Theatre management and ownership became one business, play producing was another. Cruikshank, who had built the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, was a touring manager who took control of the enlarged circuit. Meanwhile, the company had been staging a wide range of attractions, from upmarket drama and opera to vaudeville, farce, revue and variety. In Scotland, it created distinct market identities for its theatres by scheduling "high" art at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, and Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, and "low" art at the King's Theatres in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Financial results indicate that theatres and touring, when well managed, were very profitable by today's standards. The perception is clearly one that now sees the company dominated by a desire to make money.

¹ See J.B.Ratcliffe, *op.cit.* The Registered Office was at 5 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh. This was the office of their accountants and company secretaries, Messrs. Carter, Greig & Coy. They were incorporated on 5 March 1895. The subscribers to the Memorandum and Articles of Association were J. B. Howard, F.W.P. Wyndham and S. H. S.Austin. Administration was carried on from the Lyceum Theatre, where Howard was licensee, living at 6 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh. The authorised share capital was £100,000, being £50,000 at 5 per cent cumulative preferences and £50,000 ordinary £5 shares. £30,000 was paid up and £70,000 ordinary shares. Loan capital was £7,500, in 3 per cent debentures. The reserve fund was £38,000, with the financial year ending in February. There were five Directors who were, in addition to Howard and Wyndham, Michael Simons (Chairman), Robert Crawford and David Heilbron. The Simons family, father and son, continuously held the chairmanship of the company until the death of E.I.Simons in December, 1944. Granville Heilbron succeeded his father as a Director in 1926.

² See James Thomas, *The Art of the Actor-Manager: Wilson Barrett and the Victorian Theatre*, UMI Research Press, Michigan, 1984, pp.30-33. Kathleen Barker records that the Theatre Royal, Nottingham, for which capital was raised by the Lambert brothers in 1865, was turned into a limited liability company the following year, being possibly the first theatre company to register. See her 'Thirty Years of Struggle: Entertainment in Provincial Towns Between 1840 and 1870', essay in *Theatre Notebook*, Society for Theatre Research, London, Vol. XXXIX. No.3, 1985, p.140.

³ See *The Stage Year Book, 1917*, Carson and Comerford, London, 1917, p.47.

⁴ Howard left £39,885 in his will. Quoted in 'Theatrical Wills': John Parker (ed.), *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Eleventh Edition, Pitman, London, 1952, p.2001. The senior founder, R.H.Wyndham, died on 16 December 1894, leaving £56,460, p.2008. The large sums indicate their material progress as managers, especially in relation to the modest wills of other managers in this period. Henry Irving, for instance, left £20,527. The richest manager quoted is Edward Moss, who left £204,814.

⁵ This site in Hope Street, Glasgow, had been the Bayliss' Coliseum from 1867 and was renamed Theatre Royal after the previous Theatre Royal in Dunlop Street had burned in 1879, only to burn later that year and again in 1894.

⁶ See Brian Walker (ed.), *Frank Matcham, Theatre Architect*, Blackstaff Press, Belfast, 1980, pp.145-146. The beginning of Robert Arthur's management of the Theatre Royal, Newcastle Upon Tyne, coincided with Matcham's reconstruction of its stage and auditorium, but was undertaken

largely according to the ideas of Arthur, who needed more seats in order to compete with Howard and Wyndham's move to the Tyne Theatre.

⁷ See Victor Glasstone, *Victorian and Edwardian Theatres*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1975, p.122. Other commentators have not been as generous in their description of the auditorium: Christopher Brereton in *Curtains!!!* (op.cit., p.117) notes that the third balcony was removed in 1951, and the middle one extended back, to the detriment of theatrical atmosphere on this level, resulting in large areas of blank side walls with rear seating at the top of the new Upper Circle which is distant from the stage. This removal of the gallery by Cruikshank junior would doubtless be forbidden on architectural conservation grounds today, and was probably undertaken to increase the potential box-office income by installing real chairs after the customary benches in the "gods". Apologists suggest that the reason stemmed from structural problems. The photograph on page 44 shows the *original* four-tier auditorium.

⁸ Prologue: *The King's Theatre*, by J. Aitken Brown, published in the programme for the opening night, Howard and Wyndham Limited, Edinburgh, 1906.

⁹ These contrasts in respective bars, lobbies and cloakrooms are still discernible today, as is the conscious 'national theatre' style programming of the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, (Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet, Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal National Theatre) whereas the King's Theatre, Glasgow, schedules popular musicals and amateur productions. The main difference is that Glasgow's main pantomime is staged at the King's and not the Theatre Royal.

¹⁰ For definitions of "music hall" (1830-1906), "variety" (1880-1960) and "vaudeville" (1880-1932) see Valantyne Napier, *Glossary of Terms Used in Variety: Vaudeville, Revue and Pantomime, 1880-1960*, The Badger Press, Westbury, 1996, pp.v-vi. These categories were shows *without* chorus girls and no producers, directors or titles. Other "popular" theatre genres were "Honky Tonk" (1830s-1890s), "Burlesque" (1869-1942), "Revue" (1830-1996), "Follies" (1886-1996) and "Musical Comedy" (1866-1996), all of which had chorus girls, show girls, producers, directors and a title.

¹¹ See *Howard and Wyndham: Pantomimes 1888-1948*, Howard and Wyndham Limited, Edinburgh, p.5.

¹² Quoted in Vivien Devlin, *King's Queens and People's Palaces: An Oral History of Scottish Variety Theatre, 1920-1970*, Polygon, Edinburgh, 1991, p.117.

¹³ Harris was concurrently the young manager of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London from 1879 where he instituted new policies and production methods, especially in lavish pantomimes, famed for their long processions. Howard and Wyndham's connection with Harris (nicknamed 'Druriolanus') brought stars such as Dan Leno, Vesta Tilley, Marie Lloyd and Little Tich to Newcastle.

¹⁴ See advertisement for Robert Arthur Theatres Limited, *The Era Annual, 1898*, The Era, London, 1898, p.34.

¹⁵ London suburban theatres were built for down-market attractions, but rapidly lost their audiences, who deserted to the moving pictures and never returned.

¹⁶ See G. Sandison, *Theatre Ownership in Britain*, Federation of Theatre Unions, London, 1953.

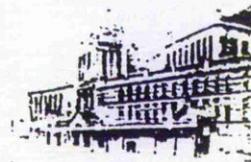
¹⁷ See advertisements 'All the Stars Radiate from Moss' Empires' and 'Stoll Theatres', in Lionel Carson, (ed.), *The Stage Yearbook, 1917*, op.cit., pp. xi-xii. These companies merged again after the death of Stoll.



Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh



King's Theatre, Edinburgh



Theatre Royal, Glasgow

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King's Theatre, Glasgow

CHAPTER FOUR

BUSINESS MANAGERS, 1931-1959

In this chapter, examination is made of the shift of the company's focus to London and the concentration of control in the hands of a tight network of company directors. The Edinburgh-based touring managers, faced with a noticeable and sudden audience decline when the increasing popularity of the movies forced a great many theatres to close and re-open as cinemas, were thus replaced by a theatre management and production company, whose main goal was to make as much profit as possible. The profit motive emphasised by the London office brought about the artistic devaluation of the provinces. There had been a time when London stars toured the regions regularly, basked happily in the warmth of the acclaim because that was a way of guaranteeing them income to compensate for the occasional losses of their London seasons. Nevertheless, Howard and Wyndham continued serious drama in Edinburgh and Glasgow, hosting the Scottish Repertory Theatre at the Glasgow Royalty Theatre under the direction of Alfred Wareing (1876-1942), then at the Edinburgh Royal Lyceum with Brandon Thomas (1898-1974) and, later, with Wilson Barrett (1900-1968).¹ In England the company collaborated with London managers, maximising profits on a West End success by sending duplicate companies on tour. This contributed to a standardisation of theatre entertainment throughout the country in the years before the subsidised repertory movement brought locally produced work of high quality to individual cities.

Upon the death of Fred Wyndham in 1930,² who had remained a director after retiring as joint managing director in 1928, the company lost its links with the actor-manager leadership of its founders. A. Stewart Cruikshank, who was appointed managing director in 1928, was essentially a sober businessman and, to inject more artistic judgement and entrepreneurial flair, especially needed with competition from cinema, the directors appointed Charles B. Cochran (1872-1951) to the board two months after Wyndham's death. Cochran was something of an English Diaghileff, a showman and impresario with a gift for spotting new talent and for bringing established names together in exciting combinations. He also had a gift for bouncing back from successive flops and bankruptcies. He virtually invented 'revue' before the First World War, moved on to cabaret in the twenties and then formed a vital partnership with Noël Coward (1899-1973), presenting half a dozen glittering shows including *Bitter Sweet* (1929), *Private Lives* (1930) and

Cavalcade (1931). Cochran was the first appointment to the Howard and Wyndham board from the London theatre milieu and he introduced the company to the networks of West End hierarchies which shifted the firm's focus to London, where the company could find the plays and star attractions to keep their Scottish and English touring circuit in business between the locally produced seasons of repertory, pantomime, variety and amateurs. London dominated the company's production and sourcing of plays hereafter. The stiff-necked, condescending pride of the London theatre was well expressed by the swaggering critic James Agate (1877-1947):

I could mention a score of stage-worthy actors who are never to be seen out of London. It may be that some bury themselves from time to time in what actors term "the country"; but we may take them as types of the competent West End actors who alone make bearable the West End type of play. To the provincial playgoer, the polished acting of good players is unknown. He is confirmed in his championship of the Potteries, let us say, and of the acting indigenous thereto by comparison of the native article with the travesties of London actors who tour the provinces wearing the shirt-fronts of their masters with so impudent a difference. It is significant that some fifth-rate actor in somebody's "No.1 Company" is neither better dressed nor better mannered than the butter-merchant whom he would amaze. Who knows but that your provincial, were he to be flooded with the full glory of London acting, might sicken of his provincial makeshifts and so die?³

The company was determined to shed any vestige of such a provincial image but the metropolis could not be conquered without the recruitment of insiders from the West End. In 1932 a theatre employee with Moss' Empires Ltd., H. M. (Harry) Tennent (1879-1941), resigned from that company and became the booking manager for Howard and Wyndham. One year later he became manager of a new combination, Moss' Empires and Howard and Wyndham Tours Ltd. The next person from the London theatre to join the board was Hugh ("Binkie") Beaumont. Cochran and Beaumont guided, influenced and manipulated the West End, and were shrewd, bright and icy operators. Beaumont had begun his career in 1920 in a Cardiff theatre box-office under Howard and Wyndham, reputedly at the age of twelve.⁴ Where Cochran was a luminary with a big image, Beaumont was discreet, quiet and retiring, more in the style of the remote and self-contained Cruikshank, who had taught the fundamentals of theatre management to the teenage Beaumont, who later recalled:

I always wanted to be in the box office. I *loved* it because box office meant money and that's how theatres survive. The box office was the real centre of power and I loved that. I was a businessman and not an artist. I like to be anonymous, to serve and work *behind* the scenes.⁵

Beaumont had gone on to be business manager at Barnes Little Theatre and, in 1926, general manager at the Duke of York's Theatre before joining the staff of Moss' Empires. Cruikshank declared that he would rather him on his own side than against him.⁶ In 1933, he was called upon to revitalise Howard and Wyndham with good, pleasant commercial plays. They were usually comedies which would attract one or two stars and which would appeal to the middle-brow audiences on the provincial circuit. He was renowned for good casting and notorious for negotiating sexual favours with juvenile artistes; a parody of the song *Bella Margueritta* was popular among young actors at the time:

In September when the plays are casting,
Binkie Beaumont said to Daphne Rye:⁷
'We must hold a very big audition!'
All the little boys were heard to cry:
'O bella Binkie Beaumont!
O, so beautiful to see!
We are hoping every meau-ment
Mister Beaumont
Will have a part for me!'⁸

Under Beaumont's influence and during the years under discussion, 1931-1959, Howard and Wyndham grew to the extent of owning the freeholds of seven No.1 touring houses in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and Edinburgh and "booked in conjunction" His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, and another fifteen houses in Ireland, Wales and England, rivalling the Stoll chain, and moving head office from Scotland to London. The theatres advertised as "booked in conjunction" were a logical step in Howard and Wyndham's expansion, for they amounted to a huge circuit of the No.1 theatres, with the company acquiring control of contracting attractions throughout Britain, and therefore a continuous engagement of up to six months for a single attraction.

The stimulus behind this expansion must have been profits, which would be greater if the booking of all the important theatres could be handled by one office, and preferably only through that office. By booking over twenty No.1 drama houses in the major cities the company put the balance of negotiating power into its own hands. The company would be assured of the best attractions at the times best suited to them and, moreover, the West End directors on Howard and Wyndham's board would be assured of the most favourable bookings for pre- and post-West End tours. Such a policy meant favouritism for the insiders on the board and, conversely, discrimination against outsiders. The following twenty-four theatres were those controlled by the company in 1954:

LEEDS	Grand Theatre
EDINBURGH	King's Theatre
EDINBURGH	Royal Lyceum Theatre
GLASGOW	Alhambra Theatre
GLASGOW	King's Theatre
MANCHESTER	Opera House
NEWCASTLE	Theatre Royal
LIVERPOOL	Royal Court Theatre

Booked in conjunction:

ABERDEEN	His Majesty's Theatre
BELFAST	Grand Opera House
BLACKPOOL	Grand Theatre
BLACKPOOL	Opera House
BOURNEMOUTH	Pavilion Theatre
BRISTOL	Hippodrome
CARDIFF	New Theatre
CARDIFF	Prince of Wales
COVENTRY	Coventry Theatre
DERBY	Hippodrome
DUBLIN	Gaiety Theatre
DUDLEY	Hippodrome
	Palace Theatre
LEICESTER	Opera House
NORTHAMPTON	New Theatre
SHEFFIELD	Lyceum Theatre

At various other times the company booked for a number of other provincial theatres. Within the list of those "booked in conjunction" are two theatres owned by J.H. Newsome, also a director of Howard and Wyndham, (Coventry and Northampton); the Elyot Beaumont⁹ theatres (Leeds and Sheffield), several theatres owned by the Stoll Group (Cardiff, Derby, Dudley, Bristol and Leicester) and one owned by the Donald family of Aberdeen.¹⁰ The owners and directors of all these theatres were part of an interlocking, masonic network, known as "The Group". Only five theatres were independent of it: the two theatres owned by the Blackpool Tower Company and those in Belfast, Bournemouth and Dublin.

Howard and Wyndham were undoubtedly now one of the major leaders in the theatre industry, both provincially and in the West End. Owners and managers were closely linked in a network of companies and it was, and remains, difficult to unravel the tangle. There was a substantial concentration of power within a few groups of interests, and the industry was dominated by several men who controlled many of the important playhouses and the

entertainment they provided. A. Stewart Cruickshank (and his son) were prominent figures in this group, along with the brothers Prince Littler (1901-1973) and Sir Emile Littler (1903-1989).¹¹ "The Group" were connected with the majority of West End theatres as well as the provincial touring houses, with Howard and Wyndham having a bigger profile out of London. They controlled, or were closely connected with, twenty-one of the forty operational theatres in London by the 1950s. They inherited the legacy of the theatre between the wars and did much to improve it. They checked excessive sub-letting and irresponsible renting. They co-ordinated the needs of management and "bricks and mortar" in their own field. But in spite of this benevolent rationalisation, the concentration of power which made it possible was dangerous for the future of the theatre.

Cruikshank's son, also Stewart (1908-1966), who was educated at George Watson's College in Edinburgh and trained in stockbroking before joining the head office staff in 1930, was promoted to the board in 1938. When appointed to the board of The Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1945, a profile in *The Stage* said:

Mr. Cruikshank is a Scotsman of the most artistic taste and good judgement in theatrical affairs. He believes that the clientele of his theatres wants the best and most artistic offerings the theatre world affords. This he gives them, and that his judgement is correct is proven by the success of the Howard and Wyndham theatres. He has accomplished much in the business development of the theatre that it is difficult to recount adequately his various achievements. He is one of the most conspicuous figures in the provincial theatre today; admired by his associates, and respected by those who oppose him a commercial way.¹²

In 1952, Stewart Cruikshank was a director of H. M. Tennant Ltd., which had an interest in the Globe and Queen's Theatres and had first claim on the tenancy of the Haymarket Theatre. He was also a director of London Theatrical Productions Ltd. and the Daniel Mayer Company Ltd. Howard and Wyndham had a large holding in H. M. Tennant Ltd., as well as controlling its seven provincial theatres. He was also a director of Moss' Empires Ltd., Associated Theatre Properties (London) Ltd. and the Stoll Theatres Corporation Ltd. The chairman of these firms was Prince Littler.¹³

The Stoll Theatres Corporation controlled the Stoll and the Coliseum; many regional theatres, including the Bristol Hippodrome, the Leicester Palace, the Manchester Hippodrome, the Leicester Opera House and thirteen suburban music halls. The network was more interdependent: Associated Theatre Properties (London) Ltd. had proprietary rights in the Apollo, the Lyric, half of St. James' Theatre, His Majesty's, the Phoenix, the



Aldwych, and was connected with theatrical catering, advertising and investment companies.

Moss' Empires ran about twenty three theatres including, in London, the Hippodrome, Palladium, the Prince of Wales, and the Empires in Edinburgh, Leeds, Liverpool, Glasgow, Newcastle, Sheffield and Swansea. Prince Littler was also a director of five other London theatres, five brewery companies, three piers and the Prince Littler Consolidated Trust Ltd. Stewart Cruikshank was also a director of the last company. Littler became chairman of Howard and Wyndham in 1949, after A. Stewart Cruikshank died in a road accident.¹⁴ Fundamental danger lay in this concentration of power, for the interlocking network narrowed the field of endeavour for those artists and playwrights of whom the groups did not approve.

The extremes to which this process of monopoly went were further exemplified by Emile Littler who controlled, with Tom Arnold (?-1969),¹⁵ three London theatres, three production companies, one printing company and was a director of Pantomime Copyrights Ltd., Northern Pantomimes Ltd., Stoll Theatres Corporation Ltd., Moss' Empires, Theatre Royal Drury Lane Ltd., Associated Theatre Properties Ltd., Prince Littler Consolidated Trust Ltd. and Theatres Mutual Ltd., an insurance company.¹⁶

Similar theatrical expansion had occurred the United States where the Theatrical Syndicate, founded in 1896, controlled most of the theatres in the big cities for sixteen years. They held a stranglehold over the entertainments industry, forcing the rebels out of business. There was also the pan-continental example of the Shubert Brothers, who at one time had a controlling interest in seven London playhouses, thirty seven American playhouses, and the bookings of over half of New York theatres, so that:

In 1956 the Federal Court compelled the Shubert Organization to sell off twelve of its theatres (including four in New York), get out of the booking business, and obtain the government's approval for any future theatre purchases.¹⁷

Howard and Wyndham might also be compared to the Australian monopoly entrepreneur, J.C. Williamson's Ltd., which was founded in 1899 and dissolved in 1976, having an almost identical span to the British counterpart. It owned, managed, produced and imported attractions for its theatres in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. It is

significant, therefore, that monopolies occurred in the United States and in Australia before Britain which, unlike the United States, had no legislation to prevent the stranglehold from the situation.¹⁸ Howard and Wyndham owned no freeholds in London's West End - that was dominated by the Littlers - but its operations were so interwoven with them in London and had, in parallel, steadily expanded elsewhere in Britain, that it was only natural that the Cruikshank-Littler octopus would extend its range if it could. No limit could be imposed on this process. Was it a law of nature that one group of men could control so many of Britain's theatres? In France, by comparison, no single management is allowed to own or operate more than three theatres. Somewhat belatedly, the subject interested the Arts Council, who wrote in 1970:

Monopoly in the theatre can take two forms and these could be called "horizontal" and "vertical". A horizontal monopoly might be said to exist when a company or individual owns or controls more than a certain number of theatres. Or from the artists' point of view, where either through ownership of theatrical agencies, producing companies or theatres, the actors' employment opportunities are controlled by a few individuals or companies. Under the definition of monopoly used by the Board of Trade there would be a monopoly if one-third of the theatres, or one-third of the employment opportunities were controlled by one individual or one company. A vertical monopoly would develop when a company not only owned or controlled theatres but also held interests in other sectors of the entertainment industry, such as in theatrical costumiers, ticket agencies, caterers or marketing and publicity. There is no definition for vertical monopoly, and economists usually call this type of structure "vertical integration". Something like horizontal monopoly could be said to have existed in the 1950s, for about half of the West End theatres were controlled by "The Group". How closely these links operated it is difficult to say, but the existence of "The Group" undoubtedly made it a dominating influence in theatre management. It was hard for inexperienced and minor managements to find homes for their productions.¹⁹

Undoubtedly the influence of "The Group" contributed to the narrow choice of plays in London and on tour. Of the two companies operating in the provinces, Moss' Empires and Howard and Wyndham, the latter undoubtedly continued to present the wider spectrum of the theatre: in Scotland they were, as observed, involved in the repertory movement with the Brandon Thomas and the Wilson Barrett seasons at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. Scotland gained resident companies once again. Brandon Thomas said of his producers at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow: "Howard and Wyndham were patience itself."²⁰ Yet the firm were, by now, theatre managers more than producers. The two functions had become separate in England, with most theatres controlled by incorporated companies rather than individuals. To a certain extent, even the producers no longer acted as

individuals, since they often formed a separate limited company to finance each production and depended heavily on the backing of “angels.”

Where the company's work in London was absorbed with exploiting West End drama, in Scotland they maintained production activity independent of the business managers and magnates of Shaftesbury Avenue. Howard and Wyndham's work as producers was, arguably, more creative in Glasgow and Edinburgh. For example, they continued to uphold the identity of Scottish pantomime and, with spectacular success, ran summer seasons of Scottish Variety with the *Half-Past Eight* shows, launched at the King's Theatre, Glasgow, in 1933. Produced along the lines of seaside entertainment, but with the benefits of a first class theatre, they described the shows as “lightsome fare of Song, Dance and Laughter.” In the thirties and forties these summer seasons often ran up to twenty-six weeks, played once nightly excepting Saturdays or holidays when the presentation was twice nightly:

Life begins at Half-Past Eight,
In Good Old Glasgow City,
Now's the time for fun,
With jest and song we'll pass the time along.
Tell your friends, how good we are,
Your sisters too, and good old Ma',
Forget your sins, for life begins,
At Half-Past Eight.²¹

The formula was the envy of other managements and the roll-call of stars was legendary: Harry Gordon, Avril Angers, Jack Holden, Beryl Reid, Jack Edge, Dave Willis, Jack Raymond, Jewel and Warriss, the Gordon Ray Girls or the Tiller Girls. Audiences grew to know the stars personally, and the company re-booked them each summer. In the 1950s the shows were renamed *Five-Past Eight*, changing their programmes every week, then fortnightly and three-weekly changes. The newer stars topped the bill: Kenneth McKellar, Jack Milroy, Rikki Fulton, Stanley Baxter, Lionel Blair, Max Bygraves, Bruce Forsyth, Bob Monkhouse and Jimmy Logan - and supported by The Bluebell Girls. Backing them was an orchestra of fifteen and a choir of eight. Stewart Cruikshank described the aim as “to give Glasgow a show equal to anything in the world”.²²

In this chapter it has been observed that Howard and Wyndham faced a serious threat to its existence as a creative force, but solved the problem of competition from cinema by moving



Howard and Wyndham's
"half-past eight"

headquarters to London, where the company invited leading West End managers to join its board. Thereafter, the period under review is long because it was marked by relative stability and profitability: with further theatre acquisitions or programming control of additional theatres. Under the Cruikshanks it became an extensive business enterprise and theatrical monopoly. In Scotland it developed new continuity and audience loyalty with the introduction of self-produced variety productions. The touring drama of 1931 to 1959 will be considered in Chapter Six, for domestic, drawing-room comedies and thrillers were to characterise the touring circuit for nearly fifty years.

¹ Wareing directed the Scottish Repertory Theatre at the Royalty Theatre, Glasgow from 1909 to 1913, presenting a varied mix of classical and contemporary drama, including thirty five entirely new plays. This repertoire matched the quality of play selection previously programmed by Howard and Wyndham at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, but with resident actors. See Winifred F.E.C. Isaac, *Alfred Wareing: A Biography*, Green Bank Press, London, 1946, pp.150-153 and P.P.Howe *The Repertory Theatre: A Record and a Criticism*, Martin Secker, London, pp.65-69. This was the "first Citizens' Theatre in the English speaking world". Howard and Wyndham rented the Royalty Theatre to Wareing for £80 per week but retained the bars, programmes and cloakroom receipts: they gave full use of their stock of scenery and properties and Willie Glover, the Howard and Wyndham property master, was seconded to Wareing's company under the contract. The ideal of repertory was attempted by Charles Frohman at the Duke of York's Theatre in 1911 but failed because of commercial West End pressures. Wareing's programme, as well as the later work of the Manchester Gaiety Theatre, the Liverpool Repertory Theatre and the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, was frequently voiced as the programme to be undertaken by a national theatre. The repertory movement was to give Britain a *geographically* national theatre: Howard and Wyndham's assistance to three pioneering companies, working in the years before subsidy, deserves greater recognition than given by theatre historians to date, but is explained by their keeping the history of theatre management on the frontiers of the discipline.

The second repertory company was led by Jevan Brandon-Tomas, actor-manager and playwright, and son of the playwright (Walter) Brandon Thomas (1856-1914), author of *Charley's Aunt* (1892).

Wilson Barrett, who was artistic director of the third repertory company hosted by Howard and Wyndham, was the grandson of the Victorian actor-manager and dramatist Wilson Barrett.

² Fred W. Wyndham had, like his predecessors, become a wealthy manager. He left £81,743 in his will. See 'Theatrical Wills' in John Parker, (ed.), *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Eleventh Edition, Pitman, London, 1952, p.2008.

³ James Agate, *Buzz, Buzz! Essays of the Theatre*, Collins, London, 1917, pp. 61-62.

⁴ See entry for Hugh Beaumont in John Parker (ed.), *Who's Who in the Theatre*, Eighth Edition, op.cit., p.268. There is no record of a Howard and Wyndham theatre in Cardiff, until the New Theatre and Prince of Wales Theatre were "booked in conjunction", but his engagement may have been with one of their productions on tour in that city.

⁵ Quoted in Richard Huggett, *Binkie Beaumont: Eminence Grise of the West End Theatre, 1933-1973*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1989, p.57.

⁶ See Kitty Black, *Upper Circle: A Theatrical Chronicle*, Methuen, London, 1984, p.5. Black was employed by H.M. Tennent from 1937 to 1953, starting as shorthand typist with Hugh Beaumont and going on to translate or adapt many foreign plays for his management. Her book is, largely, an insider's memoir of Beaumont.

⁷ Hugh Beaumont's casting director.

⁸ Quoted in Ronald Harwood, *Sir Donald Wolfitt: His Life and Work in the Unfashionable Theatre*, Amber Lane Press, London, 1971, pp.206-207.

⁹ John Elyot Beaumont was not related to Hugh Beaumont.

¹⁰ In Aberdeen the Donald family controlled eleven out of sixteen cinemas and an ice-rink. Until the 1930s they only had an Aberdeen profile, but after acquiring His Majesty's Theatre in 1933 the Donalds provide a parallel to the Cruikshanks' invasion of the London production scene. Peter Donald joined the board of Howard and Wyndham in 1952, becoming chairman in 1966. He was

uncle of the manager James Forrest Donald (1934-) owner of, and after sale to Aberdeen Corporation Theatre Director, His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, 1971 to 1994; and Peter B. Donald, present House Manager of the same theatre. Peter Donald's son, Herbert Donald (1936-) was publicity director of Howard and Wyndham and, from 1964-1977, a board member, also succeeding Freddie Carpenter as head of production and casting for their pantomimes, 1964-1977. Thereafter Herbert Donald returned to Scotland to be director of Aberdeen Picture Palaces Limited at the Capitol Theatre. See, partly, Nichola Pritchett-Brown, (ed.), *Who's Who in Arts Management, 1986*, Rhinegold, London, 1986, p.115-116 and *His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen, 1906-1996*, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen, 1996, p.6. The Donald family are, potentially, a source of further information on the history of Howard and Wyndham. This family is not related to the Aberdeen-born actor James Donald (1917-1977) but is related to another James Donald who was a ballroom dancing champion and ice-rink promoter.

¹¹ The Littler brothers were particularly retiring characters, but a biographical essay on Emile Littler appeared in Ripley A. Crooks, *Spectacle: A Book of Things Seen*, Brownlee, London, 1945. This concentrates on his famous pantomimes at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

¹² *The Stage*, Carson and Comerford, London, 12 August 1945, p.9.

¹³ The company directorships of "The Group" have been obtained from several editions of *Who's Who in the Theatre*, op.cit., G. Sandison, *Theatre Ownership in Britain: A Report Prepared for the Federation of Theatre Unions*, London, 1953, Peter Lowman, *Report to the Arts Council Theatre Enquiry on Theatre Ownership and Production Companies*, Arts Council, London, 1968, and Richard Findlater, *The Unholy Trade*, Gollancz, London, 1952. Because their publication dates vary, the list is not complete at any one date. A more rewarding source for further research would be company accounts, but before the Companies' Act (1967) it was not always necessary for many of the privately owned theatrical companies to publish balance sheets and lodge particulars of directors. Ownership and directorships are therefore hard to identify.

¹⁴ A. Stewart Cruikshank left £62,003 in his will. See 'Theatrical Wills' in John Parker, (ed.), *Who's Who in the Theatre*, Eleventh Edition, op.cit., p.1998. He distressing death is described by the producer Henry Sherek, who worked with Cochran and Howard and Wyndham, in *Not in Front of the Children*, Heinemann, London, p.90.

¹⁵ Tom Arnold was a prominent pantomime, revue and ice-show producer. His first co-productions with Emile Littler and Howard and Wyndham were *Gay's The Word* (Ivor Novello, 1951) and *You, Too, Can Have a Body*; also lessee of the Palace Theatre, London, from 1944.

¹⁶ See John Parker, (ed.), *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Thirteenth Edition, Pitman, London, 1961, p. 752.

¹⁷ See Jeremy Gerard, article in *Variety: History of Show Business*, Editors of Variety (eds.), Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1993, p.112.

¹⁸ See John West: article in *The Companion to Theatre in Australia*, ed. Philip Parsons, Currency Press, Sydney, 1996, pp.299-304. After this company and its empire broke up, the name was acquired by Kenn Brodziak (1913-).

¹⁹ See *The Theatre Today*, Report of the Arts Council Theatre Enquiry, Arts Council of Great Britain, London, 1970, p.42. They concluded that that it did not seem that any drastic measures for breaking what remained of the monopoly were called for, believing that since the 1950s it had become easier for new managements to find West End theatres for their productions. The Enquiry scrutinised regional theatre provision, including touring, but did not address monopoly outside London. The Enquiry had taken up the subject after Peter Lowman's report, op.cit.

²⁰ Quoted by Donald Campbell, *Playing for Scotland, A History of the Scottish Stage, 1715-1965*, Mercat Press, Edinburgh, 1996, p.114. In Campbell's chapter on Brandon-Thomas and Wilson Barrett he notes that Howard and Wyndham's association with the repertory movement continued until 1957, with summer residence in Edinburgh and an autumn season in Glasgow, interrupted by one notable intermission in 1937. This concerned A. Stewart Cruikshank's dislike of homosexuals: he evicted Brandon-Thomas and his company from the Royal Lyceum Theatre because the artistic director was alleged to be having an affair with a young actor from Perth, Alex MacAlpine. Barrett and the actor Esmond Knight (1906-1984) were engaged to form a new company.

²¹ Programme frontispiece, *Half-Past Eight*, Howard and Wyndham Limited, Glasgow, 1933.

²² The contribution made to Scottish theatre by *Half-Past Eight* and *Five-Past Eight* was recognised by the Edinburgh International Festival in 1993. In an uncharacteristic excursion into "popular" art, the Festival revived the genre with *The Fabulous Fifties*, staged by Jimmy Logan and Douglas Squires in a critically acclaimed production at the King's Theatre. It starred The Tiller Girls, Johnny Beattie, Jack Milroy, Susan Maughan, Jimmy Logan, Anne Fields and Karen Hunter. The scenery

was a replica of the Howard and Wyndham *Five-Past Eight* backcloths and the promoters tracked down the original number boards that lit up, allowing patrons to check their programmes for the right act. 1950s microphones contained 1990s sound technology. Personal memories from the hey-days of these productions are recorded in Vivien Devlin, *Kings, Queen's and People's Palaces: An Oral History of The Scottish Variety Theatre, 1920-1970*, Polygon, Edinburgh, 1991, pp.43-58.

CHAPTER FIVE

MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS AND TECHNIQUE, 1930-1970

In this chapter, pausing from the chronological discussion of the company's history, we examine aspects of the management techniques applied to the running of Howard and Wyndham theatres from the 1930s to the 1970s. In the first decade, the company developed a national infrastructure for its business practices, reaching the peak of its theatrical influence with the aid of sophisticated administration. Putting together a continuous, year-round programme of attractions involved both judgement and juggling; selling seats required persistence and maintaining their theatre buildings needed constant care. The Howard and Wyndham theatre management style was about financial success. Today the framework for all good theatre management includes artistic and community success. The better theatres today now try to be busy all day, with cafes, recitals, outreach, educational activities, tours, make-up demonstrations, acting workshops, post-show discussions and generally keeping an open management style: this social responsibility may have sounded odd to the Cruikshanks. Certainly, the Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook, a 200 page bible of running every aspect of their theatres, issued "solely for the use of theatre managers" in 1935, is full of seemingly arcane rules; such as employment practice, or customer care as it is known today. Nonetheless, it reveals much about management style and the detailed work of administration. Some of these rules are quoted:

Female Staff - It is essential to engage girls smart, intelligent, and a good appearance. Middle-aged women cannot be engaged. Ushers must wear black stockings.

Male Staff - Only young men of good appearance to be engaged. Fingernails to be inspected before opening the house. They should be kept well trimmed. Hands should be washed before proceeding on duty.

Men attendants should always stand to attention when spoken to by patrons. They must, when addressing patrons, salute and stand to attention.

Politeness: It is most important that staff should realise that patrons should always receive the greatest courtesy. All attendants must always address patrons as "Sir" or "Madam" as the case may be.

All members of the staff will stand upright in their posts. Any lounging about or unnecessary talking on duty is strictly forbidden. Smoking or the eating of sweets or the chewing of gum will render the offender liable to instant dismissal.

Uniforms must be kept scrupulously clean. On no account should polish be used on buttons. They should be rubbed with a clean cloth. Jewellery of any description is expressly forbidden. All attendants must wear black shoes.

All attendants must be at their post a quarter of an hour before the House opens. They must not leave until the whistle is blown.¹

The style continued to the 1960s, as typified by this programme notice at the Manchester Opera House in 1968:

Any INCIVILITY or INATTENTION on the part of an attaché of the establishment or OVERCHARGING FOR SERVICE OF REFRESHMENTS should be reported to the Manager. INFRACTIONS of ANY of the foregoing rules may be communicated to the Management, who will gladly summarily dismiss the same. It is only by being informed of breaches of the rules, and other errors or omissions, that corrections can be made....In the interests of public health the Opera House is disinfected with JEYES' FLUID.²

The Management Handbook underscored the service style of the organisation and how the details of the theatregoing experience were managed for their patrons. The size of the national circuit was a serious challenge to administer, for it could be both a strength, in offering financial stability and financial advantage over smaller competitors, and a weakness in that so many theatres had to be continuously supplied with attractions. The theatres were both high street retail outlets and in the service sector. They were competing with other businesses in the service sector, especially cinemas and, despite co-operation, the even larger Moss' Empires. From the viewpoint of those attending a theatre, there was more to theatregoing than the show itself. While the production was the most important part of their experience, their theatregoing always encompassed a number of other activities. These ranged from buying the ticket to parking the car; from somewhere to hang a coat to getting a drink in the interval. For service success, Howard and Wyndham theatres were run according to a set of standardised principles. This was important because the company knew that it was their service to patrons which made the difference to whether their customers bought again. The willingness of theatregoers to risk buying tickets for shows, about which they might know little, could be influenced by the other aspects of their past theatregoing experience. At the margin, service made a difference, and perhaps *the* difference to theatregoers coming again. Howard and Wyndham could control the quality of service it provided in a way that it could not always control the quality of productions on its circuit. Even their active management, with increasing networks in the West End theatre boardrooms, might have limited influence over the standard of attractions once producing

theatre separated from managing theatres; but they could control these other aspects of theatregoing. Cruikshank senior wrote in the preface to the Handbook:

Our theatre management, like the acting profession, follows a hazardous occupation, and our resident managers cannot, unless they are the Cochrans, expect to participate in the limelight which surrounds the artists. They can, and must, however, share his success and his disappointments, but by employing a discrete and polite contact with the public. And they, like the actor, will be wise to remember that, if one day proves to be a choking gall, the next day may well provide a preserving sweet.³

The firm's internal management style was rarely expressed so explicitly, for its world of theatre ownership, production and management was small and exclusive, surrounded by snobbery⁴ and mystique. When speaking to the public, Cruikshank wrote in a more romantic, external style, through editorials in *The Courier*, the magazine of the King's and Royal Lyceum Theatres, Edinburgh:

The audience is the most important factor in our life at Howard and Wyndham. There are good audiences and bad audiences, large audiences and small audiences, kind audiences and - getting the bird! ⁵ No matter how good a manager or an actor becomes, no matter how large his salary, or how bright the electric sign which spells his name, there is always the audience. It is an old saying that no two audiences are ever alike, and an even more curious thing is that an audience is not necessarily a good thing because it is large. Generally speaking, people enjoy themselves more at a play when the audience is full, and actors enjoy playing far more to full houses than to empty ones, and yet it sometimes happens that an audience, though meagre, has a gift of 'acting' (i.e. reacting to an artists playing) that may give the people on stage that wonderful feeling of being in tune with them, which is the greatest compensation of our arduous task. On the other hand there are nights when the audience are more interested in the bars than the play, or have dined not wisely but too well. There are nights when they don't like the actors or the play, and there are sometimes, in Edinburgh, nights when they boo.

But - there comes sometimes in our theatrical life that one evening which we will never forget (and perhaps the audience will never forget either), when there is a breathless hush all over the theatre; when two thousand people, from the duchess in the gallery to the dustman in the stalls, sit, as it were, at the actor's feet, lost in the play. Forgotten is the business of the day, their individual cares, their griefs, their worries. No longer ordinary self-centred creatures, they sit watching a puppet-play and dream in an enchanted world. It may be a world of tinsel, unreal and make-believe. It may be our theatres are gaudy, palaces for only one evening, but there is magic that night which can never be beaten - magic that lasts a lifetime - that cannot be recorded on paper, that leaves nothing permanent behind but that lives in the hearts of the audiences and stays till the day that they die. It is a hard life for an actor or theatre manager, up hill and down dale, but it has its moments of greatness and its memories are paradise.⁶

Sentimental though Cruikshank's writing is, it is an indication of the company's determined efforts to promote the uniqueness of live theatre. The talkies had arrived in 1928 and live

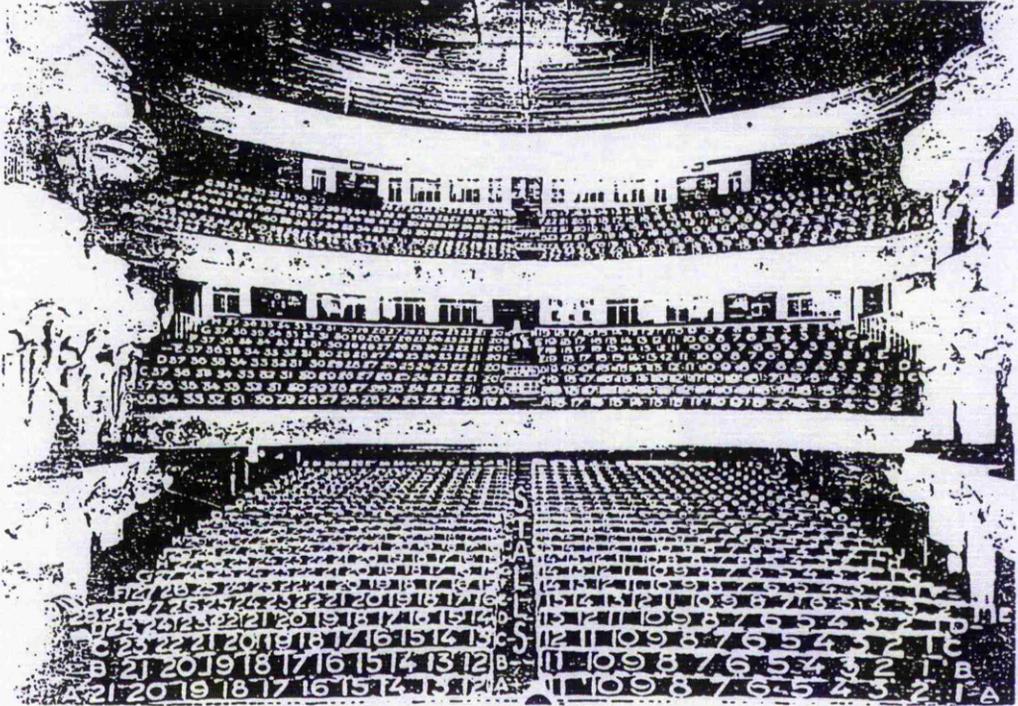
theatre had to meet the challenge of the super-cinema. Moss' Empires responded by rebuilding its Empire Palace Theatres in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Liverpool, removing Frank Matcham's ornate, neo-Baroque decorations and replacing them with new auditoriums which resembled the big new cinemas. Howard and Wyndham were more tenacious, preferring to cling to the exclusivity of theatregoing in their smaller theatres and continuing the tradition of pantomime at Christmas - a resort to popular entertainment in order to subsidise the less lucrative productions during the rest of the year. The Management Handbook reveals that the company took great store in listening to the public. This was achieved by the compilation of production reports filed by local managers to head office. *Table 5 (at the end of this chapter, p.84)* reproduces the form which managers compiled for head office. This allowed Cruikshank to make better informed risks with productions, for the company directors could thereby know the local markets better than the producers. The growth of the chain of theatres meant that Cruikshank could not be omni-present in the way that the founders had reigned in Edinburgh, conducting their management through a close network of knowing every member of staff (and a significant proportion of the audience) in the small group of theatres. The Manager's Report indicates that a bureaucratic structure was needed to handle the complexities of internal organisation. It also highlights the problem of acceptability in the market place: a dominant question in all theatrical management has always been who will determine what is "good" in theatre? Will it be the critic, the audience, the playwright, or the manager? The form indicates the manager's task in relation to this query. The theatre has always quickly reflected social atmosphere and change, both in productions and the attitude of the public. For Howard and Wyndham this meant constant adjustment, foresight and a fire for new ideas. The Manager's Report enabled them to be thinking and jumping ahead.

The relationship of theatre managers to producers was crucial to Howard and Wyndham success, for although producers chose to make their living by sending plays on tour, they did not *have* to produce a play in the same way that a theatre *had* to present one: a producer's overheads while doing nothing were generally lower than those of a closed theatre. This might give an underlying financial advantage to producers in negotiating terms with Howard and Wyndham, but the company was more knowledgeable about its audience market than the producers and, moreover, could reduce the producers' advantage by offering more than one date. Running a chain of theatres gave Howard and Wyndham a financial advantage which allowed for stable terms in contracting productions. Theatres managed as individual organisations could not compete for the best attractions.

Until the advent of the two big syndicate chains, Howard and Wyndham and Moss' Empires, this system of uniformity had been completely alien outside London, except in one or two No.3 circuits. It might be argued that the bureaucratic processes led to a loss of diversity, and this individuality had certainly been a feature in the big cities of Glasgow, Liverpool, Newcastle and Manchester. The rise of the syndicate chains, which engaged the same productions on a national tour basis, spelt the end of the individual theatre and its manager's close bond with an audience. Actor-managers also had a personal relationship with their actors. Such rough and ready methods, based on charisma, were an inappropriate basis for the conduct of industrial relations and money-making in a big theatre chain. Stewart Cruikshank, bunkered in head office, avoided contact with artists, and concentrated on business and financial affairs.

That the company was financially well managed is underscored by other documents of control. Income was never secure and depended on many factors, not least whether the success of a London season could be repeated in the provinces. *Table 6* (p.85) shows a trading statement for one week's receipts, and the producer's settlement at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, in 1932. This can be used to illustrate a range of management operations. The attraction is a musical comedy, *Rosy Rapture*⁷, which grossed £1,407 net of Entertainments Tax.⁸ The statement reveals that the production was contracted on terms of 65 per cent. In any business a perfect deal is one which minimises risk while maximising the possibility of reward. From Howard and Wyndham's perspective, this implies they would like to receive a large hire fee from a producer. From a producing management's perspective, perfection is different: a guaranteed fee from the theatre would be preferred. Given choice, neither side would want a deal to depend on the vagaries of ticket sales. These ideals would be at opposite ends of the spectrum: the reality of terms negotiated in touring was a compromise and a sharing of both risk and the prospect of reward. The contract for *Rosy Rapture*, at 65 per cent, would have been the top share paid to a producer, presumably because the production was a musical. This subject - that is, the deal with producers - was pivotal to the company's success (and a principal cause of the financial failure of the touring theatres when they became singly managed by separate local authorities after purchase in the 1980s). Separation of the function of theatre owning from that of play producing created an area of competition within the theatre: the division of receipts from the attraction, and in terms of the other terms of an engagement. Furthermore, every theatre was potentially the

KING'S THEATRE



Actual Photograph of Auditorium with every Seat except Gallery Marked

PRICES:

	MATINEE		EVENING		
BOXES <small>TO HOLD FIVE</small>	30 -	20 -	35 -	30 -	
STALLS	5 -	—	7 6	5 -	
CIRCLE	4 6	3 6	6 6	4 6	
OUT STALLS	3 -	—	3 6	—	STANDING
UPPER CIRCLE	2 6	—	3 -	—	3 - GRAND CIRCLE
GALLERY	1 -	9d.	1 3	1 -	2 - PIT AND UP. CIRCLE

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EVENINGS: First Open 7.30, Commence 8 p.m. Gallery First Dress 9 o'clock

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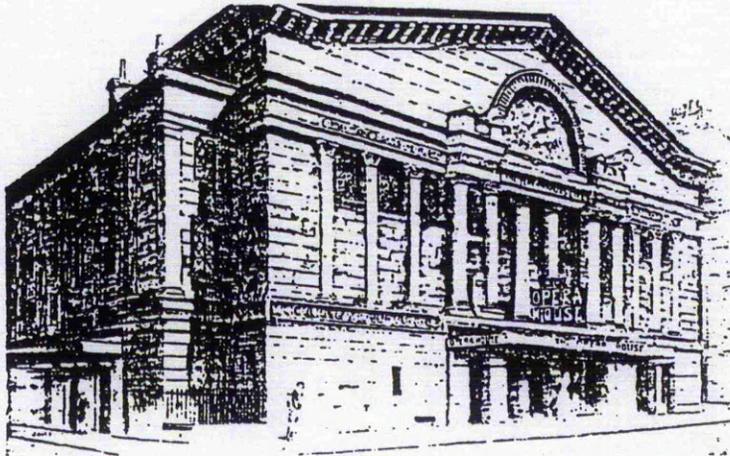
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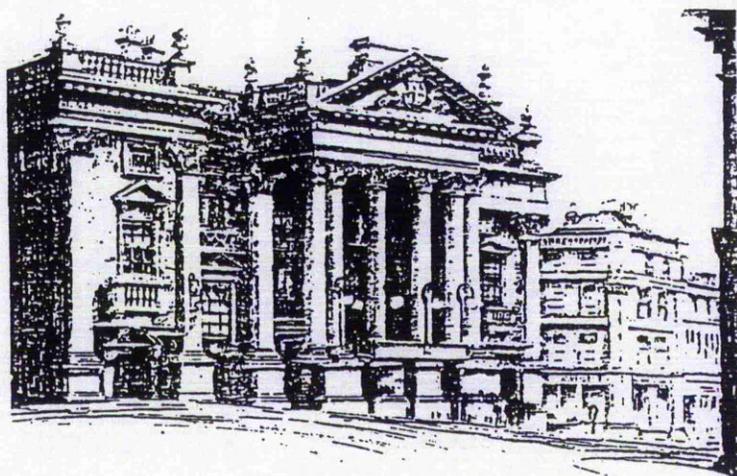
ACCOMMODATION

Stalls and Pit Stalls	906
Standing . . .	100
Grand Circle . . .	519
Standing . . .	100
Balcony . . .	223
Standing . . .	—
Gallery . . .	380
Standing . . .	10
Box Seats . . .	28
	<hr/>
	2266

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Stalls .	622
Standing .	30
Grand Circle	271
Standing .	24
Upper Circle	308
Standing .	30
Amphitheatre	165
Standing .	--
Gallery .	450
Standing .	50
Box Seats .	34
	<hr/> 1984

All seats except Amphitheatre and
Gallery bookable in advance.



competitor of every other theatre in respect of the production it wanted at the time it wanted it, so the negotiation of favourable terms was paramount: the company made sure that it retained as much of the box office income as possible. Monday night's box office receipts were £157 - and, although the take rises through the week, proving that "word of mouth" publicity gathered sales momentum towards the weekend - the opening night sales show that the company had no need to offer half-price or "two-for-one's" to build an audience. This practice is common today, and is akin to a retailer putting the stock on sale when it comes into the shop and then raising prices thereafter: this would, in most cases, be considered counterproductive. The weekly settlement statement suggests that the Company's financial management was focused on its gross margins - which are at the core of a retailer's thinking.

Instructions contained in The Management Handbook also indicate that Howard and Wyndham's bottom line was healthy because it achieved gross profits without incurring excessive overheads. These were kept under control by a strict system of written reports to head office, with minimal delegations for local expenditure below the line of the resident theatre manager. Forms were filed to Cruikshank personally for counter-approval of overhead expenditures ranging from trunk telephone calls, gas, electric light and water returns, box office postages for correspondence, telegram records, urgent repairs to theatre fabric, stationery, lamp returns and programme advertising contracts.⁹ Cruikshank had to have complete confidence in the honesty of his managers, but despite running a large chain of theatres he did so without budgets being shown to managers. Such centralised financial control would be deemed undesirable, if not unworkable, in today's theatre where responsibility is delegated through budgets so that those closest to expenditures are responsible for making them within an agreed framework.

The largest financial overhead was in the staffing of the theatres. Each theatre's staff was divided into departments: office, stage, properties, lighting, orchestra, cleaners, advertising, house (including box-office), general, wardrobe and bars.¹⁰ In 1932 the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, employed ten full-time staff plus part-time and casual workers for front-of-house, bars, the get-in and get-out of productions on stage, cleaning and distribution of leaflets and posters. The largest department was the "resident" orchestra of session musicians (costing £98 for *Rosy Rapture*); for the touring musicals did not travel with their own band. The payroll for the week's run of *Rosy Rapture* totalled £256 and the theatre had

retained a positive margin of 35 per cent or £492 from box office income after paying the producer's share.¹¹ The emphasis was on performance staff, when numbers increased dramatically, as shown in *Table 7* (p.86), being a Staff Return for one week of seven Shakespeare plays at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh. Performance staff numbered up to 73 for what must have been a large repertoire undertaking. It would have been easy to lose control of overtime payments because the company required stage staff to work long hours but the wages documents indicate a thorough control of time-sheets and recovery of significant labour costs from the visiting companies on the contra account.

Table 6 also points to the importance of ancillary earned income: receipts from cloakroom fees, programmes, bars, teas, ices and chocolates totalled £160 for the week, an extra 12 per cent on top of box office receipts. These sales contributed much less to the King's Theatre income than ticket sales, but the money was not shared with the visiting company: as a percentage of the theatre's retention after paying the producer 65 per cent of ticket sales, the front-of-house yield is almost one-third of the remaining turnover. This range of items, providing further income, has been extended in recent years, often as a result of theatre refurbishments which added restaurants, sometimes shops and even art galleries. In addition, theatres now promote function packages for the corporate hospitality market and sell show-linked merchandise on an irregular basis. Even when they do not have an actual shop, many sell theatre-linked merchandise, from seasonal gifts and Christmas cards to souvenirs. However, in 1932 there was annual income at the King's Theatre which would not be revealed on a *weekly* return: significant sums were also earned from safety curtain advertising, opera glass hires, billiard room memberships and matinee tea trays during intervals. It is noteworthy that the bars and catering income was managed by Howard and Wyndham themselves, rather than franchised to a lessee as is increasingly common today. This suggests that the company was satisfied with its ability to maximise interval profit margins.

From *Table 6* it is also possible to understand the company's marketing methods. The settlement statement recovers from the producer £64 in respect of press advertising, leaflets and posters, this being 65 per cent of promotion costs, the expenditure being shared in the same ratio as the box office split on the contract. The promotion was therefore a partnership between producer and theatre. Marketing expenditure for the week therefore totalled £98, approximately 7 per cent of the box office receipts.¹² Each Howard and

Wyndham theatre had a standardised printing requirement which the producer fulfilled, supplying the printed material for distribution by the theatre. At the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, this was as follows:

20 x 12 sheets; 20 x 6 sheets, 200 double crown posters, 100 box office cards, 1000 circulars, 1000 throwaways or *ad lib*.

Hand Painted Posters and Private Stations:

These are supplied locally, and provision is made in the contract.
Please send matter early.

Press Requirements:

Paragraphs: 12 at least, non-copyright.

Photographs: Plentiful supply. Non-copyright. Ladies preferred.

Blocks: 2 coarse grained.

Lantern slides: As supplied.

Courier: The *Theatre Courier* is issued at intervals, and photographs, story, and other matter is required early.

Headings: All printing headed: Howard and Wyndham Limited.

Managing Director: A. Stewart Cruikshank.

Manager: Andrew D. Stuart.¹³

In 1935, the King's Theatre had an audience capacity of 2,225 and all seats, except 750 in the gallery, were bookable in advance. The potential box-office income for each theatre was calculated by Head Office, who determined allocations, admission rates for categories of attractions defined as "Grand Opera", "Special Attractions", "Ordinary Attractions" and, when the theatres were occasionally used for film screenings, "Picture Attractions".¹⁴ Prices were identical throughout the circuit, though cash capacities varied with the size of auditorium and number of seats allocated in each price band.¹⁵ This suggests that the company gave greater emphasis to the prices that theatregoers paid than to filling seats, for there were no concessions offered to students, pensioners, disabled patrons, parties, stand-by customers and other categories common in theatre sales today. This is explained by the business being commercially driven, whereas theatres today help those less able to pay. No doubt the company charged what the market could bear, but because the prices varied only by production category, by charging the same prices for all drama, for instance, they probably feared that variable pricing would devalue the "cheaper" attractions in the eyes of potential theatregoers. There would be little commercial logic in this view today: liquor merchants do not charge the same amount for every bottle of wine they sell. Admittedly,

prices reflected an attraction's costs, but because producers were contracted on share terms rather than fixed guarantees or first calls, the company could achieve a more consistent relationship to the cost of their products than can theatres today. The company charged different prices not only for different parts of the auditorium but for different performances of attractions: matinee audiences paid less than theatregoers in the evenings. Pricing may appear to be superficially rigid, but the auditing controls of a manually operated box-office with printed tickets would not encourage the flexibility and speed with which a computerised sales system operates today. Admission prices for *Rosy Rapture* (1935), taken net excluding tax, were 7s.6d., 6s.6d., 6s., 5s., 3s.6d., 3s., 2s.6d., 1s.6d., and 1s. The maximum yield for the week was £2,200 and with actual receipts of £1,408, the production played to 64 per cent cash capacity. Ticket prices remained stable for many years: a musical comedy at the same theatre in 1923 (category: "Special Attraction") was priced at 6s.6d. top admission with a similar range down to 1s. In the context of accessibility, the very wide range of prices was a subtle way of encouraging everybody to visit the theatre, without recourse to categorising patrons by concessions: the top price was seven times the lowest price: a far wider range than charged today at the King's Theatre.¹⁶

Further information on marketing methods is shown in *Table 8* (p.87), detailing running expenses for another musical comedy, *The Queen was in the Parlour*¹⁷, at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, in 1932. This is a pointer to the importance of press advertising, which, at £68, was 90 per cent of marketing expenditure. The emphasis was on promotion in daily newspapers, but the return is significant for revealing the ratio of insertions in advance of the performances: 60 per cent of this expenditure was placed before opening night, suggesting that the sales pattern for advance bookings was similar to today, where touring theatres spend more on advertising before opening night, whereupon they rely on "word of mouth" recommendations. Glasgow was a more competitive theatre market than Edinburgh: there were thirteen theatres with a total seating capacity of 19,000¹⁸, but in all touring theatres presenting attractions for only one week, the imperative was to sell the opening performances so that would-be theatregoers were not left disappointed by Saturday night because they could not buy a ticket.¹⁹

Most Howard and Wyndham documents were preoccupied with receipts. Cash was more important than the recording of seat numbers sold, whereas theatres today report to local authority and arts "quango" stakeholders, who are also interested in attendance statistics,

using them to provide social justification for taxpayer "investment" via subsidies. However, *Table 9* (p.89) shows monthly attendance at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, for March 1932. Three attractions were staged in five weeks, the first being an unsuccessful (and presumably louche) revue, *Naughty Cinderella*, which grossed only £65, selling 482 tickets (excluding complimentary tickets which are included in the return total), being an average price paid of 1s. Southern Light Opera, an amateur company, grossed £1,245, selling 9,124 seats which was an average ticket yield of £1 7s.2d. and 68 per cent of seating capacity. Amateur companies performed in Howard and Wyndham theatres from the 1920s and their use of the theatres was the first major expression of community interest by Stewart Cruikshank, who had no difficulty in finding professional attractions at the time: he was not concerned whether the artistic reputation of the theatres suffered with possible lower standards from amateurs, but was generous in his support, just as his predecessors had been good citizens by helping local charitable causes. The third engagement, styled "Matheson Lang", doubtless refers to the star Scottish-Canadian actor-manager and playwright (1879-1948) who was on tour in the musical *Mr. Wu* in 1932.²⁰ This star-vehicle attraction grossed £1,408, selling 9,422 tickets which brought an average ticket yield of £1 9s.11d. and 61 per cent of seating capacity. (The percentage attendance would be lower than for the amateur week because a mid-week matinee would increase the capacity whereas volunteer performers in Southern Light Opera would not have been available during the weekdays for a matinee).

The return shows the popularity of musical comedy in the 1930s, which reached its apogee with *Me and My Girl* (L. Arthur Rose, Douglas Furber and Noel Gay, 1937): the theatre ended the month with a two week engagement of *Grand Hotel*. This was another musical, by Vicki Baum and Edward Knoblock, arriving in Edinburgh on a "direct from the West End" tour. It had opened at the Adelphi Theatre, London, in September 1931²¹ and for it to be at the King's as soon as April 1932 suggests that the production was a duplicate company on tour whilst the London season continued. Receipts of £1,777 over two weeks (selling 11,215 tickets but only achieving 34 per cent of seating capacity) reflect the management challenge of predicting success and whether to stage popular attractions for more than one week. It also reflects the live theatre's relationship to the cinema, for the Hollywood premiere of the film *Grand Hotel* had opened in April 1932, starring Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford and John Barrymore: there would have been a rush to cash-in on this success by reviving the stage version on tour, even without stars. The return is also

significant for showing Howard and Wyndham's use of complimentary tickets, for fewer than 1 per cent were given away.

This chapter has examined the management operations of the theatres and discussed the accomplished business practices employed by Howard and Wyndham from the 1930s to the 1960s. Aspects of their success included a Management Handbook for the routine but demanding administration of each theatre, from which it is possible to analyse the company's sophisticated accounting and customer care policies, as well as publicity and marketing methods which included dissemination about attractions and the nature of theatre via a corporate magazine. The theatre managers contributed to Head Office determination of programming by reporting on artistic as well as financial responses to attractions. Management was focused on financial success and, from its contractual arrangements with production companies, achieved healthy gross margins which were the framework for continuing success provided that a continuous flow of attractions could be found from the producing managements or amateur companies.

¹ See *The Management Handbook*, Howard and Wyndham Limited, Edinburgh, 1935, esp. 'Notes Covering Routine Duties of Managers and Assistants', pp.72-76.

² Manchester Opera House: *The Girl Friend*, 26 November 1968.

³ See *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., p.3.

⁴ John Pick sub-titles his history of the West End theatre, 'Mismanagement and Snobbery', arguing that snobbery in the British Cultural Establishment was the

besetting sin of West End management....[saying] that their actions were motivated not by any simple commercial ambition, but by a desire to join a particular rank of society. They did not act to make a profit from a working class, nor to create fortunes....They acted always so that theatre folk could join that supreme *rank* that great painters already enjoyed, that of *artists*, and could mix with Royalty, intellectuals and heroes as equals.

See John Pick, *The West End: Mismanagement and Snobbery*, John Offord, Eastbourne, 1983, p.17. This may also have been true of Howard and Wyndham's directors: a foyer plaque recording Royal visits to the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, was as prominent as posters for forthcoming attractions. They were, however, less exhibitionist than the Festival Theatre, Edinburgh, where photographs are displayed of managers bowing to several Queens.

⁵ "Getting the bird" signified actors being hissed by the audience in disapproval. This term of theatrical censure, or "goose", began with the O.P. Riots at Covent Garden, when theatre rioters were charged with "unnatural coughing". See Dutton Cook, *A Book of the Play*, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, London, 1876, p.373.

⁶ *The Courier*, No.1. Vol.1. October 1932, p.3.

⁷ *Rosy Rapture, The Pride of the Beauty Chorus*, a musical by J.M.Barrie, Herman Darewski, Jerome K. Jerome and John Crook (1915).

⁸ Entertainments Duty began in 1916 as a war-time measure but continued to penalise the theatre until its abolition in 1957. A campaign for remission was led by the commercial theatre. Certain "cultural" plays were exempt from Entertainments Duty in the commercial theatre after the Second World War (Shakespeare, Congreve, Maugham, Ibsen, Wilde, Chekhov and Strindberg) but this provoked tension between Howard and Wyndham and the repertory companies. As non-profit distributing companies limited by guarantee of their members, the latter were exempt from Entertainments Duty on *all* plays. This invidious distinction was most explicit when the charitable companies performed in the Howard and Wyndham theatres. Their ticket sales did not attract the

tax if the company rented the theatre as compared to contracting with the venue on share terms, when Howard and Wyndham were deemed by Customs and Excise to be the promoter. See A.P. Herbert, *No Fine on Fun: The Comical History of the Entertainments Duty*, Methuen, London, 1957, pp.59-60 and Stephen Mitchell, 'Now that the Tax Has Gone', article in *The Stage Year Book, 1958*, Carson and Comerford, London, 1958, pp.7-8. In one year, ending February 1945, the tax collected in seven Howard and Wyndham theatres amounted to £229,803.

⁹ These pro-formas are reproduced in *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., pp.146-172.

¹⁰ See Wages Summary Form, *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., p.117.

¹¹ The financial deterioration in contemporary local government operation of this theatre is revealed by examination of its accounts: in 1995/6 the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, employed 29 full-time staff; payroll costs averaged £8,944 per week; the positive weekly margin of box-office income retained after paying producers was only £2,479. These factors contributed to this theatre making a loss of £861,113, excluding box-office, maintenance and book-keeping costs which were absorbed by the council proprietors. See Robert Cogo-Fawcett, *A Future for the King's and Festival Theatres, Edinburgh*, City of Edinburgh Council, Edinburgh, 1997, p.11 and 44.

¹² In 1996/7 the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, spent £167,035 on marketing, being 10 per cent of box office receipts of £1,643,700. See Robert Cogo-Fawcett, *A Future for the King's and Festival Theatres*, op.cit., p.13. This report also reveals that the King's had an average occupancy per performance of 541 seats, selling 102,886 tickets in 1996/7. By contrast, twelve monthly returns for 1932 show that 395,208 seats were sold, an average occupancy of 1,328 seats sold per performance.

¹³ See *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., p.66.

¹⁴ See *The King's Theatre Handbook*, Howard and Wyndham Limited, Edinburgh, 1923, pp.37-43.

¹⁵ See *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., pp.24-39.

¹⁶ Tickets to a musical, *Buddy*, at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, in 1997 cost £18.50 top, less than twice the bottom price of £10.50. The cheapest seat was £6.50, being a £4.00 concession for the Upper Circle for senior citizens and students.

¹⁷ Play by Noël Coward (1926).

¹⁸ See *The Stage Year Book 1936*, Carson and Comerford, London, 1936, p.137.

¹⁹ John Pick describes this as the "wash effect" or "wave effect" of theatre booking on a limited run, with "would-be customers who cannot get into later performances *falling back* and looking for empty seats earlier in the run." See *The Theatre Industry: Subsidy, Profit and the Search for New Audiences*, Comedia, London, 1985, p.34.

²⁰ See biographical entry for Matheson Lang in John Parker (ed.), *Who's Who in The Theatre*, Seventh Edition, Pitman, 1933, p.908. *Mr. Wu* was an Anglo-Chinese play by Harry M. Vernon and Harold Owen (1913). Lang's autobiography was titled *Mr. Wu Looks Back*, Stanley Paul, London, 1948.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.1709, entry in 'Notable Productions and Important Revivals'.

Chapter 5, Table 5.

HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LIMITED	
<p>This report to be sent to Head Office and London THEATRE..... Office not later than Wednesday of relative week. (During a Repertoire Engagement, reports are to be sent to cover each production.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MANAGER'S REPORT <i>re</i></p> <p>Week commencing.....</p> <p>Attraction..... Terms to Touring Manager..... </p>	
QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
State type of Entertainment. Musical, Dramatic, Farce <p style="text-align: right; margin-right: 100px;">Tragedy, Comedy</p>	
How is it accepted by the audience?	
Is the Company satisfactory; and is the Production mounted, staged and dressed adequate to our theatres?	
Would you recommend a Return Visit? (Or in case of Repertoire, a repeat?)	
If so, would you suggest varying current terms?	
Number of Stage Night Staff require to work Production (including Permanent Staff)	Stage..... Props..... Flys..... Lights..... <p style="text-align: right;">Total.....</p>
Opposition.....	Starting time..... Length interval, First..... <p style="text-align: right;">Second.....</p> Finishing time.....
Type on back of this Sheet criticism of Cast, Production, etc. Manager

Chapter 5, Table 6.

NOTE OF HOUSE DRAWINGS AND RECOVERIES FROM TOURING COMPANIES								
KING'S THEATRE, EDINBURGH					Managing Director - A. Stewart Cruikshank.			
HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LTD.			Performances of: ROSY RAPTURE					
Week Ending: 19th March 1932.								
	House Drawings	Entertainment Tax.	Cloak-room Fees.	Programmes.	Bars.	Teas, etc.	Ices.	Chocolates.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Mon.	157 12 8	31 10 6	1 16 6	6 14 10	14 10 8	0 19 0	1 11 10	---
Tue	190 15 5	38 3 1	1 14 3	6 3 5	11 6 2	0 15 6	1 9 8	0 0 9
Wed	206 16 3	41 7 3	2 0 3	6 17 10	12 9 9	0 16 6	2 3 8	0 1 0
Thur.	180 1 10	36 0 4	1 8 3	7 4 0	15 6 9	1 0 6	2 1 0	0 0 9
Fri.	213 10 0	42 14 0	1 8 6	4 11 10	10 7 0	1 2 0	2 16 2	---
Sat. Mat.	168 5 0	33 13 0	---	---	---	---	---	---
Eve.	290 15 7	58 3 5	3 6 0	14 13 2	15 4 7	3 9 0	4 7 4	---
Total	£1,407 16 10	£281 11 8	£11 13 9	£46 15 1	£79 4 11	£8 2 6	£14 9 8	£0 2 6
Recoveries from Touring Manager			Terms of Contract					
			£ s. d.	£ s. d.				
Newspapers: <i>Scotsman</i>			9 11 9		Touring Manager receives:			
<i>Dispatch</i>			6 15 0		65%			
Special Display, <i>Dispatch</i>			4 16 0					
<i>Evening News</i>			8 13 0		Touring Manager's Share			
do. block			5 4 0		H. & W. Ltd. Share			
<i>Catholic Herald</i>			2 2 6		£1,407 16 10			
Percentage 65%			£37 2 3		Final Statement.			
Circulars				24 2 5	Touring Manager's Share			
Hand Painted Posters				3 12 6	<i>Less contra</i>			
Printing: Salary Receipts				1 1 0	Already Received			
65% Programme Slips			1 12 6		Balance due			
Orchestra								
Stage								
Electric: Rehearsals				1 16 2				
Hire Furniture								
Hire Piano								
Lighting								
Telephones, Telegrams, etc.								
Sundries								
<i>Less payable to H. & W. Ltd. to Touring Manager</i>					Bank Lodged---			
Net Contra				£31 13 3	Theatre Account			
					Bar Account			
					£1,747 17 4			
					£101 19 7			

Stamp.

Bank Lodged---
Theatre Account £1,747 17 4
Bar Account £101 19 7

Manager: A. D. Stuart
Checked Head Office by: H. Hay

Chapter 5, Table 7.

LYCEUM THEATRE, EDINBURGH												
STAFF RETURN (Including Heads of Departments)												
WEEK COMMENCING 7TH MARCH 1932												
ATTRACTION: "SHAKESPEAREAN FESTIVAL"												
M-Matinee						E-Evening						
	<i>Merchant of Venice</i>		<i>Tempest</i>		<i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>		<i>Taming of the Shrew</i>		<i>As You Like It</i>		<i>Julius Caesar Hamlet</i>	
Department	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
	M	E	M	E	M	E	M	E	M	E	M	E
Stage.	-	6	-	6	5	6	-	6	-	6	6	6
Properties.	-	3	-	3	3	3	-	3	-	3	3	3
Flys.	-	4	-	4	4	4	-	4	-	4	4	4
Electrics.	-	6	-	6	6	6	-	6	-	6	6	6
Checkers.	-	6	-	6	6	6	-	6	-	6	6	6
Ushers.	-	8	-	8	7	7	-	7	-	7	7	7
Cloaks.	-	5	-	5	5	5	-	5	-	5	6	6
Pay Boxes.	-	3	-	3	3	3	-	3	-	3	3	3
Bars.	-	6	-	6	1	6	-	6	-	6	1	6
Cleaners.	-	8	-	8	3	8	-	8	-	8	3	8
Orchestra.	-	7	-	7	7	7	-	7	-	7	7	7
Advertising	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Offices.	-	8	-	8	8	8	-	8	-	8	8	8
Linkman.	-	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	1
General.	-	2	-	2	2	2	-	2	-	2	2	2
Total.	73		73		61	72	72		72		63	73

W. PATTERSON, Hallkeeper.

JOHN E. MASTERTON, Manager.

HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LIMITED

THEATRE ROYAL GLASGOW

NOTE OF RUNNING EXPENSES INCURRED FOR
6 PERFORMANCES OF " The Queen was in the Parlour."
WEEK ENDED 3rd Sept. 1932

	£	s.	d.	Net Totals.		£	s.	d.	Net Totals.
				£	s.				£
Advance Newspaper Advertising									75
Herald	10	7	0						16
Bulletin	5	0	0						6
Record	10	16	0						
News	5	11	0						
Citizen	5	8	0						
Times	5	15	0						
Weeklies	0	12	0						
Gross	£43	9	0						
Discounts	2	1	5	41	7	7			6
Current Newspaper Advertising									6
Herald	6	16	0						6
Bulletin	3	10	8						
Express	1	0	0						
Record	6	6	8						
News	3	2	3						
Citizen	3	1	5						
Times	0	16	4						
Weeklies									
Gross	£27	19	4						
Discounts	1	7	2	26	12	2			3
Total Newspapers				£67	19	9			12
Billposting and Boardmen									3
D. Allen & Sons									3
(Two Weeks)									
Gross	8	5	0						
Discounts	0	8	3	£7	16	9			
Carried Forward				£75	16	6			18
									5
Brought forward									
Printings							£	s.	d.
Daybills							2	2	0
H.P. Posters							0	0	0
Subscription Tickets							4	4	6
							£6	6	6
Programmes									3
Electricity									15
Gas									0
Sundries									2
(Hires, Circulars, etc.)									3
Ices									1
Grand Total									£105

HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LIMITED

MONTHLY ATTENDANCE FORM

Forwarded to Secretaries monthly.

Theatre: KING'S

Town: EDINBURGH

Number of persons attending Theatre for month ended
Saturday, 2nd April 1932.

	1st Week.	2nd Week.	3rd Week.	4th Week.	5th Week.	Total
Boxes	---	5	3	1	4	13
Seats in Boxes	---	137	45	2	---	184
Stalls	98	1,183	1,185	662	955	4,083
Stalls (Mid)	---	---	409	308	251	968
Pit Stalls	112	2,285	1,853	978	1,558	6,786
Grand Circle	65	1,056	472	266	286	2,145
Grand Circle	---	307	833	453	650	2,243
Upper Circle or Balcony	91	1,924	1,996	1,200	1,423	6,634
Upper Circle do.	---	---	---	---	---	---
Gallery (early)	---	530	1,388	422	478	2,818
Gallery (ordinary)	116	1,697	1,238	619	699	4,369
Complimentary	120	Amateur Week	34	27	10	191
	602	9,124	9,456	4,938	6,314	30,434

Engagements.		House Drawings
1st Week	<i>Naughty Cinderella</i>	£ s. d. 65 1 8
2nd Week	"Southern Light Opera Coy."	1,244 18 0
3rd Week	"Matheson Lang"	1,407 16 10
4th Week	<i>Grand Hotel</i>	775 18 8
5th Week	<i>Grand Hotel</i>	1,001 0 10
		£4,494 16 0

A. D. STUART, *Manager*

CHAPTER SIX

DECLINE AND FALL, 1960-1977

This chapter charts the decline of Howard and Wyndham, suggesting reasons for the near collapse of the No.1 touring circuit in the 1970s, by which time the provincial theatre of private enterprise was on its last legs and physically run-down. Thus far, flexibility had been a virtue of the company's progress, but a number of internal and external influences combined to burden it with overwhelming difficulties.

Touring theatres in the regions had shrunk in numbers from 255 in 1920 to 106 in 1940 and by 1964 *The Stage Yearbook* listed only 24 which regularly took in touring productions.¹ Yet in London the number of theatres remained as it was in 1920, so the decline of touring theatre cannot be attributed to a general deterioration of interest in theatre. Instead, the mediocre quality of their productions reflected, and partly explained, that decline. On the other hand, there were some fifty subsidised repertory theatres in the regions, all assisted with grants from the Arts Council and, as a rule, by local authorities, but nevertheless getting most of their money from the box office. The repertory companies were steadily increasing their audiences, having moved from "weekly rep" to runs of a fortnight, three weeks and, in the biggest cities, four weeks. Nottingham Playhouse had even moved to "repertoire" in 1964², rotating a stock of five plays through two weeks as in opera planning. Only one touring theatre in the regions had an image with which theatregoers could identify (the Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham being the English exception). For many years the theatres were transit camps for a miscellaneous procession of speculative productions which, through the 1960s, had become scarcer and seedier and decreasingly profitable. The tension between provinces and London had been well expressed by Charles Landstone:

The Londoner, I think, is inclined to regard the provinces as a cultural desert. Naturally he is proud of his own theatre, which has been a dollar earner. He is little aware of the living, pulsating activity outside London. Yet it is from that the lifeblood of the West End stage is drawn.³

It might be argued that the repertory theatres were becoming a substitute for the touring houses, but no repertory company, however good, could provide the variety of productions which a good-sized touring house brings to a town - the big musicals, the major ballet

companies, the Sadler's Wells Opera, the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, the National Theatre, and West End productions with well-known names in the cast.

The decline of the Howard and Wyndham circuit began with the introduction of the "prior-to-London" tour. Before the war, "out-of-town" openings were rare. The system started during the later years of the war when the London theatre was booming and there was keen competition among the managements to secure theatres for shows which were enjoying long runs, so it was only rare that a theatre fell vacant. Consequently, the theatre landlords were in a position to be extremely selective about which productions they had in their theatres. Before the war, when it was not unusual for three or four West End theatres to be "dark", the landlords were glad to let their theatres to any reputable theatre management with a play to produce, but during the war years they were able to say to management "Get your show out on the road and I will come and have a look at it and decide whether I want it for one of my theatres".⁴ It was an arrangement to which the producing managements had no objection, because at that time business on the road was every bit as good as it was in London, and the audiences even easier to please. The towns were full of troops, war workers, the staffs of civil service departments evacuated from London and all sorts of people removed from their homes and living in crowded billets from which in the evenings they escaped to whatever entertainments the town had on offer. In the years immediately after the war the servicemen returning home with their gratuities to spend and plenty of reasons for celebrating kept the provincial theatres filled for a while with audiences no more critical than they had been during the war years, when they were out for a good night to relieve the stresses of war.

Gradually audiences became dissatisfied with what they saw at the Theatre Royal or the Grand in their town. There were still a number of first-rate shows sent out by the top managements but too many of the plays labelled "prior-to-London production" all too obviously had little hope of reaching the West End. Even the genuine West End productions on their way to "Town" were often below standard on their pre-London tour. They were being shown to provincial audiences before they had been properly rehearsed. Producers and casts were beginning to regard these tours as a series of dress rehearsals. Actors were apt to be shaky on their lines in the first week or two, and the scripts had not been sufficiently pruned and tightened up. The attitude of some managements was apt to be

"Let's leave it as it is and see how it goes in the provinces before we start making any alterations".⁵

Advance ticket sales, which had been a key element of cash-flow in the Howard and Wyndham theatres, became almost negligible unless there were big names in the cast. These at least guaranteed that the audience would get something of proven value for their money, even if the play was not particularly good. It had become difficult to do good business with even a very good new play if there were no "names" in the cast because by the time "word-of-mouth" had gone around that there was something good to see the week's run was half over:

I remember seeing *Salad Days* at Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre just before its arrival in London. Because the public had not heard of the play and there were no familiar names in the cast the house was far from full. When, years later, *Salad Days* returned to Liverpool after its London success the theatre was, of course, sold out at every performance. Friends of mine, on their retirement, settled in Blackpool where there is the fine Grand Theatre. Theatregoing had always been one of their greatest pleasures, which hitherto they had only been able to indulge in on their leaves, so they became regular patrons at the Grand, then booked by Howard and Wyndham. There were few weeks when they really enjoyed themselves. Occasionally, they saw a first-rate "prior-to-London" production, or the tour of a play which had already proved to be a West End success, but too often the plays were so feeble that they never reached London, or, if they got there, failed. Eventually my friends decided they would save their theatregoing for their occasional visits to London where they would be able to see the proved successes.⁶

Before the war, the proved successes were what Howard and Wyndham hosted week after week throughout the year. Even when a play had established itself as a success in London a tour was often sent out while it was still running in the West End. It was not unusual for two companies to be sent out in the same play, one touring the No.1 dates managed by Howard and Wyndham, who described themselves in corporate advertisements as "Britain's Premier Theatre Circuit", the other playing the smaller towns, or No.2 theatres. It was seldom that the London company toured.

But the circuit did not have to rely solely on London productions. There were plenty of companies which toured the provinces year after year, only occasionally playing a brief London season. In the 1920s there were three opera companies, Carl Rosa, Moody Manners and D'Oyly Carte and two Shakespeare companies, Benson's and Henry Baynton's, regularly on tour. There was, in addition, Sir John Martin Harvey (1863-1944) with a repertoire of half a dozen plays; there were the Terrys in musical comedies such as

The Scarlet Pimpernel (Baroness Orczy and Montagu Barstow, 1905), *Sweet Nell of Old Drury* (Paul Kester, 1900) and *The Gay Gordons* (Seymour Hicks and Guy Jones, 1907). The Compton Comedy Company toured a repertoire of classical comedies, such as *The Dominant Sex* (Michael Egan, 1914), *The Gay Lord Quex* (Arthur Wing Pinero, 1899) and *The Boy of My Heart* (Walter Howard, 1920). In addition to the touring versions of musicals also running in London there were operettas of which the provinces never seemed to tire: *The Waltz Dream* (Basil Hood and Oscar Strauss, 1907), *The Quaker Girl* (James T. Tanner and Lionel Monckton, 1910), *The Belle of New York* (Gustav Kerker and Hugh Monton, 1898) and *Floradora* (Owen Hall and Leslie Stuart, 1899). Year after year the Howard and Wyndham theatres welcomed these companies with full houses. There were, as well, a number of "well-made plays" of which the audiences never seemed to tire - *The Passing of the Third Floor Back* (Jerome K. Jerome, 1908), *The Royal Divorce* (W.G.Wills and G.G.Collingham, 1891), *When Knights Were Bold* (Charles Marlowe and Harriet Jay, 1906), *Are You a Mason?* (Leo Ditrichstein, 1920), *The Private Secretary* (Charles Hawtrey, 1883), *Potash and Perlmutter* (Montague Glass and Charles Klein, 1913), *Gaily We Set Out* (G. Sheila Donisthorpe, 1938), *The Ghost Train* (Arnold Ridley, 1925) and *The Young Person in Pink* (Gertrude E. Jennings, 1920). These plays were entertaining but are often thought trivial today. They rarely challenged or educated the audience in the way that many plays of the late nineteenth century had done. (See *Table 3: Anatomy of Attractions at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, 1904-5, Chapter Three, pp.45-6*). It was not until the British premiere of *Waiting For Godot* (Samuel Beckett, 1953) was produced at the Arts Theatre in 1955, followed by *Look Back in Anger* (John Osborne, 1956) at the Royal Court Theatre, London, that the commercial theatre began to take note of the revival of theatre for art's sake or plays which described the lives of the masses rather than emphasise the genteel, opulent and charming life of the middle class.⁷ Managing a touring theatre during the 1950s was a placid, routine job, waiting for producers to "fill up the diary" with "cup-and-saucer" plays which had improbably enduring affections in the hearts and minds of a public who treated theatregoing as almost exclusively a social habit.

In the 1960s, Howard and Wyndham theatres were afflicted by a decline in the standards of local theatre management. For many years their resident managers had no more status than a caretaker because the policy of the theatre was determined by head office in London, even on minor matters, so that the person on the spot had very little scope or incentive.⁸ Hence, their theatres became entirely dependent on London at a time when London was never less able to supply their needs. A main reason for decline was that because of immensely long

runs of the successes the number of new plays was far smaller than it used to be. By no means all the plays which achieved some success in London were suited to the tastes of the provinces. The potential London audience is so huge that a play could have a reasonable success while only appealing to a section of it, possibly the most sophisticated theatregoers, or those that supported any passable play which shared their social prejudices or political convictions. No provincial town or city had a large enough population for a play to be a box-office success unless it appealed to a wide cross-section of the public. Rising costs and dwindling audiences forced London managements to abandon "prior-to-London" tours. By the 1960s many tours were being reduced to a week or two. The value of these tours was dubious. After the establishment of the National Theatre (1963), Royal Shakespeare Company (1960) and the English Stage Company at the Royal Court (1956) had all proved that there was no need for a production to be run-in on tour if it had been properly rehearsed. Continual changes to the script and the production unsettle actors and undermine their confidence in the production.

Many of the Howard and Wyndham theatres became dilapidated, through long neglect and failure to re-invest the profits of the past. They were now too unprofitable to be worth modernising, re-painting, re-seating or re-carpeting, and their consequent dinginess and lack of amenity was discouraging to audiences. The pattern emerging was a vicious circle of inadequate audiences and second-rate attractions. From time to time a real winner appeared on the scene, such as the musical *My Fair Lady* (Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe, 1958) and the revue *The Black and White Minstrel Show* (George Innes, 1962). But these were not really touring productions at all. They entrenched themselves in a big city where they could play to full houses for three or four months. When they departed so did the mammoth audience they had conjured up for that single production. The pantomime remained the only continuity in the Howard and Wyndham theatres (plus the *Half-Past Eight* variety shows in Scotland). The company felt obliged to install bingo for part of the year in many of their English theatres, or let them go dark for long periods.

The problems of the No.1 theatres were understood by the Arts Council and they supported some touring companies through the Dramatic and Lyric Theatre Association (D.A.L.T.A.). This system, under director Jack Phipps, had some successes in touring quality attractions, notably in supporting several good companies such as Toby Robertson's Prospect Theatre Company, Richard Cottrell's Cambridge Theatre Company and Ian McKellen's Actors'

Company. These arrangements also caused Howard and Wyndham problems. Tours were arranged through a guaranteed fee system, whereby the theatre paid a fee to the company set against a percentage of box-office receipts. These guarantees ranged, in 1971, from £500 (for a play) to £4,000 (for an Arts Council subsidised week of ballet or opera) against a share in the company's favour of 70 per cent; at least 5 per cent more than paid to the commercial promoters. By subsidising certain touring companies, the Arts Council enabled them to accept lower guarantees than would normally be considered viable, and removed the onus of sharing the box-office risk with the theatres. The Arts Council was only able to subsidise non-profit distributing companies, usually registered as charities and limited by guarantee, and could not grant-aid the theatres direct because Howard and Wyndham was a commercial company limited by shares. The venues began to be marginalised in the arrangements, with the Arts Council employing separate marketing officers in the bigger cities, who began to refer to the theatres as "merely receiving houses" or "passive garages"⁹. John Elsom has described the Arts Council's role in touring:

Commercial companies still supplied the theatres with most of the attractions, and these producers faced not only competition from the repertory companies, but also from subsidised, Arts Council backed rivals on their own touring circuit. The D.A.L.T.A. companies were never expected to supply more than a small proportion of the productions needed by the theatres. By aiding a minority of companies in any one year, the Arts Council kept down the general level of guarantees, thus making it increasingly hard for the commercial companies to keep going except on the routine level of low-cost comedies. Without wishing to hurt or damage the commercial producers and without trying to impair the circuit and its theatres, the Arts Council nevertheless succeeded in doing both.¹⁰

It is noteworthy that the repertory companies had not been a problem until the rise of subsidy and local government involvement. There had been 250 unsubsidised "weekly reps" playing between 1915 and 1965,¹¹ arising from dissatisfaction with the touring circuits but causing no harm to Howard and Wyndham. Competition from these repertory companies began with the Arts Council subsidies, exacerbated by their prodding Town Halls into making grants to these locally based companies. Sweeping acknowledgement of this can be read into the 1948 Local Government Act. For the theatre, this represented a revolutionary change. Until 1948, entertainment facilities provided by local authorities has consisted largely of "pleasure grounds" (since 1847) and in them such further amenities as "pleasure boats" (1890) and "pavilions" (1907); art galleries and museums (1892); and the general purpose city halls.¹² Most of the last were quite unsuited to drama, except in the holiday resorts, where well-equipped municipally owned and managed theatres flourished

during the summer season at little, if any, expense to the ratepayer. But the 1948 Act gave local authorities *carte blanche* to

do, or arrange for the doing of, or contribute towards the expense of the doing of, anything necessary or expedient for...the provision of entertainment of any kind.¹³

This included, specifically, "the provision of a theatre". Although these powers were subject to an expenditure limit of the proceeds of a sixpenny rate, the maximum sums involved annually were substantial - £400,000 for a city such as Birmingham, about £250,000 for Liverpool and £100,000 for Edinburgh. These powers were timely, and posed Howard and Wyndham with a the threat of competition and, later, the opportunity to sell their theatres. There were other, external, factors which contributed to their problems.. There was intense competition along all fronts between the various kinds of entertainment to tap the rapidly expanding market presented by the "affluent society" of the 1950s and 1960s. In this struggle, the live theatre suffered from a special handicap since, through lack of capital, too many of the theatre buildings survived as "relics of the steam age".¹⁴ They were, moreover, disappearing from the scene as a result of competition from a new quarter: the "private developer" to whom a city centre theatre site offered a better profit when used for a supermarket or for offices. The death rate since the war had been high, as already noted. About half of the remaining theatres were summer venues, leaving, in more or less continuous use, about fifty-five theatres for repertory companies and twenty-five for touring - managed in the main by Howard and Wyndham. Important towns found themselves without theatres: such as Bolton, Hanley, Peterborough, Leicester, Southampton and Plymouth. By contrast, in West Germany during the same period fifty new theatres were built and thirteen restored.¹⁵

This bleak outlook had been tempered by signs of renewed interest in theatre building. Voluntary action was evident on a substantial scale, as in the various festivals and in theatre preservation organisations. The 1948 Act did not result in a headlong rush down the path of construction but, up and down the country, local authorities were stirring, encouraged by theatre enthusiasts and play-going societies. If councils could be persuaded to give a strong lead they could revolutionise the position. The first new theatre to built in Britain since the war was the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry (1958), home to a repertory company. At the time, Howard and Wyndham were running the Coventry New Hippodrome Theatre which had opened in 1937, the last theatre to be built before the war: "Showplace of the Midlands".¹⁶

Proposals for civic theatres caught the headlines, and with justice, for the new theatres would undoubtedly have an important role in the theatre of *tomorrow*. That they were discussed at all meant that local authorities were being educated in their responsibility to towards the live theatre. At the same time, Howard and Wyndham were concerned with the theatre of *today*, which had to provide the foundations of the theatre of tomorrow, and they were fearful that it might languish. They argued that local authorities should equally take on the less exciting and more delicate work of first aid to their existing theatres and help with preserving or improving their buildings. Local authorities had the power, to do this, not only under the 1948 Act, but also under the Planning Acts. But the company's relationship with local politicians was new territory, and the handling of City Fathers was a new and diplomatic skill for Stewart Cruikshank.

These planning powers were not limited to the better known "scheduling" powers under Clauses 29 and 30 of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act which, so far as theatres were concerned, had not been very effective. Under Clause 29 the Local Planning Authority could, by means of a building preservation order, restrict the demolition, alteration or extension of any building of special architectural or historic merit, and under Clause 30 the Minister was required to compile a list of suitable buildings. Very few theatres were considered to be architectural gems by the Minister's advisory committees, which had little specialised experience of the theatre and, at first, no theatre building later than the eighteenth century was thought to be "historical".¹⁷ Victorian and Edwardian theatres were included by 1964, but still the number of scheduled theatres was no more than fifteen. Even so, scheduling did not save the Theatre Royal, Leicester, although Howard and Wyndham's Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool, managed to survive for quite different reasons.

Substantial protection for a theatre building was only afforded by scheduling Grade I ("A" Listed in Scotland), which included those theatres considered to be a national concern. In 1964, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and the Haymarket Theatre (all in London) were the sole theatres so listed. Buildings included in Grade II (or Grade II*; "B" Listed in Scotland) were protected simply to the extent that any developer, having first signified intentions to the local authority for demolition, had to wait two months before beginning work on the site. This might be sufficient time for the local authority to forbid the demolition, for the developer to appeal to the Minister, or for the Minister to "call in" the case,¹⁸ It was no time at all for the matter to made public and its

merits discussed, for a local authority to be persuaded, or for alternative proposals to be prepared and examined. In the case of Liverpool Royal Court Theatre it was fortunate that the issue had been adequately discussed for a number of years, and that a theatre preservation society had given it national publicity before the blow fell.

The case of the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool, is of interest for two reasons. First, it provides a further illustration of the dilemma of a local authority when it acted too late. It was suddenly revealed that Howard and Wyndham's lease on the theatre had been sold to a purchaser who proposed converting it into a warehouse. To dislodge an owner who has bought in good faith was not simple and it was a happy stroke of luck that the Minister called in the case. The result of his Enquiry, and this is the second point of interest, was the grant of a two years' reprieve in which to discover whether the Royal Court could be operated profitably as a theatre. During this time, Howard and Wyndham opened negotiations for the local authority to purchase instead. It eventually did so in 1976, although in the ensuing twenty years this beautiful art deco theatre has been used only for occasional rock concerts.¹⁹ A new campaign to restore the Royal Court, with the aid of 1997 Arts Council National Lottery funds, is now underway, but the Liverpool local authority again finds itself with too many theatres for a restoration to become a viable operation. Meanwhile, in order to survive, Howard and Wyndham applied to the Independent Television Authority for one of the major commercial television licenses when the contracts came up for renewal in 1966. Their plan was to use income from television to subsidise the six remaining theatres. They continued to place a large part of the blame for the decline of their theatres on competition from the repertory companies. Subsidies distorted the theatre economy in favour of the reps. Having given grants to the repertory theatres initially, the Arts Council continued to do so, with the result that grants could pay actors, provide workshops and publicity, and keep ticket prices artificially low.²⁰

We have blundered into a situation which encourages inbred, over-subsidised, parochial repertory theatres at the expense of the touring theatres and the companies who supply them.²¹

The commercial and the subsidised theatre had become two distinct factions in the battle for audiences, with commercial managers making vigorous protests through the media as they began to realise that they had little choice but to create a new image for their theatre. In 1966, a major protest was ill-judged. It took the form of a blast against what the Theatrical

PROGRAMME



ROYAL COURT THEATRE LIVERPOOL

Messrs HOWARD and WYNDHAM LTD.

Managing Director : Stewart Cruikshank

Management Association and the Society of West End Theatre Managers variously termed filthy, lewd, obscene, pornographic, mad and decadent plays in the subsidised theatre. They received considerable attention in the press, soon to be squashed, not only by the replies from the subsidised theatre but by the retorts of critics and theatregoers. The cry that the subsidised theatre had an unfair advantage in attracting good actors also had a hard come-back, simply because it was shown that, while stars still wished to work in the West End and tour the No.1 theatres, those who chose the subsidised theatre did so on account of the better prospects they offered: good parts in worthwhile plays; time to rehearse properly; a run for a play whether or not it packed a theatre; the support of all that was possible with a long-term artistic policy.

The subsidised theatre could point to more outstanding productions than the commercial theatre, to more adventure, risk and excitement, which attracted larger numbers of young people. On the other hand, the commercial touring theatre argued that it could claim to have staged an array of theatre across several artforms: drama, ballet, opera, operetta, revue and variety, usually produced with star players. But their attack was too negative, and failed to build an image fitting to the social, cultural, educational and general entertainment changes that had revolutionised whole areas of the country, and were to become more potent. The commercial and touring theatre had, of course, much of value to offer, though oddly enough it did not realise it at the time. Suffering from the effects of change without sufficiently making their own adjustments, Howard and Wyndham appeared to be in a muddle, without any definable policy. Stewart Cruikshank died in office in 1966, precipitating another crisis: he was replaced as acting managing director by John Elyot Beaumont (1902-?1979), who had run the Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield: one of the theatres "booked in conjunction", but which turned to bingo that year with the news that its city was to build a new 1,000 seat repertory theatre next door.²² It was proved by the subsidised theatre, as it was by the Howard and Wyndham's actor-manager founders, that a firm, comprehensible policy always pays:

This will have to be a major part of the structure behind any new image for touring theatres. The enormous rise in costs of everything connected with the theatre gives commercial managers a more hazardous time than ever before. Yet not by coming up to date quickly enough the provincial theatre makes matters needlessly more difficult for itself. It is significant that the managers who have followed a policy and are identified, more or less, with a particular theatre still offer the best productions and have the most successes, whether this be with tragedy or comedy, farce or history, the new or the old.²³

Howard and Wyndham threatened to close their theatres nationally and convert or re-build them as office blocks or supermarkets. Immediately, Newcastle Planning Committee placed a preservation order on the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, as a precautionary measure. The company wrote to the Arts Council and Newcastle City Council setting out the conditions under which it believed it could guarantee to keep the theatres open for the next three years. These included a subsidy of £50,000 a year from local and governing authorities in each city where Howard and Wyndham had a theatre available for the presentation of new and experimental plays, music and personal appearances of artists who might not have universal box office appeal. The company would immediately spend £100,000 on improvements to the theatres, including increasing the size of orchestra pits to accommodate about ninety musicians, and would continue to invest £150,000 a year in new productions for the regional and London stages. The company suggested that the National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, Sadler's Wells Opera Company and the Royal Ballet should all spend four to six weeks a year in each of the major cities, more than the D.A.L.T.A. fund was able to grant. Peter Donald, the company chairman, said that £15,000 of the £50,000 subsidy should go into the Howard and Wyndham balance sheet. This amount represented an income of approximately 5 per cent on a sale price of £300,000 if the Newcastle Theatre Royal was to be sold for redevelopment. The reason the company had chosen three years as the period of subsidy was that by that time it might be faced with new competition from colour television.²⁴

Within a month of these requests for local authority subsidy, the company changed its approach to invitations to local authorities in the five cities to buy the theatres outright for about £200,000 to £300,000 each. Talks began in Glasgow in June 1966, with the suggestion that the company should lease the theatres back for seven months each year (September to April) for a period of three years. Chairman Peter Donald announced this to shareholders at a meeting in Edinburgh on 22 June 1966:

We shall pay all expenses, including a 6 per cent charge on the purchase price for the hire period and a 10 per cent profit on the hire fee. Local authorities could make a profit of £60 to £80 per week during the seven months we occupy the theatres.²⁵

This statement was important because the company was now acknowledging that the necessity of lessening the antagonistic rivalry between the commercial and subsidised

theatres. They realised that success and achievement in either could help the other. The arts minister, Jennie Lee, had been visiting several cities in a theatre and arts campaign, recognising that any advance in the state of theatre depended on a wider recognition for the need for decentralisation. Local government was understanding this more and more, and the company sought closer collaboration with councils whose work took them into entertainment and festivals. This is shown by an examination of the negotiations between Howard and Wyndham and the Edinburgh Corporation for the sale of the King's Theatre. In 1967 the company offered to sell the theatre for £200,000 along with adjoining houses which they suggested the Corporation should acquire and demolish with a view to extension and adaptation of the theatre, transforming its facilities to make a long-awaited opera house for the city. This suggestion was considered by the Corporation in relation to their proposals for developing the site next to the Royal Lyceum Theatre as an opera house, but no further action was taken as it was considered that the King's Theatre would be unsuitable as an international lyric theatre. Howard and Wyndham bided their time for a year and, after the 1968 Edinburgh Festival, told the Festival Society that the King's would no longer be available for their presentations. In turn, the Festival Society asked the Corporation to consider, as a matter of urgency, the purchase of the theatre to ensure its availability for opera performances during the Festival. This persuaded the Corporation to consider discussion of the company's proposal but it became clear that they would not be able to obtain Arts Council capital funding towards the develop of the site adjacent to the Lyceum as an opera house.²⁶ The Arts Council indicated concern that the Edinburgh Festival might be without a theatre for opera and ballet and pledged to match a Corporation purchase, pound for pound, up to £50,000. With only half of the purchase price in sight, negotiations were protracted. Howard and Wyndham dropped the asking price to £175,000 if the Corporation allowed the company to operate the King's for thirty weeks a year. *Table 9* shows the Corporation budget for such a joint operation, in which they were persuaded that a partnership could be run at an annual profit of between £8,460 and £17,710 for both parties.

An anonymous donor²⁷ came forward, promising to donate £50,000 on condition that a firm offer was made by the Corporation to Howard and Wyndham to purchase for £175,000. The Corporation resolved to purchase in January 1969 but without the adjacent houses which were an extra, on offer for £31,000. This meant that the stage could never be enlarged for opera seasons. Within one year the arrangement to share the operation with

Howard and Wyndham was relinquished, and the theatre was then managed jointly with the Royal Lyceum which had been bought by the Corporation in 1965. The King's has operated with local government subsidy ever since, and the budget highlights the company's ability to get the best terms from local authorities.

Table 9.

KING'S THEATRE, EDINBURGH		
<u>Year to 31 December 1968</u>		
Ticket sales (4 weeks closed)	£220,000	
Company shares vary between 60% and 70%; mostly are around 65% say 66%	<u>145,000</u>	
Theatre share	£75,000	
Theatre standing charges lies between £52,000 per annum and £65,000 per annum or £1,000 per week and £1,250 per week		
	<u>Standing Charges</u> <u>£1,000</u> <u>p.w.</u>	<u>Standing Charges</u> <u>£1,250</u> <u>p.w.</u>
<u>Operating Results</u>		
30 weeks with Howard and Wyndham		
30/48 of £75,000	<u>£47,000</u>	<u>£47,000</u>
Less standing charges	30,000	37,500
7.5 % on capital on £17,500 = £252 per week	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>
	£37,500	£45,000
Surplus on 30 weeks - say	9,500	2,000
Corporation share of surplus	4,750	1,000
Bar profits (3 year average)	9,000	9,000
<u>Corporation Estimated Income</u>		
	<u>Maximum</u>	<u>Minimum</u>
From 30 weeks Joint Operation with Howard and Wyndham	£4,750	£1,000
Standing Charges	30,000	37,500
Capital Return	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>
	£42,250	£46,000
Remaining 22 weeks	<u>28,000</u>	<u>28,000</u>
Bar profits	<u>9,000</u>	<u>9,000</u>
	<u>£79,250</u>	<u>£83,000</u>
<u>Estimated Expenditure</u>		
Salaries, wages, rates, insurance etc.	£52,000	£65,000
Interest charges - 1 year @ 7% p.a. on £50,000	3,500	3,500

KING'S THEATRE, EDINBURGH

Loans charges £75,000 @ 7% p.a.

for 30 years

6,0406,040

£61,540

£74,540

Surplus

£17,710£8,460

Source: City Chamberlain's Office, Edinburgh Corporation, 13 January 1969.

The budget is an important document because it reveals the flatteringly optimistic financial targets mustered by Howard and Wyndham in their attempts to persuade a local authority to become a touring theatre management.²⁸ In their negotiations for joint operation with Edinburgh and with other councils, all parties were keen to ensure that the theatres could accommodate local amateur societies, usually during April and May, and use the theatres for "cultural" activities in the summer. Howard and Wyndham stipulated that if the Councils later decided to sell the theatres for office blocks the company must have the first refusal to buy them back at the original selling price. The company had lost £26,000 on its theatre operations in 1969. It owned property with an approximate sale price of £2 million, which if invested at 6 per cent would give an income of £120,000 per year. Peter Donald was asked whether they were looking for money to achieve their stated goal of acquiring one of the major commercial television licenses (in London or the Midlands) when the contracts came up for renewal. He replied:

It is a very wealthy little company, this. We went into television ten years ago. I can put my hand in the balance sheet for £1,250,000 if necessary. So we are not short of cash.²⁹

Howard and Wyndham by now had a turnover of £8 million, with its profits coming from jewellery and publishing, after it had purchased the company W.H.Allen. However, the downward trend in No.1 theatre viability continued across Britain. By 1971, they had sold the King's Theatre, Glasgow, and the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, and were trying to deals for the others. Some local authorities, who were still considering purchase, were deterred by the prices asked by Howard and Wyndham. Why, they said, should they pay £300,000 for a theatre which is either scraping by or losing money and which could only survive by further subsidy for the programme and running costs?

Manchester and Liverpool each had to contend with the additional decline of two touring theatres in their cities: the Manchester Palace competed with Howard and Wyndham's Opera House and, in Liverpool, the Empire Theatre competed with the Royal Court

Theatre. The Arts Council favoured public acquisition of the Palace and Empire, and controversial arguments about the conflicting claims of each theatre raged through the 1970s. The Greater Manchester Council could not decide on which theatre they wanted to help survive - in fact they used this situation to play one theatre off against the other, with the result that both the Opera House and the Palace looked set for closure. Ralph Fields, the new chairman of Howard and Wyndham said in 1976:

Of ten theatres we have owned, six are now safe in local authority hands, one has been redeveloped (the Alhambra, Glasgow), and three have their future in doubt. If the local authorities in Manchester and Liverpool and Oxford had followed similar policies towards their touring theatres as those in Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, the future of the Opera House Manchester, Royal Court Liverpool and New Theatre Oxford, would now be secure. The local authorities in Manchester and Liverpool have instead contributed substantial funds to new ventures catering to minority tastes such as Liverpool Everyman Theatre and Neptune Theatres and the '69 Theatre Company in Manchester. We are now seeing the inevitable result of these policies. We remain willing to do what we can to assure the survival of the three touring theatres remaining in our ownership, but if the Arts Council, the local authority and indeed the people of a metropolitan area don't care about the future of their touring theatres, is it logical to expect us to continue to maintain them at a loss? A closed theatre soon becomes an eyesore and even a danger. If no one wants to, or can afford to operate these theatres, surely it is best that they be despatched with dignity rather than be allowed to slowly disintegrate?³⁰

The dilemma of two touring houses in decline did not concern Edinburgh, for the Moss' Empire Theatre had been sold to bingo operators in 1963, and the Royal Lyceum had become a repertory theatre under corporation ownership in 1965. This had made it easier for Howard and Wyndham to sell the King's Theatre to the corporation in 1969. Despite the city being overbuilt with theatres its aggregate seating capacity in relation to the population had become an additional problem for Howard and Wyndham, on top the problems of quality and quantity of attractions presented in Edinburgh.

During the last years of Howard and Wyndham the company also had to cope with another major shift, that of tastes and traditions in theatre architecture: the first significant challenge to the supremacy of the proscenium arch. Their stock of theatres was rooted in Victorian design: all proscenium houses with three or four encircling tiers of audience arranged in stately proportions from stalls, boxes, dress circle, upper circle and gallery with, often, beautiful decorations and, crucially, separate entrances for the "gods" for the "lower orders". At the first Theatre Royal in Edinburgh, R.H. Wyndham had inherited a Georgian playhouse, with stage projecting beyond the proscenium arch, with doors on either side of

an apron forestage.³¹ This design represented a compromise between the open-stage tradition and the continental theatre of visual effects, and actors felt more contact with the audience. William Murray had made extensive alterations to the Theatre Royal in 1818, 1823 and 1830,³² finally removing the downstage doors. The apron was still the main acting area, but when Wyndham took control he removed the apron and actors then played in a confined area representing the locale specified by the surrounding scenery. When he built the next Theatre Royal, Wyndham set the seal on this trend by having a gilt picture frame painted around the new proscenium arch. This was repeated in the Royal Lyceum Theatre and set the seal for the stage-audience relationship in all Howard and Wyndham theatres for the next ninety years.

The rigid separation between stage and auditorium was necessary because the stage had to be underneath a tower containing the grid from which scenery was flown. Thanks partly to the influence of Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), backcloths and painted flats became less important in the 1950s, but because the subsidised repertory companies were at first working mainly in the same buildings, the actors still seemed to be part of the picture created by the scenery and, like Brecht, the British playwrights, directors and actors often made a point of reminding the audience that they were sitting in a theatre watching a play, not observing life actually being lived out in front of them. In the proscenium theatres, the illusion of the invisible wall is still very much with us. Theatre directors in the subsidised companies argued that the actor should be a fully three-dimensional figure, as in Elizabethan theatres, where he stood on a forestage largely encircled by the public whose concentration was on the actor and on the way he spoke to them. In Victorian theatres, the audience sits in darkness staring into an illuminated space in which the natural centre of focus is several feet above the actors' heads. In the Globe Theatre, a spectator sitting in the back row of the top gallery was not so very much further away from the stage than the first row of groundlings of the courtiers sitting on the side of the stage itself. In the gallery of a large Victorian theatre, you were (and, argued the new theatre directors, *still* were) looking down at a distance of up to 150 feet at the top of the actors' heads. This affected the fortunate people sitting in the stalls as well as the unfortunates in the gallery. As Tyrone Guthrie (1900-1971), the Anglo-Irish director, said:

The rapport between the stage and the audience is tremendously conditioned by the amount of cubic space that is empty.³³

His theatre at Stratford, Ontario, contained 2,235 seats packed into thirteen rows. It was planned on a circle of which just less than half is backstage. Similarly, Peter Hall (1930-), in briefing architects for the Royal Shakespeare Company theatre in the Barbican, insisted that no theatregoer be more than 65 feet from the actors. At the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, the back of the gallery is one hundred feet from the stage. Robert Scott (1944-), manager of the '69 Theatre Company in Manchester, went further by specifically describing the backstage of Howard and Wyndham's Manchester Opera House:

They think that 2,000 people are going to come to see a play at the Opera House (and they very often did, because if they didn't go, they went nowhere else), and they expect a lot of money to be made; so, a lot of money has to be spent on *de luxe* equipment. The managers pride themselves on the star dressing room, which is equipped with a table for massage, and appliances of every kind; a telephone in the lavatory (private of course), as well as a telephone in the dressing room, and another telephone in the enormous room where the star is supposed to receive the bouquets and the press. But the lower class of actor has to work just works in a concentration camp, heaped like sardines in subterranean dressing rooms. All these things are out of date. It suggests a romantic management which is fascinated by the star side of the theatre, run by someone who has probably read film-star magazines in his teenage years, and who has not taken account of the professional routine and trends in modern theatre. I do not mean to be unkind about the old Manchester theatres, but our new company will lead a new age for the theatre in this great city.³⁴

Another disadvantage of the No.1 theatres was that they could not accommodate the lighting equipment which was installed in the new theatres. Gas lighting was normal until the 1880s. The Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, had the old gas lighting when it opened in 1883. Howard and Wyndham fitted electric lighting in 1893. It was only in the 1950s that footlights (which are incompatible with any form of thrust stage) were discarded: previously one of their functions was to balance the overhead lighting by throwing up light from underneath. Spotlights became better than ever before but in the Victorian theatres it was impossible to put the front-of-house spotlights the best positions for them, without blocking the view of the audience. Ideally, of course, this would be a consideration in determining the shape of the auditorium.

The picture frame stage had always had its enemies. By the end of the nineteenth century there was quite a strong reaction against it. If Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966) was in favour of altering the prevailing balance of power between the visual image and the spoken word, it was at the expense of the spoken word, but he would have liked to increase the flexibility of the proscenium, if only for the sake of encouraging a greater variety of stage pictures. In the 1920s -as in the 1960s - the reaction against the limitations of theatre

buildings was so violent that there was a movement to get right away from them, such as Max Reinhardt's spectacular production of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* in a circus and religious mime at Olympia in London. The Bauhaus lent powerful support to the idea that theatre ought to move away from theatres. A few theatres-in-the-round were built in America but none in Britain until Peter Cheeseman's company built the Victoria Theatre at Stoke-on-Trent in 1962.³⁵ Thereafter, most new theatres were constructed without a proscenium arch, as at Chichester Festival Theatre (1962) and the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield (1970), both modelled on Guthrie's open stage at Stratford, Ontario.

The late nineteenth-century theatres were primarily built for an audience that needed rather the same sort of entertainment as the popular cinema now provides. Rapid industrialisation brought a huge inflow of population into the towns and cities while improvement of public transport had increased the audience's mobility. The aristocracy was patronising the theatres less than in the eighteenth century and the new middle-class theatregoer could be satisfied most effectively with a readily digestible diet of melodrama, comedy and spectacle. Commercial and unadventurous, managers mostly staged plays that would be sure to command silence in the pit, where the audience was liable to become vociferous. It was scarcely easier to hear them or to see them from the gallery, or so reasoned the advocates of the "new" theatre forms. Casper Wrede, joint artistic director of '69 Theatre Company argued:

I am severely cramped by working in Victorian theatres, which were designed for the voracious appetite for moving pictures. The development of all our directors, designers, actors and playwrights who have gone on working in the same buildings has effectively been conditioned by the taste of an audience which no longer exists. If more theatres had thrust stages or arena stages or were in the round instead of being picture-frame stages, playwrights would almost certainly have broken free very much sooner from the tradition of the three act play with the actors anchored for a whole act, if not the whole play, to a single locale represented by a realistic set. An illuminated realistic set and a darkened auditorium encourages the pretence that the audience is not really there. It is very hard for a playwright to explore the possibilities of a close rapport with the audience in theatres that push the actor back inside a frame and push the audience up to the "gods".³⁶

The reaction against the proscenium theatres had gathered momentum beyond Manchester: the new National Theatre was designed to have three theatres, one of which was to be conventional in structure, but the largest has an open stage and the smallest a "courtyard"

design based on Georgian theatre layout. At the Nottingham Playhouse (1963) a thrust could be added to the basic proscenium. The architect, Peter Moro, put it:

The cylindrical form of the auditorium clearly envelops the audience and the performance in one architectural space when the forestage is in use. Alternatively, it is possible to take the action out of the auditorium and place it in a different space which is seen through a wide gap in the wall of the cylinder. Thus we can combine the experience of the Nottingham Theatre Royal with that of a neo-Georgian playhouse.³⁷

Many of the new theatres built from the 1960s onwards were designed for flexibility, especially when the client was a local authority. Not all councils, or their repertory companies, were hostile to the idea of Victorian theatre buildings. In Edinburgh and Glasgow, where the stock of remaining nineteenth century theatres was strongest, the subsidised companies were housed in old theatres. In 1965, Edinburgh's newly formed civic drama company was given tenancy of the Royal Lyceum Theatre and, in Glasgow, the Citizens' company has continued to operate and restore the former Royal Princess's Theatre (1878).

The last sale of a Howard and Wyndham theatre took place in September 1977: the final production was the pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk*, at the New Theatre, Oxford.³⁸ This theatre was bought by Apollo Leisure, then a private company owned by Paul Gregg, who renamed it the Apollo Theatre. During the next twenty years this company expanded rapidly, so that by 1997 they owned or leased twenty-six theatres, including Howard and Wyndham's former Opera House, Manchester, the Lyceum Theatre, London, and in Scotland, the Edinburgh Playhouse.³⁹ They set their ambition against what seemed an inexorable decline in touring theatres and have become the new colossus of the circuit. Other No. 1 theatres have since been run by local authorities or independent trusts, the majority using subsidy to programme the theatres and maintain the buildings, with most nevertheless being in deficit. A new distinction in the touring circuit may be drawn between those theatres organised for profit and those run at a loss with subsidy. They are all fraught with a very high degree of risk - but that is by no means the same as saying that they are gambling enterprises. Those managers who are skilled succeed in reducing the percentage of risk against them. Apollo Leisure is one such financial success story, making a profit of £3,307,007 on a turnover of £57,002,331 in 1994.⁴⁰ They frequently bid for the management and even purchase of council run theatres, with the offer of capping open-ended local government risk and subsidy. Much of Apollo's profit is derived from long

running seasons in Edinburgh and Manchester of musicals such as *Phantom of the Opera* (Andrew Lloyd Webber and Charles Hart, 1986) and *Les Misérables* (Claude-Michel Schönberg and Alain Boubil, 1985). These have run longer than the greatest musicals of earlier days, and they have attracted people into the No.1 theatres who, twenty years ago, never went near one. On the other hand, those managers who are unskilled increase the natural hazards and this may, in part, account for the stark contrast of losses in many touring theatres run by local government.⁴¹

During the 1980s and 1990s the touring circuit has benefited from proliferating investment in a new global commercial theatre, unknown to Howard and Wyndham. New producers, such as Cameron Mackintosh and the Really Useful Group, engineer shows of an investment, size and promotional scale which Britain has not seen before in live theatre. The National Lottery provides funds to refurbish theatres. The operation of theatre buildings remains unchanged: precarious but with capacity for self-renewal.

This chapter has traced the decline of Howard and Wyndham and identified the reasons for the company's closure, which can now be described as internal, over which the company had control, or external, which they could not influence. The internal causes were a decline in the quality of plays; the advent of the "try-out" and "prior-to-London End" tour; lower production standards; falling advance bookings; managerial inability after the death of Stewart Cruikshank; the company's diversification into publishing and television; its failure to improve audience amenities and its lack of a definable policy. The external causes were the expansion of the subsidised drama companies and the consequent distortion of the theatre economy in favour of the repertory theatres, which amounted to two leagues of provincial theatre: touring (commercial) and repertory (subsidised); a continuing tension between London and the provinces which made good actors reluctant to tour badly decorated theatres; higher costs in general such as the introduction of high-risk guaranteed fees to Arts Council subsidised touring companies; the reduced number of touring theatres caused by property developers' purchase and demolition of over 350 theatres between 1950 and 1960, with government scheduling powers to protect theatre buildings being introduced as late as 1976 by The Theatres Trust Act; a rapid shift in architectural preference from nineteenth-century proscenium arch theatres to smaller theatres with open or thrust stage; the inability of the older touring theatres to accommodate new lighting and design technologies and, lastly, the rise of television.

¹ See *The Stage Yearbook, 1920*, Carson and Comerford, London, 1920, pp.171-182, 1940, pp.145-151 and 1964, pp.113-130.

² Peter Bailey, *A Theatre For All Seasons, Nottingham Playhouse, The First Thirty Years, 1948-1978*, All Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1994, p.88.

³ Charles Landstone, 'The Provincial Picture', essay in *Theatre Programme*, J.C.Trewin, (ed.), Frederick Muller, London 1954, p.75. Charles Landstone was Associate Drama Director of the Arts Council of Great Britain for ten years and had, Trewin writes, "an unmatched knowledge of theatre in the provinces"; he told the full story in his second autobiography, *Off-Stage*, Elek, London, 1953.

⁴ Interview with Renée Stepham, an independent booking manager, 18 June 1997. Miss Stepham retired in 1997 at the age of eighty one, after nearly sixty years of planning tour itineraries and booking shows on behalf of producers, most of whom were, with her, members of the Association of Touring and Producing Managers. This association, founded in 1906, was devoted to protecting the interests of producers in the provinces, and covered practically every phase of the entertainment industry, including opera, ballet, straight plays, musical comedies, revue, repertory, variety road shows and circus. Howard and Wyndham were members of the Theatrical Managers' Association founded by Henry Irving in 1894 (Stewart Cruikshank Junior was a member of its Council for fifteen years). This employers' association represented mainly "bricks and mortar" managers in No.1 provincial theatres, but shared its secretariat and offices with the Society of West End Theatre Managers, founded in 1908. When the charisma and power of managers gave way to less individualism and enhanced corporate structures, these organisations were subtly re-named The Theatre Management Association and Society of West End Theatre. Class, geography and rank of employers within the industry was further stratified: the Independent Theatre Association Ltd (originally the Provincial Entertainments Proprietors' and Managers' Association, Ltd) was formed in 1913, its membership comprised the managers and producers in the No.2 theatres; its President, for thirty five years, was P.J.Broadhead, of "The Broadhead Tour Circuit", succeeded by the manager of the Empire Theatre, Middlesborough). In Scotland, the Scottish Managers' Association embraced all aspects of theatrical endeavour, under its President, George Urie Scott of Glasgow, but Howard and Wyndham were not members. Non-profit repertory companies were represented by the Council of Repertory Theatres (later the Council of Regional Theatre) and local government by the Institute of Municipal Entertainments Managers. The state-aided and the commercial theatre began to move to a blending when C.O.R.T. amalgamated with the T.M.A. in 1978, but the distinction between London and the regions continues today, witness the separation of the Society of London Theatre (S.O.L.T. being successor to S.W.E.T.) and the T.M.A. These employers' associations were mainly pre-occupied with trades union negotiations, particularly with British Actors' Equity Association and the National Association of Theatrical and Kine Employees (later B.E.C.T.U.) and with campaigns for the abolition of Entertainments Tax in the commercial sector.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Charles Duff argues that there was far more vitality in the British theatre before the arrival of the angry young men and the Royal Court revolution than is generally acknowledged. Duff maintains that these playwrights:

knew more about the human heart and wrote with greater literacy than many of their successors of the late 1950s and 1960s.

To prove this point he runs through several plots, with snatches of dialogue and reviews, but most of them sound quite dire. See Charles Duff, *The Lost Summer: The Heyday of the West End Theatre*, Nick Hern Books, London, 1995, p.232-237. This book led to a brief cry from the backwaters as to why such plays are not revived. The Royal National Theatre promptly staged *Absolute Hell* (a re-working of *The Pink Room* by Rodney Ackland, 1952) but there has, other than Rattigan and Coward, been little attempt to re-discover other plays of this era, perhaps because a glance at old acting editions might confirm Helen Osborne's view (*The Spectator*, London, 10 June 1995, p.42) that

It is not only the characters that creak but the language which is dead and rotten, with its heightened poesy or lumpen realism, stuck somewhere between the chilly cockiness of Shaw and the snooty notion of 'Theatre as Literature'.

A recent examination of these plays occurs in Maggie B. Gale, *West End Women: Women and the London Stage 1918-1962*, Routledge, London, 1996, which examines the context, content and reception of plays written by women in the commercially oriented theatre.

⁸ This opinion was confirmed during an interview with Stewart O. Murray, former Theatre Manager, King's Theatre, Edinburgh, 3 December 1996.

⁹ "Garages" alluded to productions "parking" in touring houses rather than "belonging" to the theatres.

¹⁰ John Elsom, *Post War British Theatre*, Routledge, London, 1976, p.139, with additional information from an interview with Jack Phipps, former Director, Dramatic and Lyric Theatres Association and Head of Touring, Arts Council of Great Britain, 14 February 1997. D.A.L.T.A. was originally formed by The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells Opera and Ballet to obviate clashes in their touring dates outside London, and to ease difficulties arising from playing in repertoire, which West End and touring houses did not face. In 1997, the Touring Department of the Arts Council continues to act as referee and funder for lyric companies on tour, limiting clashes of repertoire, city, region and timing by a "spheres of influence" policy.

¹¹ See Richard A. Jerrams, *Weekly Rep: A Theatrical Phenomenon*, Peter Andrew, Droitwich, 1991, p.1. This work includes a chapter on Wilson Barrett's company at the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, 1940-1955. Cruikshank is later paraphrased as saying "Dare anyone suggest that the subsidy offered to some repertory companies is always honestly employed?"

¹² See Lord Redcliffe-Maud, *Support for the Arts in England and Wales*, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London 1976.

¹³ See *Local Government Act, 1948*, or Lord Redcliffe-Maud, *Support for the Arts in England and Wales*, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London, 1976, pp.9ff. Redcliffe-Maud outlines the history of local government support for the arts in a preamble to the implications of council reorganisation.

¹⁴ Jack Phipps, op.cit.

¹⁵ See 'Report of the Council for Theatre Preservation', in 'Bulletin of the Society for Theatre Research', *Theatre Notebook*, Vol. XVII, No.2, Society for Theatre Research, London, 1962, pp.37-38. By contrast, during the same period in West Germany, fifty new theatres were built and thirteen restored.

¹⁶ See Michael J. Newman, *The Golden Years: The Hippodrome Theatre Coventry*, Baron Birch for Quotes, Whittlebury, 1995, p.117. S.H.Newsome, manager of the Hippodrome and a board member of Howard and Wyndham Limited which booked attractions at Coventry, addressed the Rotary Club of Coventry in 1963:

I would not consider the population of Coventry very theatre-minded. Although the Belgrade is one of the finest repertory theatres in the country, their Annual Report recently published states that attendance figures have been disappointing and that they have had to appoint a publicity manager. So far as the Hippodrome is concerned, attendance figures for a good part of the year are excellent, and we manage it, with Howard and Wyndham and Stewart Cruikshank, without any subsidy. I frequently have the joy of seeing the most rewarding sight to any theatre manager - a packed house full of happy faces. From what I have said already, you will be in no doubt that Howard and Wyndham and I are fully aware that in television we have the strongest form of competition that theatre has ever experienced. How to meet this competition is our big problem. My attitude is that television is here to stay and we must use it to serve our own ends by bringing the stars created by television into the theatre. Secondly, we must concentrate as far as we can on those types of entertainment which the living stage can do better than television. Pantomime is one example, the opera and ballet are others. Whatever has happened in the theatre, these three facets of theatre of the theatre have either held or increased their popularity in our theatres. I am glad to be able to tell you that I have hopes that next year Coventry will be well catered for in opera and ballet and I am negotiating visits of all that is best in this field. I expect you are all wondering what I have to say about that extraordinary phenomenon, The Beatles. I do not pretend to understand the mass hysteria which has swept through the teenage population, but I will make one comment - comparison with Tommy Steele.... No matter what is said in the council chamber debates, the true function of the theatre is to entertain, not to educate. This must be remembered.

¹⁷ See John Earl, 'The Preservation Game', essay in *Curtains!!! or A New Life for Old Theatres*, John Offord, Eastbourne, 1982, pp.45-60.

¹⁸ It was not until 1976 that theatres in England benefited from the establishment of The Theatres Trust, created by Parliament to "promote the better protection of theatres for the benefit of the nation." Secretaries of State for the Environment have, since 1977, required all local planning authorities to consult with the Trust before determining planning applications affecting land on which there is a theatre. The work of this statutory body was extended to Scotland by the Theatres Trust (Scotland) Act, 1978. See Hugh Jenkins, *The Culture Gap: An Experience of Government and the Arts*, Marion Boyars, London, 1979, p. 211.

¹⁹ See Harold Ackroyd, *The Liverpool Stage*, Amber Valley Print Centre, Erdington, 1996, p.109. Howard and Wyndham's worst year at the Royal Court resulted in a loss of £85,300 in 1969/70. The theatre was sold to Merseyside County Council for £90,000.

²⁰ Ticket prices for straight plays on tour were often double that charged in subsidised repertory theatres: top-price for drama at the King's Theatre, Glasgow, was £1 10s. in 1968. An example of the different approach to pricing in the subsidised theatre is the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre. In 1975 this theatre claimed the lowest price of all theatres in the United Kingdom and probably Western Europe, (50 pence all seats with 25 pence for concessions), arguing that this was the best way to sell

gilded, exotic and highly idiosyncratic versions of little-known classics in an area that that was once considered the biggest slumland in Europe.

See Paul Bassett, 'The Low Seat Price at the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow', essay in *Journal of Arts Policy and Management*, Vol.II.No.1, City University, London, 1985, pp.14-17.

²¹ Derek Salberg (1912-1997), manager of the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, quoted in an interview, *Birmingham Evening Post*, 12 August 1965.

²² See James Richardson and Damon Fairclough, (eds.), *Lyceum: a Building Worthy of the Best*, Sheffield Libraries and Information Services, Sheffield, 1991, p.27.

²³ See 'The Two Theatres', leader writer, *The Stage*, London, 16 September 1966, p.8.

²⁴ *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 June 1966. See also: Sean McCarthy, (ed.), *The Theatre Royal, Newcastle Upon Tyne*, Proscenium Publications, Bristol, 1988, p. 67.

²⁵ *The Scotsman*, 23 June 1966.

²⁶ At this time the Arts Council of Great Britain funded capital theatre developments through its 'Housing the Arts Fund'.

²⁷ Speculation about the identity of this donor was the subject of two letters published in *The Scotsman* at the time: In the course of an interview with Stewart O. Murray, retired manager of the King's Theatre, it was suggested to me that the donation came from a Director of Howard and Wyndham, who safeguarded his tax position by reclaiming estate duty by making the gift as a charitable contribution.

²⁸ For background to the Edinburgh situation from the perspective of the Edinburgh Festival, see Eileen Miller, *The Edinburgh International Festival, 1947-1996*, Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1996, p.68.

²⁹ *The Scotsman*, 16 February 1970.

³⁰ Letter to *The Times*, 14 July 1976.

³¹ See ground-plan of *Proposed Theatre Royal Edinburgh, 1768*, Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh City Libraries.

³² See playbills for 11 December 1818 (for *The Green Man*), 4 November 1823 (for *The Young Quaker*) and 17 November 1830 (for *The Honeymoon*). These describe alterations such as the installation of gas illumination, reductions in the number of boxes, a new painted ceiling and "central lustre", new canopy on the front elevation, stage machinery, upholstery and ornamentations.

³³ Quoted in James Forsyth, *Tyrone Guthrie*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1976, p.166.

³⁴ See interview, *Manchester Evening News*, 6 February 1970. Ironically, Scott left '69 Theatre Company to become managing director of Manchester Theatres Limited, which restored and re-opened Manchester Opera House in 1985. This company had previously restored the Manchester Palace Theatre, with the intention of having regular visits from The Royal Ballet and the Royal Opera. Touring costs were often three times the box-office take and it took only three years before the scheme was abandoned. In 1990, the theatres were bought by the national chain of theatre owners, Apollo Leisure, after accumulating a deficit of £400,000.

³⁵ See Frederick Bentham, *New Theatres in Britain*, TABS and Rank Strand Electric, London, 1970, p.127.

³⁶ See David Fraser, *The Royal Exchange Theatre Company, An Illustrated Record*, Manchester, 1988. pp.19-21. Quoted from Casper Wrede, writing in 1973 during planning of the company's Royal Exchange theatre-in-the-round.

³⁷ See John Bailey, *A Theatre For All Seasons: Nottingham Playhouse, The First Thirty Years, 1948-1978*, op.cit., p.56. Nottingham Theatre Royal was run by Moss Empires, the fate of which, like Howard and Wyndham's theatres, was now in the balance. The adjoining Nottingham Empire had been pulled down in 1959. The Conservatives, then in opposition on the Nottingham City

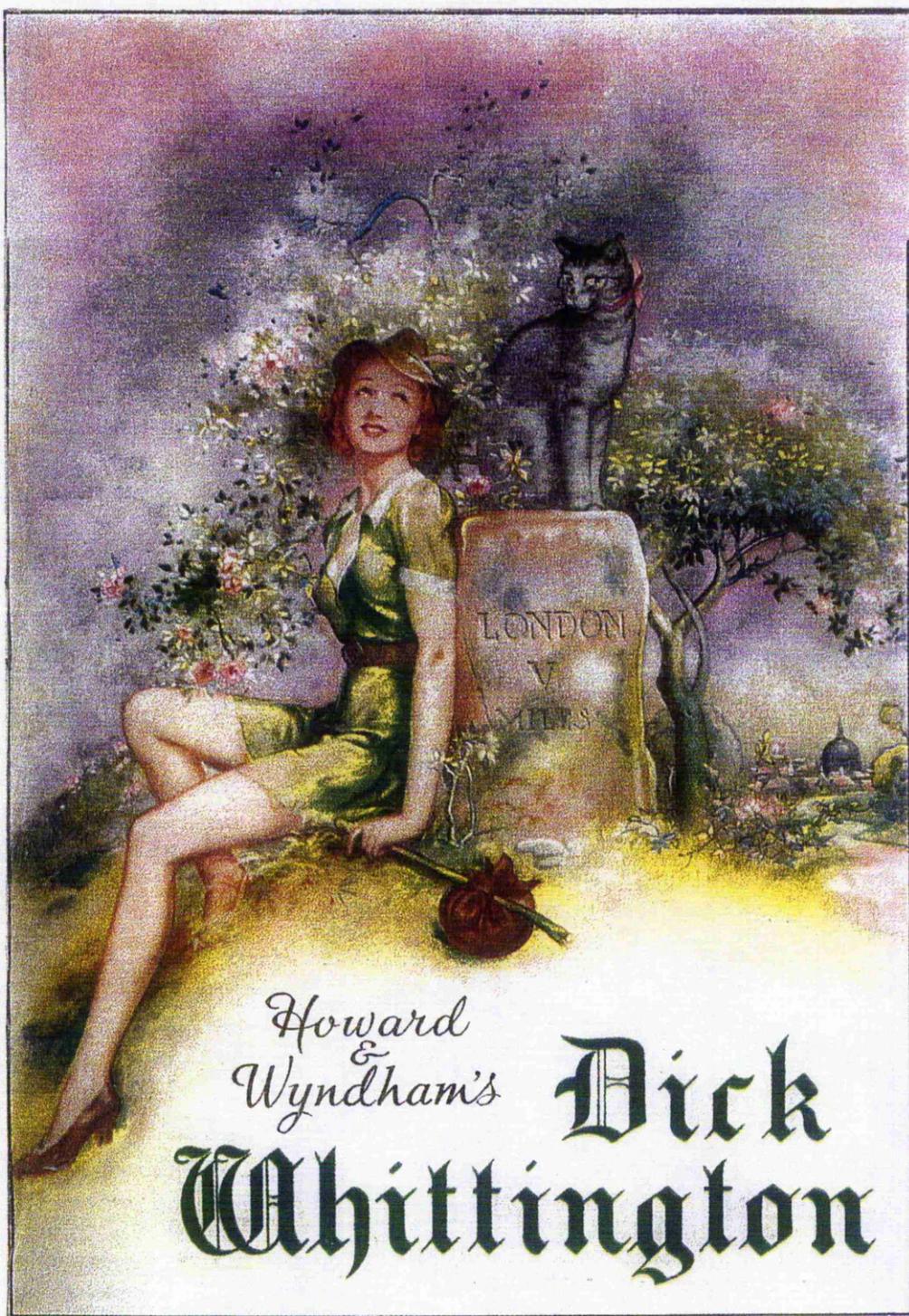
Council, tried to scrap the new Playhouse scheme in favour of the Theatre Royal. The touring house was reprieved by a timely change of political control: the Conservatives took power of the corporation during construction of the new Playhouse and three weeks before demolition of the Theatre Royal had been ordered it was purchased by the council and subsequently restored.

³⁸ It was suggested to me, by three former employees of Howard and Wyndham, that proceeds from the sale of the remaining theatres were invested in West End productions and that the company lost these funds on a rapid succession of failed plays. At winding up, the last Directors of Howard and Wyndham Limited were Ralph A. Fields (USA), Elyot Beaumont, Ralph Copping, Matthew A. Berdon (USA), John Burrows, Jean Antoine Cramer (Switzerland), Herbert Donald and William Sarnoff (USA). Only two of the remaining directors (Beaumont and Donald) had a life-long theatrical background. In 1996 the company name was acquired from Companies' House by a Glasgow entrepreneur, Robert C. Kelly, in the hope of reviving Howard and Wyndham's illustrious past. His first production was *Piaf* (Pam Gems, 1973), touring from the Dundee Repertory Theatre to No.1 theatres in Scotland.

³⁹ See Barbour, Sheena, (ed.), *British Performing Arts Yearbook 1997*, Rhinegold, London, p.408.

⁴⁰ See Apollo Leisure Group Plc., *Group Profit and Loss Account for the Year Ending 3 December 1994*, Lodged at Companies House, signed by the Directors, 29 June 1995. This company is, in many respects, the successor to Howard and Wyndham Limited and would make for rewarding research into contemporary commercial theatrical management, a possible sequel to this study.

⁴¹ Notable but scarce exceptions to the loss-making local authority owned touring houses today are some owned and/or run by independent trusts: Southampton Mayflower Theatre, Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre, Theatre Royal Bath and Blackpool Grand Theatre.



CONCLUSION

This study has traced the progress of the company Howard and Wyndham from 1851 to 1977, from an Edinburgh stock company to a nationally influential touring management, from actor-managers to touring managers and business managers. In conclusion, comment is offered on the company in its entirety, highlighting its striking characteristics and focusing on its particular merits and shortcomings.

In confining this study to a commercial management, there is no intention of belittling the other phases of theatre management during the period under discussion - no intention of undervaluing the subsidised repertory companies, for example - but Howard and Wyndham deserves special attention because they brought the widest spectrum of theatre to millions of theatregoers who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to enjoy it. It is easy to accuse the company of artistic caution, in particular from the 1960s, but this was, in part, dictated by professional and commercial necessity.

The organisation began as a stock ensemble, over which the actor-managers R.H. Wyndham and J.B. Howard had complete control, often playing leading roles themselves, but surrounding themselves with other first-class visiting actors, thereby contributing to the development of the star system in Scotland. During the company's formative years, from 1851 to 1894, it was directed by these two men, F.W. Wyndham and their consorts, proving themselves persons of marked character with accurate judgement of public taste. Being familiar with the stage as actors and managers they could perform their administrative duties with efficiency. Their bravura style drew the audiences into their theatres. They entertained the public with a wide range of plays, from Shakespearean adaptations to contemporary comedietta. The box-office was the principal factor in determining the life of any theatre management before subsidy and Howard and Wyndham were determined to be managers who knew how to please the audience. The popularity, success and reputation of Howard and Wyndham in Edinburgh helped their expansion to Glasgow and Newcastle, where they leased theatres, going on to build and own the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh (1883). From the company's investment in bricks and mortar radiated much of the inspiration to build the stock of gorgeous, late-Victorian and Edwardian theatres, the best of which remain under listed protection to offer enjoyment for future generations. Few other parallels with today's theatre can be found in this period, because the conditions were very different,

but it might be suggested that the stock company was the forerunner of the repertory model. However, when the actor-managers incorporated themselves as a limited liability company in 1895, certain new artistic policies and principles for the business administration of theatre began.

The stock company system was abandoned and touring companies emerged as the artistic and commercial focus of their work. Under F.W.P. Wyndham's leadership, we can observe the transition from actor-manager to touring manager. At this time, Howard and Wyndham were only to a small extent producers in the early twentieth century. In the provinces there were relatively few producers, at least until the return of limited local production and the rise of subsidised drama companies. The link between the theatres and the producers was effected by the contract whereby a production occupies a stage for a period of time, the two parties dividing box-office income and certain expenditures with terms agreed upon. With the company's take-over of the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, in 1928, family-led management passed from the founders to that of a second patriarchy, the Cruikshanks. To them were drawn most of the competent theatre artists on tour - entertainers, playwrights, actors, directors, designers, producers and variety artists - whose work was brought to theatregoers nation-wide through the programming of their No. 1 touring theatres. After the 1920s it is easy to slight their presentations as commonplace and middle-of-the-road, but this was more the product of the artistic realities of the popular "drawing-room" and "cup-and-saucer" plays of this time, rather than their administration. Nevertheless, they fostered three repertory companies who were tenants of their Scottish theatres and, as producers, were famed for their significantly Scottish pantomimes and Scottish variety seasons. In the 1930s they found difficulty in finding attractions for their extensive circuit, particularly in England, and were faced with the challenge of competition from the cinema. The head office moved from Edinburgh to London, and a new structure of management was initiated which, at best, revealed a significant tension between London and the provinces.

The Cruikshanks were business managers and under their administration the circuit expanded - twenty-four theatres were owned or controlled by 1954. No single actor could run a commercial theatre organisation of this size, without abandoning the one career in favour of the other. The *business* of the commercial theatre dominated the *art* the commercial theatre. Theatrical management became a specialised function of its organisation, foregoing three hundred years of artist-led management in Britain.

In England, the Cruikshanks' choice of attractions was largely determined by "The Group" of theatre magnates which controlled the industry through an interlocking system of directorships. Plays on tour to the Howard and Wyndham circuit reflected the tastes of this West End coterie. From a strict business sense, they were an efficient administration, concerned only with the core business of *theatre* - a giant amongst small operators, promoting theatre for entertainment's sake. Although many of their play choices now seem trite, we must note that they took risks without the help of subsidy. They managed without the financial, social and political encumbrance of today's window-dressing theatre peripherals. "Strategic outreach", "business planning", "marketing initiatives", "workshops", "access schemes", newly invented arts objectives and occupations, which amount to clichés about "commitment to excellence and innovation", were unknown to Howard and Wyndham. These extras are, perhaps, a hijacking of theatre by something called the "cultural industries" and which, to Howard, the Wyndhams and the Cruikshanks, would surely be regarded as hostile to their traditional but authentic theatrical spirit.

During the long years of Howard and Wyndham's decline, which saw the demise of the variety industry and the rise of television, theatre *making* substantially returned to the provinces, this time supported by subsidies from the Arts Council. This system has continued, and come to dominate the provincial theatre in Britain. With the exception of mega-musicals, the commercial producing theatre has declined while at the same time many local authorities have purchased the No. 1 theatres and are now forced to provide the running costs of the theatres in which the companies perform. The touring system, and to a particularly influential extent Howard and Wyndham, caused the separation of theatre buildings and theatre production. The building infrastructure became a different element in theatrical management and the company legacy is that two strands of theatre now require separate subsidies.

In British theatre history, 126 years is a very long life for continuous theatre management: Howard and Wyndham flourished for most of this time. Their longevity, as well as their business practices, are attributes worthy of celebration.

APPENDIX 1

THEATRICAL MANAGEMENT AND TOURING:

ACRONYMS, CONTRACTIONS, GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS AND JARGON

This list offers short definitions of theatrical usage common in touring theatre and in the management of Howard and Wyndham Limited. This lexicon highlights, in particular, the tension between London and the provinces and is included because of its peculiar descriptive power.

- Acting Manager** The business manager who *acts* in the interests of the theatre management; title in use until the 1910s. Howard and Wyndham's last acting managers were Mr. Percy Humphreys (Glasgow) and Mr. Harry Macfarlane (Edinburgh), becoming *business* managers in 1911.
- Actor-Manager** A leading player who rented a theatre, ran his own company or toured a repertoire of plays under his own management, playing the leading roles himself: as in J.B.Howard and R.H.Wyndham.
- Advance Manager** The official who travelled ahead of a touring company, arranging local publicity, etc.
- Angel** The person who, privately, financed the play, usually one of several backers. Howard and Wyndham used this system from the 1920s onwards. Their identity was secret.
- Artistes** A progressive, non-gender specific term in Howard and Wyndham contracts for actors and actresses.
- bad get-in** An awkwardly situated scene dock whose doors are above street-level, or at right-angles, for instance, to a narrow passage. Extra money had to be paid to casual stage labour to get-in scenery at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh. Trades Union agreements specified certain other Howard and Wyndham theatres: Manchester Opera House and the Theatre Royal, Nottingham (when booked in conjunction with Howard and Wyndham).
- Baskets are in, the** A phrase used in provincial touring theatres in the nineteenth century when there was a "full house". Many touring companies were stranded through lack of audiences, so that, in order to settle their account with the acting manager, the property baskets were left behind as security.
- Billiard rooms** At the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, there were two floors over the front of the theatre, fitted with "14 first class tables." An

early example of a theatre's ancillary activity and income.

Billing

The position and size of an artiste's name in relation to the play title and to other performers, such as *star-billing* (often above and bigger than the title and author, reflecting audience appeal, salary and ego). In variety theatres (Moss' Empires) this was called *top of the bill* meaning that the artiste had made it to the top, with the rest of the *bill* being the running order for the evening. Repertory theatres usually declined to name artistes other than author and director on publicity material reasoning, without regard to market-forces but with the cushion of subsidy, that the play and "creative team" were the paramount sales points; they gave way to *alphabetical-billing* to emphasise the resident company and ensemble nature of productions which often meant that everyone received the same pay. An aspect of unnecessary tension between the two forms of provincial theatre, often generating three-party protracted negotiations when a commercial or touring management picks up a play for commercial exploitation and has to negotiate *billing* with the artiste's agent and *terms* with the repertory company.

Boys and Girls

Traditional form of address to a touring company by the resident manager. In their No.1 theatres, Howard and Wyndham's Management Handbook (1935) ruled that the more dignified "Ladies and Gentlemen" be used.

Bricks and mortar

A theatre building; used to distinguish a resident manager from a producing manager.

"Buried in the provinces"

A London phrase for acting in a touring company, or in resident repertory in a provincial town - forgotten by London managements. John Drinkwater said: "London obviously is and will remain by far the most powerful centre of theatrical enterprise. To say that the future of drama lies with the provinces is a pretty figure of speech for established actors to use when speaking on tour to Rotary Clubs and High Schools, but it is no more."¹

Call over

The daily reconciliation of outside bookings which the box office manager made with outside ticket agents or "libraries". The booked seats were marked on the seating plans, the unmarked ones being available for sale as 'doors'. The Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook contains 45 pages on box-office procedures.

Capitalisation

The sum of invested money needed to produce a production. The point where a production has recovered its investment capital is called "recoupment".

Call, train

The *train-call* was the time at which a touring company left one town for the next on the tour list. For the benefit of

artistes, the resident manager gave the times of departure and arrival, and any changes to be made en route. "*The Stage Guide* (1912) quoted Third Class rail fares from each tour date to many following cities, as well as the cartage contractor who removed the sets and properties from the stage to the railway station. Artistes carried their own costumes on tour until the 1950s.

- Catch a cold** To do a bad week's business in a provincial town.
- Celestials** The theatregoers in the gallery, or "gods".
- Circlers** The theatregoers in the Dress Circle or Upper Circle.
- Complimentary** A free ticket given by the management to an artiste. The Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook stated: "Safeguard any breach of *Entertainments Tax* regulations by seeing that NO ONE is permitted into the theatre without an official permit, duly endorsed by the Manager. Managers must not pass persons past checkers without permits. A name only upon a ticket is not sufficient - name and address must be given, as all complimentary permits pass on to Check Clerk's office for record purposes. Rubber stamps must not be used, and each permit should be initialled by the Manager only."²
- Contra** A deduction made by the theatre from its final payment to the visiting company, deducted for expenditure incurred by the theatre on behalf of the touring company. Howard and Wyndham accounts suggest that very small sums were re-charged. Apollo Leisure, and some independent theatres today, take a more aggressive line, 'contraing' anything with the expectation that a subsidised company will not notice because it has Arts Council backing and, even if they complain, their cash will have earned interest for the theatre for a longer period. The Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook stated "Managers must never over-estimate the share due to the Touring Manager, and when payments are made all contras must be carefully considered for their maximum recovery and deducted."³
- C.O.R.T.** Council of Repertory Theatres, founded 1948. An association of non-profit distributing professional repertory managements in the provinces. They could claim exemption from Entertainments Tax and, when registered as charities, exemption from income tax and a mandatory 50 per cent reduction in rates. The word repertory was often used in a pejorative sense, which led to the change to Council of Regional Theatre. Later merged with the T.M.A. once the dividing line between non-commercial and commercial theatre changed to retrenchment and difficulty for each strand of provincial theatre.

Country, the	Anywhere out of London, specifically provincial tour dates.
Crewed, be	Changing trains at Crewe station, a railway junction where touring companies waited for connections on Sundays.
D.A.L.T.A.	Dramatic and Lyric Theatres' Association.
Damager	Artistes name for a manager, who might be seen to damage their prospects.
Date	A town on a theatre company's tour itinerary.
Digs	Theatrical apartments for touring artistes. The Stage-Door keeper (known as "Hallkeeper" in Howard and Wyndham theatres) mailed lists of boarding houses to companies.
Discipline	The Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook contains several tracts about 'seniority', 'punctuality', 'politeness', 'cleanliness', and 'notices', reading like a military handbook.
Dog tour/barring clauses	A tour of adjacent towns. Howard and Wyndham exercised a modest twenty mile barring clause in order to ring-fence their audience catchment areas. In Edinburgh and Glasgow today, the touring theatres attempt to negotiate a fifty mile radius barring clauses within a definite time, so as to present 'exclusive' Scottish seasons, reckoning that theatregoers travel readily between the cities. Similar barring clauses cause intense competition for attractions between adjacent independent theatres: for example, Sunderland Empire Theatre and Newcastle Theatre Royal; Bradford Alhambra Theatre and Leeds Grand Theatre; Birmingham Hippodrome Theatre and Birmingham Alexandra Theatre.
Edinburgh Festival	The annual festival in the "Athens of the North", founded in 1947. Stewart Cruikshank Jnr. was a member of its Council and negotiated guaranteed income to Howard and Wyndham via a Festival Society rental of the King's Theatre. This was mutually beneficial as the Festival provided quality attractions for three summer weeks when few companies toured Britain. In 1950, Cruikshank was instrumental in the appointment of the Festival's second artistic director, Ian Hunter: "He [Cruikshank] probably had more had more experience of assessing managerial capability in the world of the arts than anyone else on the Festival Committee. He told them: "Oh no, I think you are quite wrong. You should give the young lad a chance"." ⁴
en route	A column in <i>The Stage</i> newspaper noting the whereabouts of all touring companies for the current week and their destinations next week. Now styled "On Next Week: The Regions", not distinguishing between tours and resident companies.

Equity	Short for British Actors Equity Association.
family theatre, the	Slogan of Edinburgh King's Theatre used by Howard and Wyndham in the 1930s.
Fish and actors	Observation made by British Railways staff when they saw a carriage and truck in a siding on a Sunday when trains conveyed mostly touring companies and fish trucks. A "Fish-and-Chip" tour was a tour contracted to small dates (No.3 theatres), paying artistes just enough to live on fish and chips. (Also known as "The Woolworth Circuit"). Railway privileges enabled touring companies to freight scenery according to the number of actors on tour: 21 to 33 artistes were able to take one truck not exceeding 21 feet in length, with large companies of 167 to 200 passengers taking six trucks free of charge. ⁵
F.O.H.Manager	Front of House Manager, the latter term for Acting Manager. The proscenium arch theatres were divided into the two worlds of backstage and front of house, separated by a pass door, through which neither staffs passed except in an emergency.
full West End cast	The often euphemistic billing of a touring cast. <i>The King's Theatre, Edinburgh, Handbook</i> (1923) stated: "Howard and Wyndham is noted for enterprising and go-a-head methods of management. The King's Theatre is what one would term in London a West End House, and has a west end audience." ⁶
get-out figure	The weekly running cost of a touring attraction, being the sum needed at the box-office to enable the company to leave the town without surrendering their baskets and properties. In use today.
impresario	Promoter of spectacular entertainment, particularly musical plays, who discovers talent and organises productions, usually in London. The term was often applied to Charles B. Cochran, Hugh (Binkie) Beaumont and Prince Littler (Directors of Howard and Wyndham) but never given to the Cruikshanks who, despite being managers of important theatres, were even more retiring characters.
in Town	Acting in a West End theatre and not on tour.
King's, the	The <i>King's</i> Theatres in Edinburgh or Glasgow.
Lyceum, the	The <i>Royal Lyceum Theatre</i> , Edinburgh.
management, go into	Forming a theatre company.
no play; no pay	Clause in Howard and Wyndham touring contract up to 1955.

Artistes received no pay for weeks out.

No.1 Theatre

Bookings (and pay for artistes) were graded according to the size and reputation of the theatre; all Howard and Wyndham theatres were No.1 dates.

No.2 Theatre

A smaller theatre than the Howard and Wyndham or Moss' Empires dates; in Scotland these were, for example, the Gaiety Theatre Ayr, the Opera House Dunfermline, Theatre Royal Inverness, the Grand Opera House Falkirk and Gaiety Theatre Clydebank. In England, No.2 theatres were usually in seaside holiday resorts (excepting Brighton Theatre Royal and Blackpool Grand Theatre), spa towns (such as Buxton Opera House) or small industrial towns (such as Wakefield Theatre Royal and Opera House and Barnsley Theatre Royal) or London suburbs (such as Golder's Green Hippodrome). The Bostock Circuit was graded as a No.2 syndicate and run from Glasgow: its chain of theatres included Norwich Hippodrome, Ipswich Hippodrome, Paisley Hippodrome, Hamilton Hippodrome, Hamilton Victoria Hall, The Blantyre House, Bostock and Wombwell's Royal No. 1 Menagerie, Glasgow Exhibition Buildings and the Glasgow Royal Italian Cirque and Opera House.

No.3 Theatre

A small theatre in a market town or suburb. In Scotland these included the Empire Theatre Musselburgh, Kirkcaldy Hippodrome, Pavilion Theatre Forfar, Dalrymple Theatre Fraserburgh, Marine Theatre Portobello and Melvin's Palace Theatre Arbroath. An aggregation of Glasgow No.3 theatres was run by George Urie Scott: Shettleston Palacem Theatre, Callowgate Theatre, Larkhall Empire Theatre and Barrhead Pavilion Theatre. This manager's empire extended as far as the Hawick Pavilion Theatre.

notice

Notice which told the company that the play would not be "transferring" to the West End at the end of the tour.

on the road

Touring the provincial theatres. Edith Evans said: "God was very good to me. He never let me go on tour." Other condescending sayings about touring include "Olivier's Lear was a *tour de force*; Wolfit's was forced to tour."⁷

opposition

Performances at a rival theatre at a provincial tour date. The weekly return compiled by the resident manager included a section on *opposition*: see form reproduced in Chapter Four.

pencilled date

Unconfirmed booking in a theatre manager's diary, starting with "a light pencil" and progressing while the producing manager and theatre juggle their schedules through "pencil", "heavy pencil", "agreed" and confirmed when the theatre issues and receives a signed copy of the contract for the week. Howard and Wyndham planned all attractions for their circuit

from head office, subsequently informing their resident manager of a theatre's confirmed diary. Local theatres had no entrepreneurial role in finding or negotiating the terms of productions, except amateur weeks. The producing manager hoped for a better financial deal than the resident manager was ever able to offer: both wanted the other to bear the risk.

playing/working	Legitimate touring companies <i>played</i> theatres; musical-comedy and variety artistes <i>worked</i> theatres. Companies always <i>played</i> the Howard and Wyndham circuit.
prior to London production	The intimation on posters and advertisements that the play is being given a short tour of the provinces before its West End premiere. Also known as <i>try-out</i> .
proof of daybill and programme	Checking posters, advertising and programme copy. The Howard and Wyndham Management Handbook stated: "Managers must see that they have the copy in hand so that they may have the proofs not later than a week prior to the opening date of the attraction. Managers should note that they should endeavour to delete any superfluous matter from the submitted copy of Daybill and Programme. It might be necessary to obtain the Touring Manager's consent."
provincial theatre	The stage outside London; latterly known as "regional theatre."
rehearsal pay	Money given to artistes to rehearse more than the prescribed number of 'free' calls. Equity negotiated fairer rehearsal pay although Howard and Wyndham paid less for rehearsal than performance weeks until 1961.
repertory theatre	Theatre producing its own plays, usually in a provincial town. James Agate wrote: "Faced with a touring theatre in which it is a moot-point as to whether the lifting of the curtain tended to raise the spirits of the spectator or to depress them still further, the provincial made up his mind to make a bid for independence with a theatre of his own." ⁸ Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree sought to laugh the repertory theatres out of existence with the riddle: "When is a repertory theatre not a repertory theatre? When it is a success." Ralph Fields, last Chairman of Howard and Wyndham, in an argument over the relative merits of their Manchester Opera House and the several Greater Manchester repertory companies, said "The City Council watches over the people's pleasures, giving these theatres ever greater subsidies to ever diminishing houses." ⁹ Determinedly non-commercial until the 1990s, these theatres were usually opposed in every way to commercial touring houses.
resident manager	The manager of the theatre as distinct from the manager of a visiting company. The resident manager handled local business.

return date	A second booking at the same theatre as a result of a very profitable first week.
show business	The entire theatre industry, except repertory theatres which sought to avoid parallels with the West End and commercial touring.
split week	A week when a theatre hosts two attractions (Monday to Wednesday; Thursday to Saturday) because audiences are not large enough to justify a week's engagement. This was rare in Howard and Wyndham theatres, though increasingly common in touring today, when sometimes whole weeks of "one night stands" are the only financially viable way of staging esoteric art, or when touring theatres are used as concert halls.
standing accommodation	Theatres were granted permission by the licensing authorities to allow patrons to stand for a performance providing the whole seating capacity on the respective floors was full. In 1935, at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, the standing accommodation totalled 134, above a seating capacity of 2,225. This theatre is licensed today for 1,336 patrons and standing is forbidden. The Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh, had standing accommodation for 288 patrons, a seating capacity of 2,157 and is licensed today for 680 seated patrons. In Glasgow, Howard and Wyndham's King's Theatre was licensed for 153 standees above a seating capacity of 2,126 (1,785 today). Their Theatre Royal was licensed for 220 standees above a seating capacity of 2,073 (1,547 today). Patrons stood behind the back row of seats on each tier. All these theatres were bigger were than the new West End theatres built in the same period: the Savoy was considered big at 1,300 seats; only the Shaftesbury (1,670 seats), Lyric (1,400 seats) and Empire (1,400 seats) being larger, while the capacity of No.1 theatres invariably exceeded 2,000 seats.
star dressing room	The best dressing room in the theatre. Howard and Wyndham theatres had one <i>en suite</i> dressing room, the remainder had shared washing facilities as in cheap hotels. The Management Handbook stated: "No person (other than those engaged) is allowed to see artistes in the dressing rooms unless the Resident and Touring Managements are satisfied that they have a <i>bona-fide</i> reason. See that the Hallkeeper understands that no visitor passes his box without a written permit from the Management."
steward	Usual style for front of house attendant. Howard and Wyndham preferred "usher" and "usherette".
S.W.E.T.	Society of West End Theatre Managers, founded 1908, later Society of West End Theatre, later Society of London Theatre (S.O.L.T.). Prince Littler and Hugh Beaumont (Directors of

Howard and Wyndham Limited) were President and Vice-President.

T.M.A.	Theatrical Managers' Association, later Theatre Management Association, founded in 1894 by Henry Irving. Employers' association: Howard and Wyndham were founder members.
touring rights	The rights to tour the London production, licensed by the author to the touring management.
variety public	The audience who went to Moss' Empires, as opposed to play-goers who went to Howard and Wyndham theatres.
week out	A week during a tour when no theatre had been found to take the show and a week out of work resulted in no pay until Equity negotiated continuous terms in 1974.

¹ See John Drinkwater, *The Gentle Art of Theatre-going*, Robert Holden, London, 1927, pp.51-66. The comment is surprising because Drinkwater, a playwright, was a producer and the first General Manager of Birmingham Repertory Theatre from 1913.

² *The Management Handbook*, op.cit., p.156.

³ *Ibid.*, p.77.

⁴ Quoted by Iain Crawford, *Banquo on Thursdays: The Inside Story of the Edinburgh Festival*, Goblinshead, Edinburgh, 1997, p.21.

⁵ See Alfred Barnard, (ed.), *The Era Annual, 1914*, The Era, London, 1914, 'Railway Rates and Privileges for Theatrical Parties', p.71.

⁶ *The King's Theatre Handbook*, op.cit., p.7.

⁷ Quoted by Leo McKern in 'A Knight to Remember', essay in Ronald Harwood, (ed.), *A Night at the Theatre*, Methuen, London, 1982, p.110.

⁸ James Agate, *Buzz, Buzz! Essays on the Theatre*, Collins, London, 1917, pp.63-64.

⁹ Interview in *Manchester Evening News*, 13 October 1969.

King's Theatre, Glasgow.



Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh.

PROGRAMME

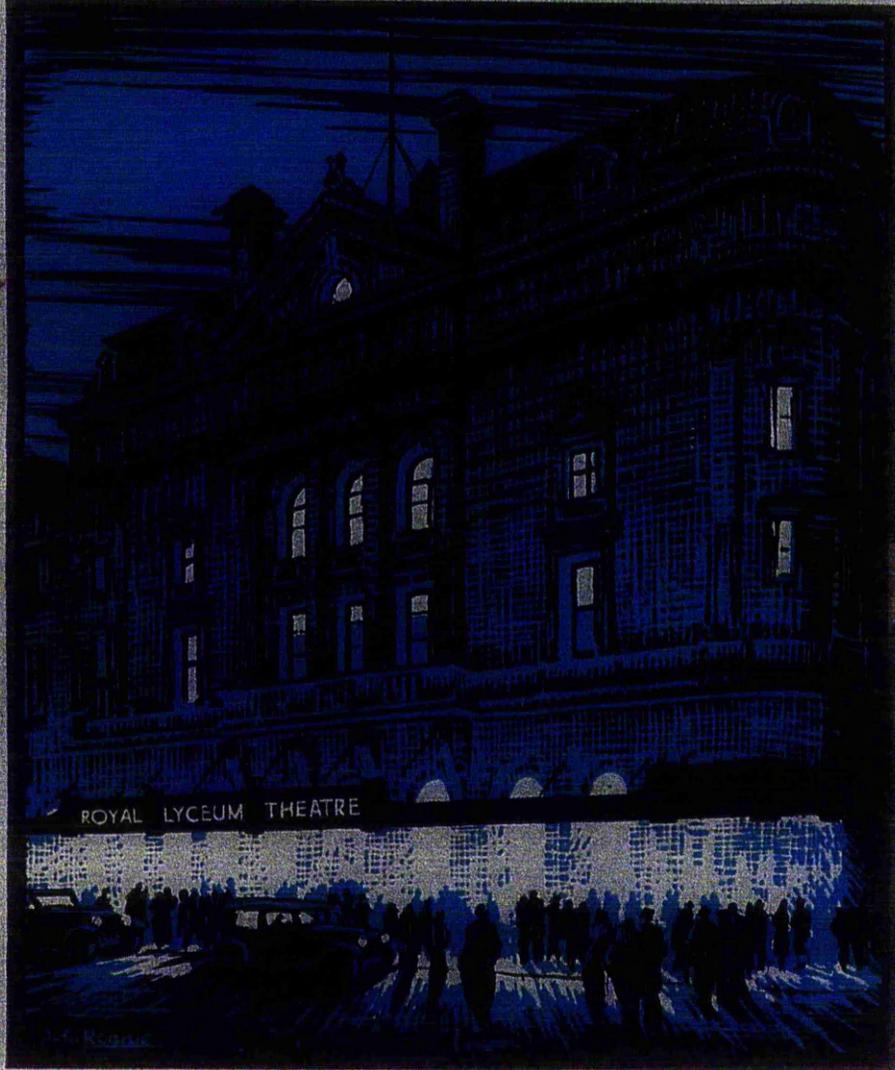


ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE EDINBURGH

MESSRS HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LTD.
Managing Director: Stewart Cruikshank

Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh.

PROGRAMME



ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE EDINBURGH

MESSRS HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LTD.
Managing Director : Stewart Cruikshank

Theatre Royal, Glasgow.



APPENDIX 2

HOWARD AND WYNDHAM ARTISTES CONTRACTS, 1853 to 1961

The following contract for an engagement at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh illustrates the brevity of contracts between manager and actor in the years before the rise of the chain of touring theatres and incorporation of Howard and Wyndham as a limited company in 1895.

EDINBURGH, October 3, 1853.

I agree to give Mr. Powrie three shillings and 6d. per week for fifty-two weeks and a benefit in Edinburgh the receipt of the whole amount to be divided between Mr. Powrie and the management. Mr. Powrie's salary to commence this day. The travelling expenses away from Edinburgh will be paid by me.

R.H.WYNDHAM.¹

The second contract, issued in 1960, shows the extent of detail covered in the final years of the company. The pantomime contract is one approved by the Theatrical Managers' Association, the Association of Touring and Producing Managers, British Actors' Equity Association and the Variety Artistes' Federation, revised in July 1960. Responsibility for negotiating artistes contracts lay with Head Office, where Stewart Cruikshank signed all agreements. He personally negotiated terms with producers for touring attractions as well as salaries and billing with the agents of the stars of pantomimes and variety shows, delegating rates and details for other artistes to a deputy. In view of the number of contracts issued, and to minimise contractual ping-pong, the company used their own contract templates throughout, adapted from the heads of agreement set by the Provincial Theatre Council. With money and reputations at stake, there was no room for ambiguity. The content of the performance and its technical details, damage liability, as well as rehearsal times had to be pinned down precisely, long before the productions went on tour.

HOWARD AND WYNDHAM LIMITED
Managing Director-Stewart Cruikshank

ARTISTE'S CONTRACT

PANTOMIME SEASON 1960/61

ALHAMBRA THEATRE, GLASGOW²

AGREEMENT between Howard and Wyndham, Limited (hereinafter called "the Company") andFRANCIS REID..... (hereinafter called "the Artiste") as Stage Manager. ³.

The Company agrees to pay the Artiste a Weekly inclusive Salary of £18.10s.0d. during the run of A WISH FOR JAMIE⁴ at the Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow commencing on or about 9th December 1960.

Rehearsal 28th November, or for period booked, and in consideration thereof the Artiste shall play whatever part or parts the Company may in its discretion direct.

Subject to the provisions of this Agreement this engagement is for the run/er
~~..... full weeks with option on part of Management to extend as required by giving one week's notice prior to termination of this engagement.~~

One week's notice will be given by the Company of the termination of engagement.

The above salary shall include the Artiste's services at six or twelve Evening Performances and all Matinees, but the Artiste shall be paid one twelfth of the weekly salary for any performances played in excess of twelve during any one week. ~~The Artiste will not receive any salary for rehearsals either prior to or during the engagement.~~ Should any engagement commence or terminate during a week, the Artiste will be paid one-twelfth for each performance played in respect of a Pantomime engagement and one-eighth for each performance played in respect of a Summer Season engagement.

If during the first two weeks of the engagement the Company shall be of the opinion that the Artiste is unsuitable for the part or parts for which he or she is engaged, the Company shall be entitled to terminate the engagement on one week's notice from the date of intimation to the Artiste. In the event of any Artiste's engagement being so terminated, the Artiste shall have no claim for loss of publicity or any claim upon any ground whatsoever, other than the claim for salary to the date of termination of the engagement.

The engagement by the Company of the Artiste is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- Costumes, etc.** 1. The Artiste shall provide all costumes for own acts, wigs, tights and shoes to the satisfaction of the Company.
- Rehearsals.** 2. The Artiste shall attend rehearsals when required by the Company.
- Material used.** 3. The Artiste shall not, except by arrangement with the Management, use during performances any material of which he or she does not hold

the copyright, or which does not belong to him or her, or which he or she has no right to use.

No other engagement.

4. The Artiste declares that, at the time of signing this Agreement, he or she is under no other engagement with any other management or agent which could preclude him or her from fulfilling the engagement shewn herein, and that he or she has not concealed any change of professional name or description.

Attendance at Theatre

5. The Artiste shall be in the theatre thirty minutes prior to the time advertised for the commencement of each performance.

Illness or Absence.

6. In the event of incapacity of the Artiste from illness, or his or her absence from the theatre through any other cause, the Company shall have the right to terminate this engagement forthwith, and the Artiste shall thereupon forfeit all rights and benefits under this Agreement, except any salary due to the Artiste up to the date of the commencement of the absence.

Influence of Drink or Drugs.

7. Should any Artiste be, in the opinion of the Company's Manager, under the influence of drink or drugs at a time when his or her services are required by the Company, the Company shall have the right to terminate the Artiste's services forthwith, and in that event the Artiste shall forfeit all rights and benefits under this Agreement, except any salary due to the Artiste up to the date of the termination of such services.

Entering of Auditorium.

8. Unless with the permission of the Company, the Artiste shall not be permitted to enter the auditorium of the house during the performance.

Option to Transfer.

9. The Company shall have the option of transferring the Artiste to any Theatre or Management other than that herein mentioned.

Responsibility for Property.

10. The Company shall not be responsible for the safe custody, or for damage, theft or loss from any calls, of property belonging to the Artiste, either in course of transit or at the Theatre

Distance Bar Broadcasting etc.

11. Prior to the commencement of this engagement, the Artiste shall not appear in any place of amusement within a radius of twenty miles of the Theatre at which the Artiste is to appear, and during the engagement the Artiste shall not give or lend his or her services or name to any entertainment, performance, exhibition or function elsewhere, including broadcast or television performances (for payment or otherwise) without first obtaining the consent in writing of the Company.

Additions to the Script.

12. The Artiste shall not introduce any gags or interpolation of any kind, other than such as may be added to the part by arrangement with the Management.

Advertising Rights.

13. Sole advertising rights belong to the Company and no Artiste may introduce any material of an advertising nature or exhibit any advertising mater in any Production or Act.

- Visitors.** 14. No strangers or visitors will be admitted to the dressing rooms during rehearsals or performances without the consent in writing of the Company.
- Issue of Bills or Adverts.** 15. The Artiste shall not issue any bills or advertisements without the consent in writing of the Company.
- Theatre Rules.** 16. The Artiste shall accede to all reasonable requests of the management, and observe and carry out the ordinary rules of the Theatre.
- Communications.** 17. The Artiste shall not receive any communications (whether written or otherwise) during the performance.
- Dogs.** 18. The Artiste shall not bring any dogs or other animals into the Theatre, except such as are used in connection with his or her performance.
- Smoking.** 19. No smoking will be permitted in the dressing rooms, or on the stage unless required by the business of the play.
- Assignment of Benefits.** 20. Except as otherwise stated in this Agreement, neither the Agreement nor any benefits hereunder shall be assignable or chargeable.
- Endorsations.** 21. Any further conditions that may be endorsed hereon shall have the same affect as if set out in the body thereof.
- Closure of Theatre terminating Contract.** In the event of the Theatre being closed in consequence of any public calamity, war, riot or civil commotion, Royal demise, epidemic, fire, act of God, or any other cause, or in the event of the Theatre not being available for theatrical performances in consequence of the withdrawal or suspension of any licence, or by reason of any alterations or other work required to be done by the Health, Licensing or other Authority, or by reason of any combination, strike or lock-out of any workmen, musicians, artistes or staff interfering with the working of the Theatre, or from any cause whatsoever not within the control and not occasioned by the default of the Company, the Company shall have the option of putting an end to this Agreement without previous notice, or (if the closing of the Theatre is merely temporary) of treating the Agreement as inoperative for such period as the circumstances shall require; and in any of said events no claim shall be competent against the Company under this Agreement.
- Transfer of Agreement.** In the event of the Company letting, transferring or otherwise disposing of the Theatre, it shall have the right of transferring this Agreement to its successor, or on giving a fortnight's notice to the Artiste, of cancelling the same.
- Options.** The Artiste hereby agrees to give the Company an option upon his or her service for the run of the following seasons

In the event of the Company desiring to exercise the option, notice in writing to this effect shall be given during the run of the immediately preceding season.

Disputes and Differences.

Any disputes, differences or questions which may arise between the parties hereto as to the meaning and terms of this Agreement, or as to the carrying out of the same, or as to the rights and obligations of the parties thereunder, or otherwise in the premises in any manner of way, shall be referred to a sole Arbiter to be chosen by the parties hereto, or, failing agreement, to a sole Arbiter to be appointed under the Arbitration (Scotland) Act 1894, with power to the Arbiter so chosen or appointed to pronounce awards, interim and final, which shall be binding on both parties

Date this second day of July 1960.

For Howard and Wyndham Limited.

.....
Stewart A. Cruikshank, Managing Director.

Artiste's Signature (Francis Reid).

.....

Note: All communications to Managing Director, Messrs. HOWARD AND WYNDHAM, Ltd., GRAFTON STREET, LONDON W.1

Artiste's Permanent Address

.....

.....

.....

Endorsation. Full salary will be paid as from the first day of rehearsals. The Management will pay 2nd class return rail fares.

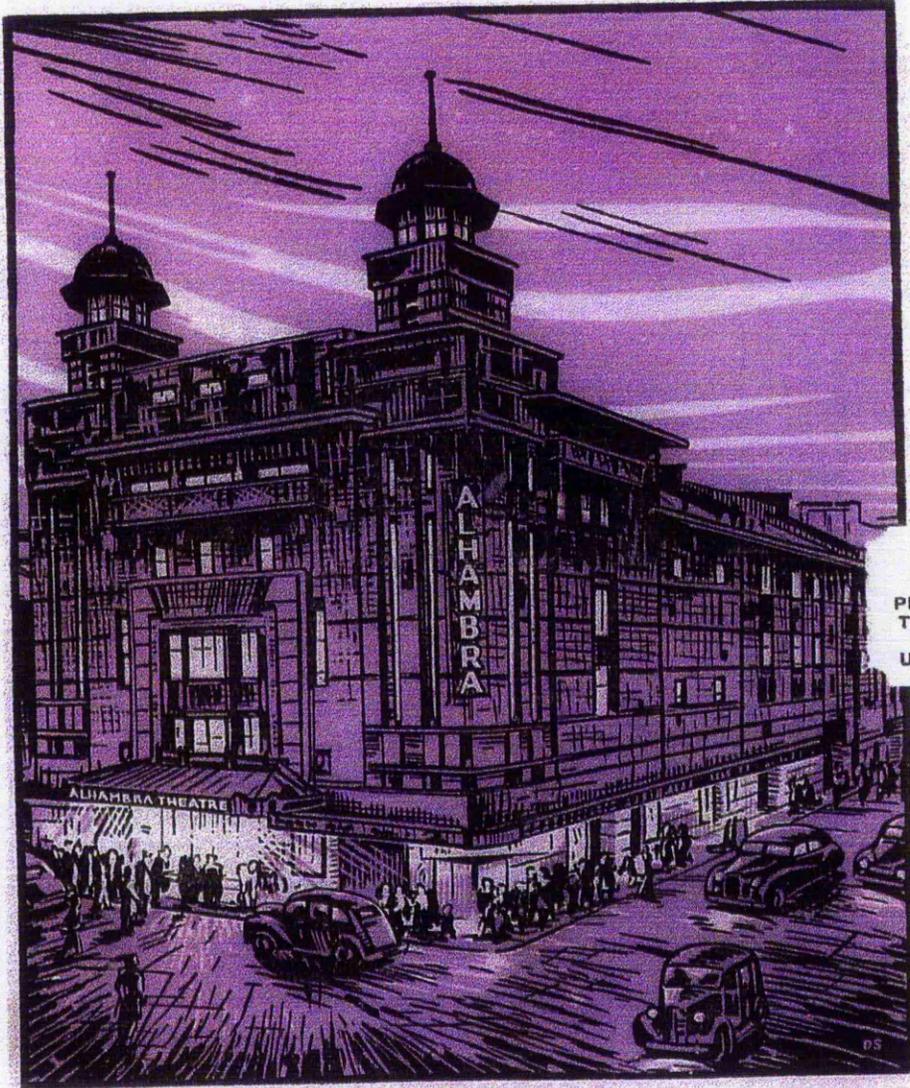
¹ See contract between R.H.Wyndham and Mr. Powrie, Edinburgh City Library. To receive a benefit, Powrie would have been a leading man in Wyndham's company and therefore on the top wage. Dibdin (op.cit.) reports that Thomas Powrie, from the Prince's Theatre, Glasgow, but a native of Dundee, made his first Edinburgh appearance on 10 October 1849 as Hamlet, Wyndham playing Laertes: "The following day the *Courant* said that Powrie "displayed talents which entitle him to take a higher place among living actors", p.408.

² The Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow, was built in 1912 and acquired by Howard and Wyndham in 1954, used principally for their *Five Past Eight* variety shows and *Wish For Jamie* pantomimes. Despite a vigorous campaign to preserve it, it was demolished in 1970. See Iain Mackintosh and Michael Sell (eds.), *Curtains!!!* op.cit., p.221. See also Alasdair Cameron, *See Glasgow, See Theatre: The Glasgow Theatre Trail*, The Glasgow File, Glasgow, 1990, entry 14, where the Alhambra's dates are cited as 1910-1971.

³ Stage Managers were described as artistes because they were represented by British Actors' Equity Association, whereas the resident stage staffs of Howard and Wyndham theatres were represented by the technicians' union, N.A.T.T.K.E. (National Association of Theatrical, Television and Kinematic Employees). In general, stage managers were employed on conditions not less favourable than the minimum for actors but with special conditions relating to the nature of stage management. These recognised that a stage manager had to be on duty before the actors arrived and remained until after the last actors had left the theatre.

⁴ *A Wish For Jamie* was one of a series of successful pantomimes directed and devised by the Australian dancer and director Freddie Carpenter (1908-1992), engaged as Howard and Wyndham's joint Head of Production (with Dick Hurran) from 1950 to 1965. The company also employed a resident Musical Adviser - Geraldo.

Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow.



€
PLEA
THAT
SEA
UNBI

Britain's Premier Theatre Circuit

HOWARD & WYNDHAM LIMITED

Chairman: PETER DONALD
 Managing Director: STEWART CRUIKSHANK

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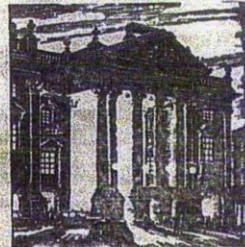
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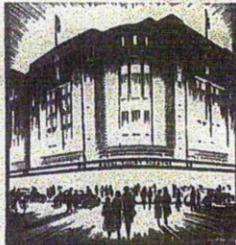
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Newcastle City Libraries: Local Studies Collection, Clark Programme Collection.
Francis Reid, former stage manager, Howard and Wyndham, Private Collection.
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Dr. David Wilmore, Private Collection, Harrogate.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Raymond and Pamela Iles, Dr. Adrienne Scullion (Supervisor), Professor Jan McDonald (Supervisor), David Boyd, Anne McCluskey, Crispin Raymond, Peter Aughton, Iain Mackintosh, Robert Breckman, Robert C. Kelly, Elizabeth Watson, Christine Watkins, John Cavanagh, Dr. David Wilmore, Francis Reid, Jack Phipps, Renée Stepham, Tamara Malcolm, William Emonds, Nicolas Bloomfield, Andy Davenport, Donald Campbell, Professor Sir James Dunbar-Nasmith, Peter Sarah, John Godfrey.