REVIEWING SHAKESPEARE

Ranging from David Garrick’s Macbeth in the 1740s to the World Shakespeare Festival in London 2012, this is the first book to provide in-depth analysis of the history and practice of Shakespearean theatre reviewing. Reviewing Shakespeare describes the changing priorities and interpretive habits of theatre critics as they have both responded to and provoked innovations in Shakespearean performance culture over the last three centuries. It analyses the conditions – theatrical, journalistic, social and personal – in which Shakespearean reception has taken place, presenting original readings of the works of key critics (Shaw, Beerbohm, Agate, Tynan), while also tracking broader historical shifts in the relationship between reviewers and performance. Prescott explores the key function of the ‘night-watch constable’ in patrolling the boundaries of legitimate Shakespearean performance and offers a compelling account of the many ways in which newspaper reviews are uniquely fruitful documents for anyone interested in Shakespeare and the theatre.

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For my parents,

*Philippa and William Prescott*
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Acknowledgements

This book began its life at the Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon, and owes much to the company and advice of students and staff at that very special place. John Jowett and Russell Jackson offered typically acute comments on first drafts of early chapters. I also owe a great debt of gratitude to Peter Holland for setting the ball rolling and for being such a kind, clever and inspiring mentor.

In the years since I have benefited from dozens of conferences, seminars, panels and discussions – formal and otherwise – with too many friends, students and colleagues to do justice to here. But I am very grateful for assistance from librarians at the Shakespeare Institute (especially James Shaw and Kate Welch), the Bodleian, the British Library and the University of Warwick. Warm thanks to Andrew Dickson, Terence Hawkes, David Roberts, and Gary Taylor for input and advice at key stages; to Paul Edmondson, Peter J. Smith and Stanley Wells, for reading and generously commenting on late drafts of the manuscript. Special thanks to Michael Billington, Michael Coveney, Charles Spencer and the late John Gross for sharing their experiences and thoughts in interview. Earlier versions of parts of Chapters 2 and 5 have previously appeared in Shakespeare Survey 58 and the Blackwell Companion to Shakespeare and Performance (ed. Barbara Hodgdon and W.B. Worthen).

At the business end of the publishing process, I am immensely grateful to Mary Stewart Burgher and Lydia Wanstall for giving so freely of their time and expertise in helping to proof final drafts; Chris Jackson was also an exemplary copy-editor. All errors and infelicities are my own. At Cambridge University Press, Rebecca Taylor, Joanna Breeze and Anna Lowe have all been models of care and efficiency. And I am delighted to join a generation of Shakespeareans in thanking Sarah Stanton for everything she does, for individual authors and for the profession as a whole.
Acknowledgements

It is hard to imagine a greater or a happier debt than the one I owe to my parents, without whom it is pretty safe to say this book would not have been written. I therefore dedicate this to them on the joyous occasion – 31 August 2013 – of their golden wedding anniversary.