BECKETT BEFORE GODOT
In *Beckett before Godot*, John Pilling re-evaluates the formative years of Beckett between the publication of his first work in 1929 and the composition late in 1946 of *The Calmative*, his last work before the ‘trilogy’. Using a wealth of unpublished manuscripts and correspondence from around the world, Pilling examines individual works across all genres for what they reveal of Beckett’s creative process during this crucial period. He offers a detailed account of Beckett’s early psychological and aesthetic development, and shows how his artistic growth was always paradoxically linked to the likelihood of failure, to which he was always temperamentally attracted. Pilling's treatment of the first two decades of Beckett's career as a writer offers for the first time a coherent critical narrative of his development during this long period of apprenticeship. *Beckett before Godot* links biographical fact with a series of powerful close readings to modify and enhance our understanding of one of this century’s most influential authors.
BECKETT BEFORE GODOT

JOHN PILLING
Professor of English and European Literature
University of Reading
for

my son Sam
... you must say words, as long as there are any, until they find me, until they say me, strange pain, strange sin, you must go on, perhaps it's done already, perhaps they have said me already, perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story, before this door that opens on my story, that would surprise me, if it opens, it will be I, it will be the silence, where I am, I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on. 

_The Unnamable, p. 418_
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Abbreviations

CP


Dis


Dream


FL


HRHRC

Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Harvey


Knowlson


Mu


No's Knife


Pr


Reading

The Beckett International Foundation, Department of Archives, The Library, University of Reading.

TCD

Trinity College Dublin, Department of Manuscripts

ULP

As the Story was Told: uncollected and later prose, London: John Calder, 1990.

W