

## CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

*Books of enduring scholarly value*

### **Literary Studies**

This series provides a high-quality selection of early printings of literary works, textual editions, anthologies and literary criticism which are of lasting scholarly interest. Ranging from Old English to Shakespeare to early twentieth-century work from around the world, these books offer a valuable resource for scholars in reception history, textual editing, and literary studies.

### **Shakespeare in the Theatre**

William Poel (1852–1934), actor, director and author, began his acting career in 1876, deliberately choosing provincial touring in order to learn his craft. After a period as manager of the Royal Victoria Hall and Coffee Tavern (later the Old Vic), he worked as stage manager for the actor-manager Frank Benson. In the 1890s he founded the Elizabethan Stage Society in order to demonstrate his fervent belief that only a return to Elizabethan performance methods would enable a true understanding of Shakespeare's plays. This was to have a profound influence on modern productions, with directors such as Tyrone Guthrie and John Gielgud adopting his ideals rather than his often idiosyncratic practices. Moreover, his long-held wish for a replica of the Globe Theatre has since become a reality. Poel was also a prolific author and this work, first published in 1913, explores his philosophy by bringing together four articles on the staging of Shakespeare.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library and other partner libraries, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection brings back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

# Shakespeare in the Theatre

WILLIAM POEL



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,  
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108057219](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108057219)

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2013

This edition first published 1913  
This digitally printed version 2013

ISBN 978-1-108-05721-9 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

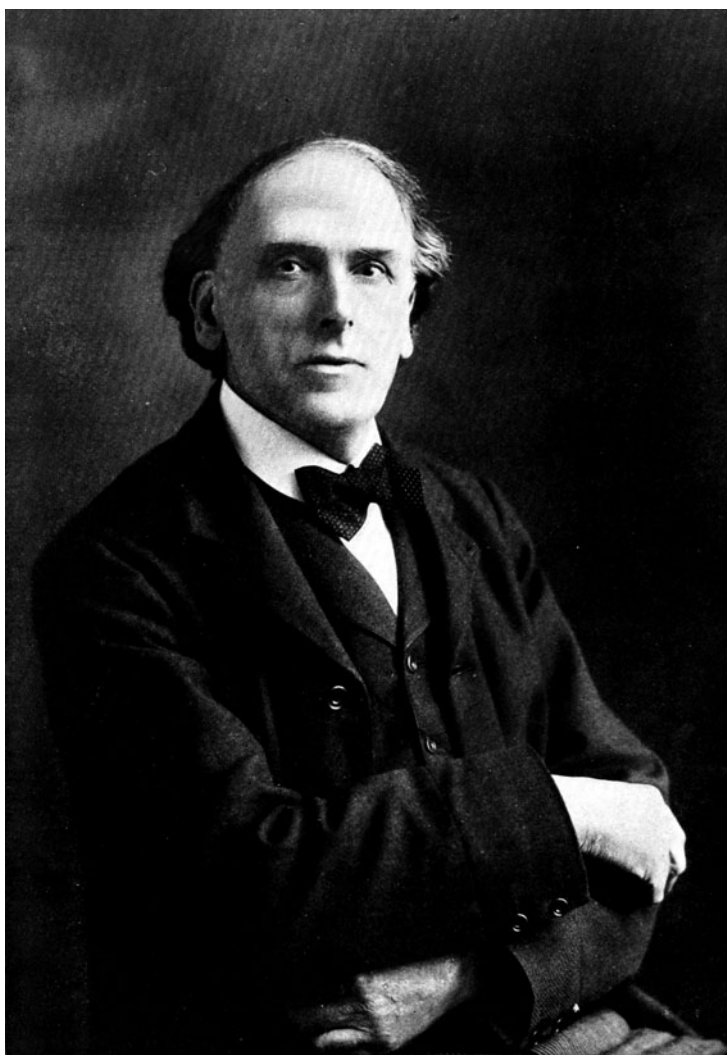
Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## Shakespeare in the Theatre



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)



*Photo. Bassano.*

*Yours truly,  
W<sup>m</sup> Poel.*

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

# SHAKESPEARE IN THE THEATRE

BY

WILLIAM POEL

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE ELIZABETHAN  
STAGE SOCIETY

LONDON AND TORONTO  
SIDGWICK AND JACKSON, LTD.

1913

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---



Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## NOTE

THESE papers are reprinted from the *National Review*, the *Westminster Review*, the *Era*, and the *New Age*, by kind permission of the owners of the copyrights. The articles are collected in one volume, in the hope that they may be of use to those who are interested in the question of stage reform, more especially where it concerns the production of Shakespeare's plays.

W. P.

*May, 1913.*

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-05721-9 - Shakespeare in the Theatre  
William Poel  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

## CONTENTS

### I

#### THE STAGE OF SHAKESPEARE

	PAGE
The Elizabethan Playhouse—The Plays and the Players	3

### II

#### THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Some Mistakes of the Editors—Some Mistakes of the Actors —The Character of Lady Macbeth—Shakespeare's Jew and Marlowe's Christians—The Authors of "King Henry the Eighth"—"Troilus and Cressida"	27
---	----

### III

#### SOME STAGE VERSIONS

"The Merchant of Venice"—"Romeo and Juliet"—"Ham- let"—"King Lear"	119
---	-----

### IV

#### THE NATIONAL THEATRE

The Repertory Theatre—The Elizabethan Stage Society— Shakespeare at Earl's Court—The Students' Theatre— The Memorial Scheme	193
---	-----

INDEX	241
-------	-----