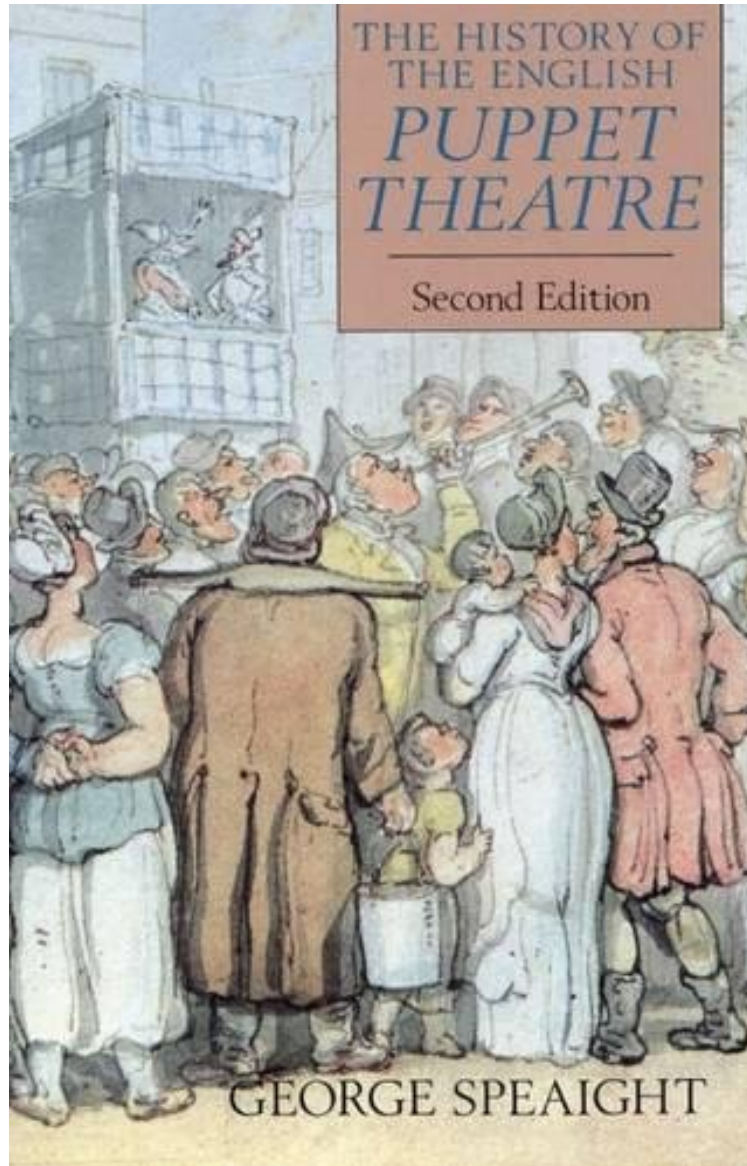


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# The History of the English Puppet Theatre, Second Edition

*George Speaight*

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THEATER. Another one: THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH TOY THEATER. Somehow, the reviewer mixed the wrong title with the wrong book. However, both books are excellent resources for their subject matter, interesting and highly informative. Anyone wanting to research either of these subjects areas should read them. They are the bibles in their field. Highly indexed- with extensive bibliographies and fine historical illustrations and photographs they are first rate books.

A welcome reissue, revised and updated, of the classic work on the English puppet theatre, this detailed and lavishly illustrated book, first published in 1955, shows why puppet theatre in England developed along different lines from that on the Continent, and brings the story up to the television age. In 1938, at the age of 24, George Speaight left his job as a bookseller and went to work as a farmhand at Pigotts, the family settlement of Eric Gill and his group of artist-craftswomen in Buckinghamshire. While there, Speaight decided to write a history of Punch and Judy. The project grew, and during the Second World War he spent his nights working in the Auxiliary Fire Service and his days at the British Museum Reading Room researching Punch and puppets. This book is the result of all his research.

"Mr. Speaight knows well the literature of his subject, and he has a lively, colorful style, and his book contains many rare and delightful illustrations. Speaight brings the general history of puppets down into the twentieth century." James C. McManaway, Shakespeare Quarterly