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| **Your article** |
| Sean O’Casey (1880-1964) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Born into Dublin tenement life in 1880, Sean O’Casey (originally John O’Casey) went on to become one of Ireland’s most important playwrights, best known for his realist Dublin Trilogy, which premiered at the Abbey Theatre and included *The Shadow of a Gunman* (1923), *Juno and the Paycock* (1924), and *The Plough and the Stars* (1926). The four-act *Plough and the Stars* provoked riots on its second night as protestors objected to the play’s critique of Irish nationalism. O’Casey’s close association with the Abbey ended in 1928 when W. B. Yeats rejected his play about the First World War, *The Silver Tassie*, which combined realism and expressionism. O’Casey had moved to England in 1926, where he married the actress Eileen Carey, and he continued to write politically focussed plays for English and American stages. He also wrote political essays and six volumes of autobiography.  O’Casey’s family were working-class Dubliners who struggled financially after his father was seriously injured, and O’Casey started work at age fourteen. This first-hand understanding of gruelling poverty informed his life-long socialism and his involvement in the 1913 Dublin Lockout strike. In *The Plough and the Stars*, his critique of nationalism centered on the disparity between the rhetoric of freedom through blood sacrifice and the hardships of working-class life. |
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| Further reading:  (Kilroy)  (Krause)  (Krause and Lowery, Sean O’Casey: Centenary Essays)  (Moran)  (Murray) |