

Seven Masters of Supernatural Fiction: (Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy)

Edward Wagenknecht



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An unusual grouping of mainly British writers, this insightful study includes some, like Henry James, who are indisputably leaders of the canon regardless of genre, and others, like Algernon Blackwood, who wrote almost exclusively in the supernatural; all, however, were clearly masters of this genre. The author, Edward Wagenknecht, writes from a long lifetime of scholarly study and publishing, thoroughly internalized familiarity with all of the exemplary works chosen for examination, and personal friendship fostered by extensive epistolary intercourse with two of the subjects, Walter de la Mare and Marjorie Bowen.

The seven chapters on the individual writers each examine plot, character, mood, and setting in a traditional sense, sparked by personal observations and unique comparisons. Each study is preceded by a biographical sketch and documented by comprehensive bibliography and notes. In the case of the less studied writers, like M. R. James and Arthur Machen, these chapters may be the fullest accounts ever published. For all, Wagenknecht combines a fan's appreciation with a scholar's insights to produce an important and enjoyable book.

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