PREFACE

The thesis **SELECT PLAYS OF THORNTON WILDER - A STUDY** is the outcome of my research in the department of English, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati. The present thesis has been made to evaluate the three major plays and some short plays written by Thornton Wilder, a famous American playwright. The aim of the study is to bring out the influences in moulding the artistic career of Thornton Wilder as a stage playwright. The focus is on the realization on the true value of life which brings forth an alluring, magnetic grandeur. The topics include the uniqueness of the writer in his humanistic approach to various thematic concerns, dramatic techniques and literary techniques, use of farce, allegory with all the paradoxes.

At this juncture I should mention that I could get only a few Xerox copies of the plays from IACIS formerly ASRC, Hyderabad. I’m grateful to my friend Mr. S. A. A. Zeelani, who helped me procure the texts of the plays from the US.

The present thesis has been conveniently been divided into five chapters. The first chapter subtitled the **VERSATILE LIFE OF THORNTON WILDER** conveys the uniqueness of the playwright who endeavours to emphasize the true value of life inspite of hardships that follow and the soothing anodyne to be followed with all the paradoxes. This chapter also provides various influences Wilder has been influenced that shaped him to be extremely unique from the rest of his contemporary writers.

The second chapter subtitled **THE ADAPTER OF STYLES & ASSUMER OF DISGUISES** deals with the literary techniques employed by Wilder in his major plays and also in the plays like *The Long Christmas Dinner, Pullman Car Haiwatha, The Happy Journey to Trenton and Camden*. The imagery in his
characterization, the theatrical nuances and the technique of allegory adopted by him to express in a peculiar style is presented.

The third chapter subtitled **FANCIFUL & FLOWERY ILLUSIONIST** explains how Thornton Wilder stylized his plays like *The Angel that Troubled the Waters*, *The Trumpet shall Sound*, *Alcestaid* and the other three major plays which upset the conventional trends but yet set new horizons making the audience realize their own perceptions of reality. These enthrall the theatre goers for ages.

The fourth Chapter subtitled, **INTERLOCKING & INTERACTIVE DEVISER OF THEMES** attempts to project the familial themes with their family relationships straining due to psychological disturbances, influences of the great depression. The themes of alienation, socio-psychological dissection of characters trying to struggle for identity and the humanistic tendencies which ultimately project the theme of love for a fellow being is aptly put forth through the major plays *Our Town*, *The Skin of Our Teeth* and *The Matchmaker*.

The fifth chapter subtitled **THE COLOSSAL IDEALIST & NOAH OF THE NEW MILLINEUM** is the summing up of the study showing how Wilders works have been humanistic, eternal and can endure for ages with passionate convictions to begin afresh in life expressing beliefs long established are to be cherished forever.