



TWOPENCE TO EMBARK ON A NEW JOURNEY ACROSS ENGLAND'S NORTH WEST AND WALES

Following a hugely successful tour across Merseyside earlier this year and the announcement of a three-week run at Liverpool's Royal Court Theatre in Autumn 2016, **Twopence to Cross the Mersey** will now extend its journey to venues across England's northwest and North Wales.

The **new stage play version** of *Helen Forrester's Twopence to Cross the Mersey* wowed audiences in Liverpool, Southport, St Helens and Wirral during a six-week tour in Spring 2015.

Due to popular demand, **Twopence to Cross the Mersey** will return to entertain larger audiences in Liverpool for three weeks at the popular **Royal Court**, which has undergone a multi-million pound refurbishment. Then will continue to six venues in **Rhyl, Preston, Southport, Warrington, St Helens** and **Stockport**.

The new version is being staged by **Pulse Records Ltd** in collaboration with producer and stage writer **Rob Fennah** and producer **Bill Elms**. They are joined by director **Bob Eaton**. Full cast details will be announced in the coming months.

Producer and stage writer Rob Fennah said: *"I had always visualised Twopence to Cross the Mersey as a straight play and was thrilled when audience and reviewers alike gave the new adaptation a big thumbs up. Sales at the Royal Court have already got off to a great start and now we will take the show out across the northwest and Wales, this will enable even greater numbers of Helen's readers to come and see her most famous book come to life on stage at their local theatre."*

Rob added *"Earlier this year, Helen's son, Robert Bhatia, and his family, flew in from Canada especially to see it. Robert told me he could feel his mother's presence on the stage and was so captivated by the performance he was moved to tears."*

Helen Forrester's Twopence to Cross the Mersey tells the true story of a young girl and her formerly wealthy family as they are suddenly thrown into poverty during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Leaving behind the nannies, servants and comfortable middle-class life in the South West of England, they uproot their shattered lives and choose Liverpool as the place to start again to rebuild their dreams and fortune. Unbeknown to them however, a terrible shock awaits them.

This stage adaptation is fully authorised by the Helen Forrester estate.

More information can be found at www.twopencetocrossthemersey.com

Follow on Facebook/TwoPenceThePlay or twitter @twopenceplay

FULL TOUR LISTING

TWOPENCE TO CROSS THE MERSEY – The Stage Play

LIVERPOOL

Royal Court Theatre

20 September – 8 October 2016

0151 709 4321

www.royalcourtLiverpool.com

(Now on sale)

RHYL

Pavilion Theatre

12 – 15 October 2016

01745 330000

www.rhylpavilion.co.uk

(On-sale Thu 29 Oct at 10am)

PRESTON

Charter Theatre

19 – 22 October 2016

01772 804444

www.prestonguildhall.com

(On-sale Thu 29 Oct at 10am)

SOUTHPORT

Theatre and Convention Centre

24 – 27 October 2016

0844 871 3021

www.atgtickets.com/southport

(On-sale Thu 5 Nov at 10am) TBC

WARRINGTON

Pyramid & Parr Hall

28 – 29 October 2016

01925 442345

www.pyramidparrhall.com

(On-sale Thu 29 Oct at 10am)

ST HELENS

Theatre Royal

7 – 11 November 2016

01704 756000

www.sthelenstheatreroyal.com

(On-sale Thu 29 Oct at 10am)

STOCKPORT

Plaza Theatre

15 – 16 November 2016

0161 477 7779

www.stockportplaza.co.uk

(On-sale Thu 29 Oct at 10am)

A special Early Booking Offer is in place at all venues as well as generous Group and OAP Rates. Check venue Box Office for details

ENDS

For more information, interviews, images, review or competition ticket requests please contact Bill Elms at Bill Elms Associates on 0151 245 0135 or bill@billelms.com.

EDITORS NOTES

Press review tickets are available on press nights at all venues.

2015 Production Shots: Credit David Munn Photography

More about Helen Forrester

Helen Forrester was born June Huband in Hoylake, Cheshire (now in Merseyside), the eldest of seven children of inept, socialite, middle-class parents who lived on credit. When her father was made bankrupt during the Great Depression, the family was thrown into poverty. Evicted from their comfortable home in an English market town and with nothing more than the clothes they stood up in, the large family took the train to Liverpool where they hoped to rebuild their lives. While Forrester's father searched unsuccessfully for work, the family were forced to live together in a single room. As the eldest child, the 12-year-old Helen was kept away from school to look after her six younger brothers and sisters. For the next few years the family were forced to rely on meagre hand-outs from the parish, and the kindness of strangers. At the age of 14 Forrester rebelled against her life of drudgery and her parents agreed to allow her to attend evening classes to make up for her missed years of education.

Throughout her teenage years, Forrester worked for a charitable organisation in Liverpool and Bootle, which provided background for her novels *Liverpool Daisy*, *A Cuppa Tea* and *An Aspirin*, and *Three Women of Liverpool*. After surviving the Blitzing of Liverpool and losing two consecutive fiancés to the Second World War she met and, in 1950, married Dr. Avadh Bhatia; her life with him in India provided background for *Thursday's Child* and *The Moneylenders of Shahpur*. The couple travelled widely, eventually settling in Edmonton, Canada, in 1955, where Dr. Bhatia became the director of the Theoretical Physics Institute at the University of Alberta. He was a pioneer in electronic transport theory and the study of diffraction of light by ultrasonic waves. The best-selling memoir of her childhood was *Twopence to Cross the Mersey*. It was later turned into a successful musical. Living in Alberta provided background for Forrester's novels *The Latchkey Kid* and *The Lemon Tree*. *Yes Mama*, which takes place mostly in late 19th and early 20th Century Liverpool, also includes a section about Alberta. She died on 24 November 2011 in Edmonton, Alberta.



Maria Lovelady as Helen Forrester
Twopence To Cross The Mersey (The Stage Play) - 2016 - Touring Production





Scriptwriter Rob Fennah with Author Helen Forrester in 1992
Twopence To Cross The Mersey (The Stage Play) - 2016 - Touring Production

