

CHESTER CITY COUNCIL in collaboration with the Cheshire Community Council present, on the Cathedral Green, 27th June to 7th July 1962, the Chester Mystery Plays.

In a new adaptation from the mediaeval text by John Lawlor and Rosemary Anne Sisson. Under the direction of Christopher Ede. Costumes by Sheila Jackson.

The Chester City Council again take up their traditional role in presenting the Chester Mystery Plays, the oldest of the surviving cycles, a responsibility first undertaken in the Fourteenth Century.

The success of the Festival of Britain revival and subsequent productions has proved that after six hundred years the plays still command audiences in the Twentieth Century.

In 1962 a new version will be used, adapted from the mediaeval text by John Lawlor, Professor of English in the University College of North Staffordshire, who has collaborated with the playwright Rosemary Anne Sisson. The aim of the adaptation has been to maintain the style and verse-form of the original while making the language intelligible to modern ears.

The twenty-four short plays of the mediaeval cycle have been condensed into two plays of modern length which will be presented alternately, so that the whole cycle can be seen in two evenings, or when there is a matinee, on one day. The first play "The Promise" starts with the Fall of Lucifer, followed by The Creation, Adam's transgression, the murder of Abel, the story of Noah and the Universal Flood, the sacrifice of Isaac, the first part ending with Balaam and his Ass. The second part is devoted to the Nativity of Christ.

The second play "The Redemption" starts with The Temptation and the first part includes the Raising of Lazarus, the Last Supper, the Betrayal and Trial and culminates in the Crucifixion. The second part opens with the Resurrection and leads to the Ascension, while the cycle ends with the Last Judgment.

The 1962 production will contain several scenes from the cycle which have not been performed since 1600. While the Old Testament story is told with native humour and startling humanity, the New Testament reveals great tenderness and beauty, and the Passion of Our Lord seems to have inspired the mediaeval authors to the most beautiful verse in the cycle. In this the simple verse has a deep understanding and dramatic insight.

The production is being staged on the Abbey Green against the background of the Cathedral.

Chester Mystery Plays

The plays will be directed by Christopher Ede, who brought them to life in 1951 in the first revival for three and a half centuries. He will still have round him many of the players who have built a tradition in the Twentieth Century comparable with that which bound together their mediaeval forerunners in the City of Chester.

All seats are in a covered grandstand.

PRESS COMMENTS

"The production by Christopher Ede was extremely impressive. He let the audience float on the full tide of simple and poetic narrative which carried the play from the Garden of Eden to the sacrifice of Isaac."—NEWS CHRONICLE.

"I saw 'In the Beginning,' which goes from Eden to the Ark and to Abraham and Isaac: shrewd and simple, warm with life, charged with a slapping folk-humour, and pathos that is arrow-true. The Cycle is, in another sense, miraculous; it binds the centuries." J. G. Trewin, SUNDAY OBSERVER.

"The highly stylised Ark, the sending forth of the black wooden raven and the white wooden dove, the handling of the doomed crowd who jeer at Father Noah, the gay and characterful costumes by Sheila Jackson, all build up a vigorous impression of mediaeval ideas adapted for a later telling."—MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

Details of Performances

EVENINGS AT 8 p.m.

Wednesday 27th June and 4th July	"THE REDEMPTION"
Thursday 28th June and 5th July	"THE PROMISE"
Friday 29th June and 6th July	"THE REDEMPTION"
Saturday 30th June and 7th July	"THE REDEMPTION"
Monday 2nd July	"THE PROMISE"
Tuesday 3rd July	"THE REDEMPTION"

MATINEES AT 3 p.m.

Wednesday 27th June and 4th July	"THE PROMISE"
Saturday 30th June and 7th July	"THE PROMISE"

Prices of Admission

EACH PERFORMANCE 10/- 7/6 5/- and 3/6

A reduction of 5% will be allowed on block bookings of not less than 30 seats.

Booking Arrangements

Advance Booking Office will be open from 1st January, 1962.

Box Office for personal bookings will open at:

Miss Gatherall, 5 St. Werburgh Street, Chester Tel. 23400, on 16th May, 1962-9 a.m. to 5-30 p.m. Monday to Saturday, (9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesdays).

There is a Ticket Order Form overleaf.

1962

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Chester Mystery Plays

ADVANCE POSTAL BOOKING from 1st JANUARY, 1962
BOX OFFICE for personal bookings from 16th MAY, 1962

Postal Booking to be made with this form should be sent with a cheque, postal order or money order and a stamped addressed envelope to:

Miss Hilda Gatherall, 3 St. Werburgh Street, Chester

Cheques and orders should be crossed "& Co.," and made payable to Chester Corporation. Bookings will be dealt with in order of Receipt. Since the number of seats is limited, bookings made without remittance cannot be held longer than 48 hours. Tickets once booked cannot be changed nor can money be refunded.

Ticket Order Form

Please forward tickets as follows:

Name of Play Date and time of Performance
(For particulars see overleaf)

"THE PROMISE" seats at

"THE REDEMPTION" seats at

Total £ : :

I enclose *Cheque/Postal Order/Money Order

value £ : :

Name (block capitals)

Address (block capitals)

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Signed Date

* Delete as necessary

Chester

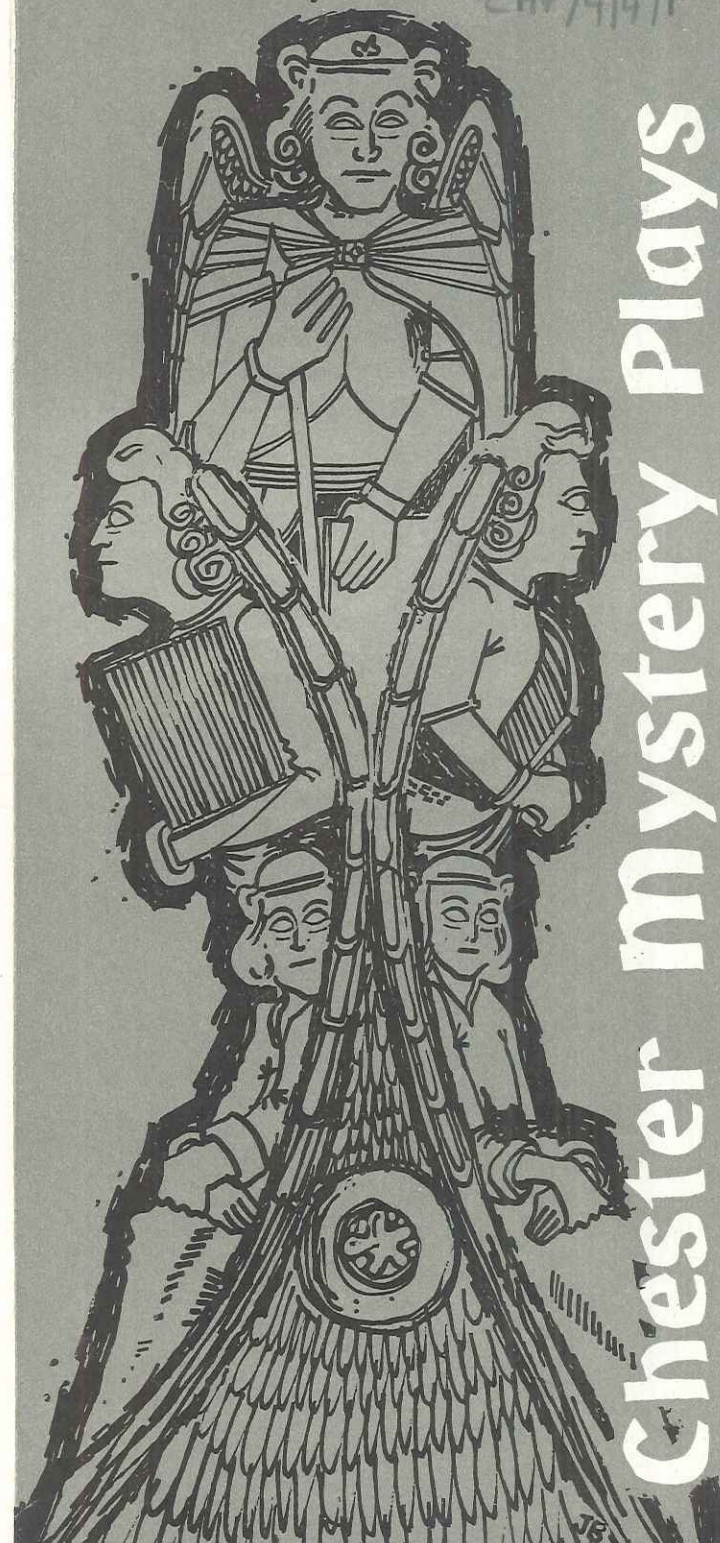
an ideal Holiday centre

CHESTER, the historic county town of Cheshire occupies an outstanding position among the ancient cities of Britain. Not only is it one of the very few places where the complete circuit of walls has been preserved in its entirety, but the main streets are lined by the famous Rows. These mediaeval galleries above street-level provide an additional line of shops and in architectural form can be matched in no other city in the world.

The Walls of Chester, nearly two miles in circumference, form an elevated promenade from which many fine views of the city and surrounding countryside can be enjoyed. Part of the North Wall and the whole of the East Wall are of Roman foundation. At the North-West angle are two towers, Bonewaldesthorpe's Tower and the Water Tower, built in 1322.

Chester Cathedral, originally a Benedictine Abbey, built shortly after the Norman Conquest, stands within the City Walls in a setting of considerable beauty. Its early Monastic buildings include the Refectory, the Great Cellar, Chapter House and the Cloisters. Opposite the Town Hall is the Abbey Gateway (built in 1377) which leads to Abbey Square and the Cathedral Refectory and Cloisters. It was outside the Abbey Gateway that the Chester Mystery Plays were first acted on carts; each play as it gave way to its successor being re-enacted in various parts of the City so that everybody might see the episodes from Bible History played before them.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT
CHESTER, send to
DEPARTMENT MP, TOWN HALL, CHESTER
for a copy of the
ILLUSTRATED GUIDE BOOK, PRICE 2/-



Chester Mystery Plays