

Video Transcript

by Learning Service

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Title: 360° Liverpool Playhouse (a brief history).

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Verbatim Transcript

>> Allan: Let's start out on Williamson Square, because lots of people have come to the city now get to see that what is, if I'm going to be honest, rather a rundown area with shop facades and really only one or two buildings that are actually from Victorian times, many of sorts of lost their identity in that sense and they're now very modern, and some might argue pretty ugly buildings.

So, the square itself, in the 18th century, it only had buildings on the north side and these were residential properties and as everybody knows about Liverpool its trade and its wealth, all came from the port and, and from the trade that took place across the Atlantic and so it's by and large wealthy merchants that lived on that north side of, of the square if you can call it square as such. With the Theatre Royal in decline and the Playhouse growing in popularity, this was a theatre that attempted to actually cater for all classes. It's interesting to note, that when you look at the wages and salaries of ordinary folk at the time, it's hard to imagine how they could have afforded to go to the theatre at all because, I was looking somewhere over the weekend, and I read that the average salary of a maid or a servant was five pounds...and that's a year.

So, if we imagine coming into the entrance area, into the theatre the original entrance area which is a beautiful, it's a lovely historical thing that we've managed to retain, and they have, you know, it's a pretty special place when you walk through that. What you see is that there's two ticket boxes, two box offices and one was intended for the gentlemen, and they would go to the box office and present their tickets or purchase the tickets, maybe even have servants purchase the tickets for them and then they would walk straight through, which is now a wall but they would walk

straight in to the theatre, behind me here, right at the very back of the stalls, which is the lowest level of this theatre. So, the gentleman would come into the stalls and this would be their area.

End.