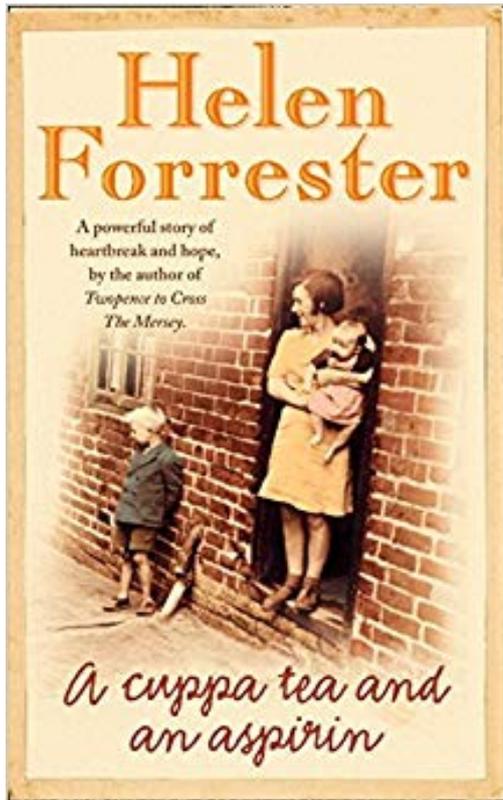


## A Cuppa Tea and an Aspirin *by* Helen Forrester



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**Author:** Helen Forrester

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A powerful new novel, heart-breaking but ultimately uplifting, from the author of the classic *Twopence to Cross The Mersey*. Life in a Liverpool tenement block during the Great Depression is a grim struggle for Martha Connelly and her poverty-stricken family, as every day renews the threat of homelessness, hunger and disease. Family warmth remains constant however, despite the misery and disquiet of the slum surroundings, and the indomitable neighbourhood puts up a relentless fight for survival. Helen Forrester's poignant novel relays bleakness and hardships, but celebrates also the spirit of unified hope and the restorative values of the close-knit community.



## Reviews of the *A Cuppa Tea and an Aspirin* by Helen Forrester

### Lightseeker

I had read Ms. Forrester's other 2 autobiographies and this one is a sad/cheery/forlorn/uplifting as they were. Her life story is amazing.

**Narim**

I love to read British historical novels and this is one of the best. I have read this 3-4 times it is such an engaging story.

**Terr**

I was appalled by the poverty of these Irish immigrants in Liverpool. We forget what the depression years did to large sections of the industrialised world. Much worse to be poor in a city. World War 2 provided employment for men and women, and thereby accelerated the possibility of greater freedom for women.. This shift from rural to urban living is what the developing world is experiencing now,. A process that took place in Europe over a few hundred years is expected to be resolved in one generation. The writer has experienced the hunger and the cold herself. She tells the story with simplicity and authenticity.

**Arcanefist**

great reading of old time Liverpool and fantastic I found it on Amazon for only a penny..I recommend this one

**Phenade**

I totally re-lived a lot of my past through this book - wonderfully written, my tears flowed, It came from an era that, hopefully, will not be repeated. This book I will re-read in about a year from now! - just to see that it still has the same impact!

**MarF**

Very detailed novel set in late 1930's court area of Liverpool. After about 100 pages, I had to give up because I was getting nauseated.

**Funny duck**

Living in a court in one room in 1939, with nine kids and a husband who tries to get hired twice a day for the tides, Martha Connolly has no way to better her conditions. She buys old sheets and tears them into square rags to sell for cloths, and her few pence barely cover food. When she has no food she goes around the charities of Liverpool, hoping for a pot of soup to carry home and some bread. They have to meet rent and coal, and several families use one toilet. Martha has one child in a TB sanatorium and one boy away at sea, and keeps her daughter home from school to help hemming handkerchiefs and mind the youngest child.

Life was cold and tough and dirty and people did not wash, carrying vermin. There was never enough food and kids did almost unthinkable things to get treats. Boots had to be begged. With a large population of workers and more desperate men coming from Ireland all the time, labour was cheap.

Then the war came along and everyone's life changed. Liverpool was a prime target as a port, and was bombed for a solid week. Young people got work and money, but at a terrible cost.

Looking back over her life from a care home where she has been put after falling and hurting her hip, Martha bemoans the fact that the family got broken up and kids moved abroad for work, others just dropped her when they married up in the world. This is a sad tale and it makes us grateful for the better conditions we have today. I found it readable and very evocative of the hard times

endured in many cities.

This is a realistic and very well observed chronicle of the lives of the deprived in Liverpool throughout the 1930's. Squalor abounds and many can think only the present; there being no future for them but, by hook or by crook, to put bread on the table.

Inspired by her faith, Martha struggles to overcome the squalor and yet, despite all the hardship, neighbours try to help each other and, for me, it was in the emergence of community under duress that the story is, ultimately, uplifting.

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