

December 1670

THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA BY THE SPANIARDS. ALMANZOR AND ALMAHIDE; or, The Conquest of Granada. The Second Part. [By John Dryden.] Edition of 1672: Prologue to the First Part. Spoken by Mrs Ellen Gwyn in a broad-brim'd hat, and wast-belt. Mahomet Boabdelin – Kynaston; Prince Abdalla – Lydall; Abdelmelech – Mohun; Zulema – Harris; Abenamar – Cartwright; Selin – Wintershall; Ozmyne – Beeston; Hamet – Watson; Gomel – Powell; Almanzor – Hart; Ferdinand – Littlewood; Duke of Arcos – Bell; Almahide – Mrs Ellen Gwyn; Lyndaraxa – Mrs Marshall; Benzayda – Mrs Bowtell; Esperanza – Mrs Reeve; Halyma – Mrs Eastland; Isabella – Mrs James. Epilogue [possibly spoken by Charles Hart]. Prologue to the Second Part of the Conquest of Granada [possibly spoken by Michael Mohun]. Epilogue to the Second Part.

Bridges

COMMENT. The King's Company. The date of the first performance is not known, but a letter—see 2 Jan. 1670/1—indicates that the first part had been acted before that date and that Part II was to be shortly staged. The point of the Prologue spoken by Ellen Gwyn seems to have derived from an incident at Dover (see Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 29) in May 1670, when James Nokes attired himself in a ridiculous fashion, including “Broad wast Belts.” The speakers of the Epilogue and the Prologue to the Second Part are mentioned in Sir William Haward's MS (Bodl. MS Don. b., pp. 248–49); see *The Poems of John Dryden*, ed. James Kinsley (Oxford, 1958), IV, 1848–49.

In Part I a song “Beneath a myrtle shade,” with music by John Bannister, is in *Choice Songs and Ayres*, First Book, 1673. Another, “Wherever I am,” with music by Alphonso Marsh, is in the same collection, as is also “How unhappy a lover am I,” the music by Nicholas Staggins.

Mrs John Evelyn to Mr Bohun, ca. Jan. 1670/1: Since my last to you I have seen “The Siege of Grenada,” a play so full of ideas that the most refined romance I ever read is not to compare with it; love is made so pure, and valour so nice, that one would image it designed for an Utopia rather than our stage. I do not quarrel with the poet, but admire one born in the decline of morality should be able to feign such exact virtue; and as poetic fiction has been instructive in former ages, I wish this the same event in ours. As to the strict law of comedy I dare not pretend to judge: some think the division of the story is not so well if it could all have been comprehended in the day's actions (*The Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn*, ed. William Bray, IV, 25). According to John Evelyn—see 9 Feb. 1670/1—Robert Streeter did some of the scenes for this play. In the Preface to *The Fatal Discovery*, ca. February 1697/8, George Powell, in discussing revivals of Dryden's plays, stated: In relation to our reviving his *Almanzor* . . . very hard crutching up what Hart and Mohun could not prop.

THE HUMORISTS. [By Thomas Shadwell.] Edition of 1671: Prologue Written by a Gentleman of Quality. No actors' names. Epilogue. [The dancer referred to in Shadwell's Preface may well have been Mrs Johnson.]

Saturday 10
LIF

COMMENT. The Duke's Company. This performance is on the L. C. lists at Harvard. See Van Lennep, “Plays on the English Stage,” pp. 16–17. This performance may have been the premiere. Shadwell, in his Preface, implies that it was acted six days. As Saturday was a day frequently chosen for a first showing and as the play was certainly given again on 14 Dec. 1670, the sequence of performances which follow in this Calendar is based on the assumption that Saturday 10 Dec. 1670 was the first day, Wednesday 14 Dec. 1670 the fourth day of acting.

The Preface: This Play . . . came upon the Stage with all the disadvantages imaginable: First, I was forced, after I had finish'd it, to blot out the main design