

Mich. Lee; Friendall – Mountford; Ruffle – Bright; Musick Master – Harris; DL  
 Mrs Friendall – Mrs Barry; Mrs Sightly – Mrs Bracegirdle; Mrs Wittwoud –  
 Mrs Mountford; Mrs Teazall – Mrs Cory; Betty – Mrs Richardson. Epilogue,  
 Spoken by Mrs Barry.

COMMENT. The United Company. The date of the premiere is not known, but the *Gentleman's Journal*, January 1691/2, suggests that it was first given in December 1691, although the tendency of this journal to be dated one month and appear in the next month makes the interpretation of its information difficult: We have had a new Comedy this last Month, call'd *The Wives Excuse: or Cuckolds make themselves*: It was written by Mr Southern, who made that call'd *Sir Antbony Love*, which you and all the Town lik'd so well. I will send you *The Wives Excuse*, as soon as it comes out in Print, which will be very speedily: And tho' the Town hath not been so kind to this last, as to the former, I do not doubt but you will own that it will bear a Reading; which some that meet with a better Fate too often do not; some that must be granted to be good Judges commend the Purity of its Language (pp. 51-52).

Henry Purcell composed the music for this work. One song, "Corinna I excuse thy face," the words (according to the Edition of 1692) by Tho. Cheek, the music by Henry Purcell, but without the singer's name, is in *The Banquet of Musick*, The Sixth and Last Book, 1692 (licensed 17 Feb. 1691/2). "Say, cruel Amoret," sung by Mountfort; "Hang this whining way," sung by Mrs Butler; and "Ingrateful lover," the words by Major General Sackville, are in *Joyful Cuckoldom*, ca. 1695. See also Purcell's *Works*, Purcell Society, XXI (1917), xxvi-xxix.

#### CONCERT.

COMMENT. Newdigate newsletters (Folger Shakespeare Library), 5 Dec. 1691: The same night y<sup>e</sup> Morocco Ambasadr with all his retinue was at the great musick house in Covent Garden. [I owe the transcription of this item to Professor John Harold Wilson.]

Saturday 5  
BG

COMMENT. Luttrell, *A Brief Relation*, II, 313, 17 Dec. 1691: Last Tewsdays [i.e., Wednesday] a great disorder at the playhouse, where the lord Grey of Ruthin and viscount Longueville were knockt downe, and 2 other lords puncht with the butt ends of muskets; they complained of the affront to his majestie, who referred them to the house of lords, where they made their application yesterday; and the lords thereon desired his majestie would be pleased to command the suspending acting of playes till further order.

Wednesday 16  
[DL or DG]

Newdigate newsletters, 17 Dec. 1691: Last night the Kings play House was shut up upon complaints given in to the King by the Lord Grey Viscount Longville and other Lords that they had received severall Affronts from and were badly used by y<sup>e</sup> door keepers, and 'tis said the future Acting is suspended till further order (Wilson, "Theatre Notes from the Newdigate Newsletters," p. 82). See also HMC, 13th Report, Appendix Five, pp. 464-65.

COMMENT. Luttrell, *A Brief Relation*, II, 315: The duke of Norfolke was abused in the fray at the playhouse: the house of lords examined the same, and sent for captain Primrose, who commanded the party of soldiers there, who excused himselfe therefrom: one of the bishops moved to suppress the playhouse, it being a nursery of lewdness, but the temporall lords were against it, but directed the lord chamberlain to send his warrant to suspend them from acting till further order: which was accordingly done.

Thursday 17

COMMENT. Luttrell, *A Brief Relation*, II, 316: The players have begg'd pardon of the lords abused there, and have leave to act again on Monday. [The order for reopening is in L. C. 5/150, p. 345 (Nicoll, *Restoration Drama*, p. 361).] Newdigate Newsletters, 19 Dec. 1691: We heare that the Play house will be againe opened

Saturday 19

- Saturday 19* this Night or on Monday & will Continue to Act as formerly and tis S. the Sentinell who dischargd his Musquet was tryed by a Court Martial and acquitted (Wilson, "Theatre Notes from the Newdigate Newsletters," p. 82).
- Tbursday 31* [DL or DG] THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR. [By William Shakespeare.] *Cast not known*.  
COMMENT. The United Company. *Gentleman's Journal*, p. 56, Jan. 1691/2: *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, an Old Play, hath been reviv'd, and was play'd the Last Day of the Year.

## January 1692

- DL THE MARRIAGE-HATER MATCHED. [By Thomas D'Urfey.] Edition of 1692: L. Brainless – Bowman; Sir Philip Freewit – Monfort; Sir Lawr. Limber – Sandford; Capt. Darewell – Hodson; Myn Here Van Grin – Leigh; Bias – Bright; Solon – Dogget; Callow – Bowen; MacBuffle – Trefuse; Thummum – Smeaton; Splutter – Colly [Cibber]; Lady Subtle – Mrs Barry; Lady Bumfiddle – Mrs Cory; Phaebe – Mrs Bracegirdle; Berenice – Mrs Lassels; La Pupsey – Mrs Butler; Margery – Mrs Lawson. Prologue, Mr Monford Enters, meets Mrs Bracegirdle dressed in Boy's Cloaths, who seeing her [him], Endeavours to go back, but he taking hold of her, speaks. Epilogue. Spoken by La Pupsey, with her Lapdog in Masquerade.

COMMENT. The United Company. The exact date of the first production is not known, but the play was entered in the *Term Catalogues*, February 1691/2, and mentioned in the *Gentleman's Journal*, February 1691/2 (licensed 12 February 1691/2). In all probability, it was first acted not later than January 1691/2. The music to one song, "As soon as the Chaos," was composed by Henry Purcell. See his *Works*, Purcell Society, xx (1916), xvii. Two songs—"Bonny lad prithee lay thy pipe down," with music by Tollet; "Great Jove once made love like a bull," with music by Mountfort—are in *The Banquet of Musick*, The Sixth and Last Book, 1692.

Dedication, Edition of 1692: Having at last so well acquitted it self on the Stage (tho' the thronging, imperfect Action, and worse than all, the faulty length, which I will never be guilty of again, render'd it little Diversion the first day).

A Letter to Mr D'Urfey [by Charles Gildon], Edition of 1692: If there be any fault in this Play, 'tis that which few are guilty of; that is, there are too many good Characters, too full of Humour, a very pardonable failing, which only proceeds from Variety, the life of Pleasure and Wit, tho' that gave it the disadvantage of seeming too long the first days Acting, tho' the Stage's being throng'd with Spectators, did not a little contribute to the imperfect Acting of it, which accidental Misfortunes concurring with the Endeavours of an opposite Faction, must needs have damn'd it, had it not by the Force and Vigour of its own Worthy, rais'd it self the second day with the general Applause of all that saw it. . . . But the *Marriage-bater* went further, and in spite of all the disadvantages it labour'd under of Action and Audience, pleas'd on, after several times Repetition.

See also *Poeta Infamis; or, A Poet not worth Hanging* (1692) for a variety of comments upon this play. *London Mercury*, 26 Feb. 1691/2: Query 4. Whether in Justice he [D'Urfey] is not obliged to present Mr Dogget (who acted Solon to so much Advantage) with half the Profit of his Third Day, since in the Opinions of most Persons, the good Success of his Comedy was half owing to that admirable Actor? Query 5. Whether, if there be any Wit in bringing a Person upon the Stage with an extravagantly broad-brimmed Hat, and a Muff of the same Size, so it will