

## April 1693

Monday 10–Saturday 15

PASSION WEEK

Mid-April  
DL

THE RICHMOND HEIRESS; or, A Woman Once in the Right. [By Thomas D'Urfey.] Edition of 1693: Sir Charles Romance – Freeman; Sir Quibble Quere – Bright; Tom Romance – Powel; Dr Guiacum – Sandford; Frederick – Williams; Rice ap Shinken – Bowman; Dick Stockjobb – Underhill; Hotspur – Hudson [Hodgson]; Quickwit – Dogget; Cummington – Bowen; Fulvia – Mrs Bracegirdle; Sophronia – Mrs Barry; Mrs Stockjobb – Mrs Bowman; Madam Squeamish – Mrs Knight; Marmalette – Mrs Lee. Prologue Spoken by Mr Dogget, with a Fools Cap with Bells on his Head. Epilogue.

COMMENT. The United Company. The date of the first performance is not precisely known, but by 9 May 1693 it had been acted four times (see Dryden's letter, below); on the other hand, the *Gentleman's Journal*, February 1692/3 (issued in March) had stated that D'Urfey's new farce would not appear until after Easter. Hence, it may well have been the first new play after Passion Week.

A dialogue, "Behold, the man with that gigantick might," the music by Henry Purcell and sung by Mr Reading and Mrs Ayliff, is in *Orpheus Britannicus*, 1698. See Purcell's *Works*, Purcell Society, XXI (1917), viii–x. A dialogue, "By these pigsnes eyes that stars do seem," the music by John Eccles and sung by Dogget and Mrs Bracegirdle, is in *Joyful Cuckoldom*, ca. 1695. Another, "Stubborn church division, folly, and ambition," to a Ground of Mr Solomon Eccles, is in *Tbesaurus Musicus*, 1694. And "Maiden fresh as a rose," the verse by D'Urfey and sung by Pack, but not printed in the play, is in *The Merry Musician*, I (1716), 56–57. This last song may have been for a later revival.

*Gentleman's Journal*, April 1693 (issued in May 1693): Since my last we have had a Comedy by Mr Durfey; 'tis called the *Richmond Heiress or a Woman once in the right* (p. 130). Dryden to Walsh, 9 May 1693: Durfey has brought another farce upon the Stage: but his luck has left him: it was sufferd but foure dayes; and then kickd off for ever. Yet his Second Act, was wonderfully diverting; where the scene was in Bedlam: & Mrs Bracegirdle and Solon [Dogget] were both mad: the Singing was wonderfully good, And the two whom I nam'd, sung better than Redding and Mrs Ayloff, whose trade it was: at least our partiality carryed it for them. The rest was woefull stuff, & concluded with Catcalls; for which the two noble Dukes of Richmond and St Albans were chief managers (*The Letters of John Dryden*, pp. 52–53).

Late April  
DL

A VERY GOOD WIFE. [By George Powell.] Edition of 1693: Prologue, By Mr Congreve, Written for Mr Hains, and spoken by him. Epilogue, Spoken by Mrs Knight. Courtwitt – Powell; Wellborn – Hodgson; Bonavent – Alexander [Verbruggen]; Squeezwit – Bowen; Venture – Bright; Hickman – Trafusis; Sneaksby – Hains; Aminadab – Cibber; Jeremy – Lee; Crack – Lawson; Annabella – Mrs Mountfort; Widow Lacy – Mrs Knight; Carroll – Mrs Lassels; Mrs Sneaksby – Mrs Lee.

COMMENT. The United Company. The date of the first performance is not precisely known, but the *Gentleman's Journal*, April 1693 (issued in May) states that it followed D'Urfey's comedy: And since that [*The Richmond Heiress*] another by Mr George Powell, call'd, *a very good Wife*, which hath already been acted five times (p. 130). It is likely that Powell's comedy first appeared late in April or very early in May.

- Dedication, Edition of 1693: The unexpected Success of this Play. Late April  
DL  
*A Comparison between the Two Stages* (p. 16): *Ramble*: The next? *Sullen*: *A very good Wife*. *Ramble*: That's almost a Solaecism: whose is't? *Sullen*: Oh an excellent Author's! one George Powell's, the Player. *Ramble*: What was it's Fate? *Sullen*: Damn'd, damn'd, as it deserv'd.
- CONCERT. A song, "Celebrate this Festival," the text by Nahum Tate, the music by Henry Purcell, is in *Comes Amoris*, 1693. Sunday 30  
At Court  
 COMMENT. This celebration of the Queen's Birthday presumably was given on 30 April, her birthday. The music in the Royal Society of Music gives the singers as Mrs Ayliff, The Boy, Turner, Snow, Edwards, Howell, Bowman, Damascene, Bouchier, Williams, Woodeson, Roberts. See Purcell's *Works*, Purcell Society, XXIV (1926), ii.

## May 1693

- THE PROPHECESS. [By Thomas Betterton.] *Cast not known*. DG  
 COMMENT. The United Company. This play was probably revived in May or June 1693. Two songs for it—one sung by Mrs Ayliff, the composer not named; another, the music by Ackroyde, but no singer named—are in *Gentleman's Journal*, June 1693 (advertised in *London Gazette*, 13 July 1693). These songs presumably were a part of a revived version not long preceding their publication.
- THE FEMALE VERTUOSOS. [By Thomas Wright.] Edition of 1693: Prologue, DG  
 Written by Mr Doggett, and spoken by him. Sir Maurice Meanwell – Underhill; Meanwell – Hodgson; Sir Timothy Witless – Bright; Wittless – Doggett; Sir Maggot Jingle – Bowman; Clerimont – Powell; Trap – Bowen; Bully – Hains; Lady Meanwell – Mrs Leigh; Lovewitt – Mrs Knight; Mariana – Mrs Bracegirdle; Catchat – Mrs Mountfort; Lucy – Mrs Rogers. The Epilogue, Spoken by Mrs Catchat.  
 COMMENT. The United Company. The date of the première is not certain, but reference to it in the *Gentleman's Journal*, May 1693 (issued in June 1693), suggests that it appeared in May: We have had since my last a new Comedy called, *The Female Vertuosos*, something in it was borrowed from Moliere's *Femmes Savantes*, and as it hath Wit and Humour, it cannot but please in the perusal, as in the representation (p. 168). One song, "Love thou art best of human joys," to words by Anne, Countess of Winchelsea, was set by Henry Purcell.
- CONCERT. At Court  
 COMMENT. Luttrell, *A Brief Relation*, III, 88, 2 May 1693: The queen went lately on board of Mr Shores pleasure boat against Whitehall, and heard a consort of musick, vocall and instrumental; it was built for entertainment, having 24 sash windows, and 4 banquetting houses on top.
- COMMENT. Dryden to Walsh, 9 May 1693: The play I am now writing is a feignd story: & a Tragicomedy of the nature of the Spanish Fryar: And I am sure the tale of it is likely to be diverting enough. I have plotted it all; & written two Acts of it. This morning I had their chief Comedian whom they call Solon [Dogget], with me; to consult with him concerning his own Character: & truly I thinke he has the best Understanding of any man in the Playhouse (*Letters of John Dryden*, p. 54). Tuesday 9

Wednesday 10  
A FAST DAY