

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.