

Troilus and Cressida. By John Dryden. When this play was revived at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields on 28 Oct. 1697, the bill bore the heading: Not Acted these 16 Years. Whether or not the phrase "these 16 Years" is taken literally, it probably indicates a revival early in this decade.

Venus and Adonis. A Masque by Dr. John Blow. This work consists of a Prologue and three acts, and a MS score is in BM Add. Mss. 22,100: Cupid – Lady Mary Tudor; Venus – Mrs Davys. The MS states that this was an entertainment for the King (Charles II, presumably); hence, it must have been given before his death on 6 Feb. 1684/5. Since the volume in which the earliest known MS appears is dated 1682, it is entered into this season. See *Venus and Adonis*, ed. A. Lewis, 1949.

September 1681

THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES, AND TEGUE O DIVELLY THE IRISH PRIEST. [By Thomas Shadwell.] Edition of 1682: Prologue. No actors' names. Epilogue, by Mrs Barry and Tegue. [Mrs Barry probably acted Isabella; Anthony Leigh, Teague]. DG

COMMENT. The Duke's Company. The date of the first performance is not known, but as the play was entered in the *Term Catalogues*, November 1681, it was probably first given in September, certainly not later than October. Downes (*Roscious Anglicanus*, pp. 38–39): Being a kind of Opera, having several Machines of Flyings for the Witches, and other Diverting Contrivances in't: All being well perform'd, it prov'd beyond Expectation; very Beneficial to the Poet and Actors.

Edition of 1682, To the Reader: I heard that great opposition was design'd against the Play (a month before it was acted) . . . The Master of the Revels (who I must confess used me civilly enough) Licenc'd it at first with little alteration: But there came such an Alarm to him . . . that upon a Review, he expunged all that you see differently Printed, except about a dozen lines which he struck out at the first reading. . . . I had so numerous an assembly of the best sort of men, who stood so generously in my defence, for the first three days, that they quash'd all the vain attempts of my Enemies, the Inconsiderable Party of Hissers yielded, and the Play lived in spite of them.

October 1681

MITHRIDATES, KING OF PONTUS. [By Nathaniel Lee.] *Cast not known*. For a previous cast, see February 1677/8. A Prologue spoken at Mithridates King of Pontus, the First Play Acted at the Theatre Royal this Year, 1681. [Written by John Dryden.] Epilogue [written by Dryden and spoken by Goodman and Mrs Cox]. Mid-October DL

COMMENT. The King's Company. The exact date of this performance is not known, but the Prologue refers to "After a four Months Fast," suggesting that the theatre did not reopen until the end of the Long Vacation (24 Oct. 1681 is the beginning of Michaelmas Term). The Epilogue also seems to refer to events at