

- DL a première preceding Easter; in addition, the large number of minor actors suggests a Lenten performance, possibly in February, certainly no later than early March. One song, “So fair young Caelia’s charms,” the music by Daniel Purcell and sung by Mr Magnus’s Boy, was printed separately in 1697.  
*A Comparison Between the Two Stages* (1702), p. 18: *Triumphs of Vertue*, tho’ I think this no ill Play, yet ’twas Damn’d.
- Thursday 4*  
DL, LIF COMMENT. James Brydges, *Diary*: I went to y<sup>e</sup> playhouse in Covent Garden, & after that to y<sup>e</sup> playhouse in Lincolns inn fields (Huntington MS St 26).
- Saturday 6*  
At Court LOVE FOR LOVE. [By William Congreve.] See 30 April 1695.  
 COMMENT. *Post Boy*, 2–4 Feb. 1696/7: On Monday the King visited the Princess of Denmark and invited her to Whitehall on Saturday next, it being her Royal Highnesses Birth Day, and his Majesty has been pleased to give the Right Honourable the Lord Chamberlaine Orders to have the Play called *Love for Love*, written by Mr Congreve, Acted there the better to Celebrate the Day.  
*Post Boy*, 6–9 Feb. 1696/7: Last Saturday being the Anniversary of her Royal Highness the Princess Ann of Denmark’s birth, . . . at night the King was pleased to Entertain her with a fine Comedy, call’d *Love for Love*, Written by Mr Congreve, Acted by his Majesty’s servants at Whitehall, where the Court appeared very gay and splendid, suitable to the occasion. [Somewhat similar references appear also in Luttrel, *A Brief Relation*, IV, 180, and *The Flying Post*, 6–9 Feb. 1696/7.]
- Monday 15*  
DL, LIF COMMENT. James Brydges, *Diary*: I went to y<sup>e</sup> Playhouse in Covent Garden, where I met Mr Knight, after w<sup>ch</sup> I went to y<sup>r</sup> other playhouse, & there saw S<sup>r</sup> Charles Barinton, & M<sup>r</sup> Mildmay; before y<sup>e</sup> play was done, I came hence home (Huntington MS St 26).
- Friday 19*  
LIF COMMENT. James Brydges, *Diary*: To y<sup>e</sup> Grecian Coffee house, where meeting M<sup>r</sup> Pits, wee went together to y<sup>e</sup> playhouse in Lincoln Inn Fields (Huntington MS St 26).
- Saturday 20*  
LIF THE MOURNING BRIDE. [By William Congreve.] Edition of 1697: Prologue, Spoken by Mr Betterton. Epilogue, Spoken by Mrs Bracegirdle. Manuel – Verbruggen; Gonzalez – Sanford; Garcia – Scudamour; Perez – Freeman; Alonzo – Arnold; Osmyn – Betterton; Heli – Boman; Selim – Baily; Almeria – Mrs Bracegirdle; Zara – Mrs Barry; Leonora – Mrs Boman.  
 COMMENT. Betterton’s Company. The date of the first performance is not certain, but the evidence points to this day as a strong possibility. Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus* (p. 44) states that it was given thirteen days consecutively, and John Coke (see 16 March 1696/7) states that it was acted “till Saturday” (16 March 1696/7). If the tragedy was acted on Wednesdays but not Fridays, as was often the practice in Lent, and if the farce alluded to for Saturday, 16 March 1696/7, comprised the entire program, this day was probably the première. The following sequence of performances is based on these premises.  
 Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 44: *The Mourning Bride* . . . had such Success, that it continu’d Acting Uninterrupted 13 Days together. Gildon, *English Dramatick Poets*, p. 23: This Play had the greatest Success, not only of all Mr Congreve’s, but indeed of all the Plays that ever I can remember on the English Stage, excepting some of the incomparable Otway’s.  
 Aston, *A Brief Supplement* (in Cibber, *Apology*, II, 302): His [Betterton’s] Favourite, Mrs Barry, claims the next in Estimation. They were both never better pleas’d, than in Playing together.—Mrs Barry outshin’d Mrs Bracegirdle in the Character of Zara in the *Mourning Bride*, altho’ Mr Congreve design’d Almeria for that Favour.