ENGLISH DRAMATISTS

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ENGLISH DRAMATISTS

**VANBRUGH
&
FARQUHAR**

John Bull

Professor of Film and Drama, University of Reading

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For Carole and Lydia

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Editor's Preface

Each generation needs to be introduced to the culture and great works of the past and to reinterpret them in its own ways. This series re-examines the important English dramatists of earlier centuries in the light of new information, new interests and new attitudes. The books are written for students, theatre-goers and general readers who want an up-to-date view of the plays and dramatists, with emphasis on drama as theatre and on stage, social and political history. Attention is given to what is known about performance, acting styles, changing interpretations, the stages and theatres of the time and theatre economics. The books will be relevant to those interested in or studying literature, theatre and cultural history.

BRUCE KING

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Notes on the Text

A note on the use of quoted texts

I have quietly modernised the quoted seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts in the interest of accessibility. I have, generally, followed twentieth-century spelling custom and, on occasions, altered punctuation. However, I have left all the important contemporary oaths and archaisms as they were and, in particular, have absolutely not tried to pick up Lord Foppington on his somewhat idiosyncratic use of the English language.

A note on the use of the terms 'Restoration' and 'post-Restoration'

The general description of 'Restoration comedy' has been, and to some extent still is, used as a convenient generic label. I have preferred to write of 'post-Restoration comedy', thus allowing for the possibility of generic connections being made but not stretching unreasonably the notion of 'Restoration' into the eighteenth century.

Vanbrugh and Farquhar in Their Contexts: Histories

1660	Restoration of Charles II. Samuel Pepys starts his diary. Foundation of Royal Society. King's and Duke's Companies given royal patent. First actresses on stage.
1661	New Model Army paid off, and new army established by Charles. Duke's Company at Lincoln's Inn Fields.
1662	Act of Uniformity passed – all ministers refusing new Prayer Book and 39 articles to be deprived of posts. Royal Society incorporated by royal charter. Licensing Act for all publications.
1663	Unsuccessful republican rising in Ireland. Republican unrest in Yorkshire and Durham. First post-Restoration colony founded in Carolina. Royal African Company to trade in slaves, ivory and gold. King's Theatre at Theatre Royal.

1664	V born in London.	Treason trials in north of England. Nell Gwyn joins King's Company.
1665		Second Dutch War. Great Plague. Theatres closed.
1666	V's family move to Chester.	French and Denmark ally with Dutch. Presbyterian uprising defeated in Scotland. Great Fire of London. Theatres reopened in November.
1667	Probable year of F's birth in Londonderry, the son of a Protestant clergyman.	Secret treaty with France. Theatres closed in July for Dutch War.
1668		Betterton and Harris as managers of Duke's Company.
1669		Duke of York converted to Catholicism. Theatres closed to mourn death of Charles's wife, Henrietta-Maria.
1670		Secret Treaty of Dover with France.
1671		New Excise Bill passed. Parliament prorogued after attempts to pass bill to exclude Catholics from office. Dorset Garden Theatre opened.
1672		Third Dutch War. Theatre Royal burnt down.
1673		William of Orange attempts to extract England from war. Test Act passed – all who hold office under the crown or in the army or Royal Navy publicly to repudiate Roman Catholicism.
1674		Parliament reassembled, but prorogued after its attempts to

- disband the standing army, introduce a habeus corpus bill, and further anti-Catholic measures. King's Company at new Drury Lane Theatre.
- 1675 Cavalier Parliament recalled but prorogued again by end of year. Royal Observatory at Greenwich.
- 1676 New secret treaty between Charles II and Louis XIV.
- 1677 Parliament recalled, but again prorogued as part of financial deal with Louis XIV of France. Anglo-Dutch Treaty. Charles Killigrew takes over management of King's Company from Thomas Killigrew.
- 1678 The Popish Plot. Parliament recalled and prorogued again.
- 1679 Parliament dissolved and election held. First Exclusion Parliament in attempts to deny Duke of York the succession. Prorogued.
- 1680 Second Exclusion Parliament.
- 1681 Charles dissolves Oxford Parliament. Shaftsbury arrested for treason.
- 1682 United Actor's Company formed by Betterton and Smith after 'revolt'. Monmouth rebellion.
- 1683 V goes to France to study architecture. Rye House Plot. Monmouth involved, but pardoned.
- 1684 Trial of Titus Oates
- 1685 Charles II dies; theatres closed for

		three months. James II succeeds. Duke of Argyle leads unsuccessful Scottish rising.
1686	V takes commission as Ensign in Lord Huntingdon's regiment, but quickly resigns.	League of Augsburg formed to protect German interests.
1687		James II's first Declaration of Indulgence.
1688	V imprisoned as 'spy' at Calais for his support of William of Orange.	James II flees country.
1689		Accession of William III and Mary. James in Ireland with French troops to support Catholic rebels.
1690		Battle of the Boyne: William's Protestant army defeats James's Catholic forces. Colley Cibber starts acting career.
1691	V moved to Vincennes prison.	Catholic Army defeated at Battle of Aughrim. Treaty of Limerick.
1692	V moved to Bastille, and later freed, returning to England.	French invasion planned. War continues in Europe.
1693		Skipwith and Rich take over United Company.
1694	F at Trinity College, Dublin.	Death of Queen Mary; theatres closed. Bank of England formed.
1695	V Captain of Marines in Lord Berkeley's regiment.	Namur recaptured by army under William. Betterton leads actors to Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre.
1696	F acting in Smock Alley Company in Dublin. V's	Lord Chancellor to license all plays for performance.

The Relapse and Aesop
(Drury Lane).

1697	F comes to London. V's <i>Aesop, Part II</i> (Drury Lane), and <i>The Provoked Wife</i> (Lincoln's Inn Fields).	Treaty of Ryswick.
1698	F's <i>Love and a Bottle</i> (Drury Lane), and publication of his novella, <i>Adventures of Covent Garden</i> . V's <i>A Short Vindication of The Relapse and The Provoked Wife from Immorality and Prophaness. The Country House</i> (Drury Lane).	Robert Wilks in Drury Lane Company. Collier's <i>A Short View of the Immorality and Prophaness of the English Stage</i> .
1699	F's <i>The Constant Couple</i> (Drury Lane). V architect for Castle Howard.	Army Disbanding Act passed despite William's protests.
1700	V's <i>The Pilgrim</i> (Drury Lane).	Death of Carlos II begins Spanish Succession crisis.
1701	F's <i>Sir Harry Wildair</i> (Drury Lane).	Pretender recognised by Louis XIV; French War.
1702	F's <i>The Inconstant</i> and <i>The Twin Rivals</i> (Drury Lane), and publication of his <i>Love and Business</i> , which included his <i>Discourse Upon Comedy</i> . V Comptroller to the Board of Works; <i>The False Friend</i> (Drury Lane).	William III dies; Anne succeeds. Marlborough opens campaign in War of Spanish Succession.
1703	F marries Margaret Penell. F's <i>The Stage Coach</i> (Drury Lane). V becomes Carlisle Herald; begins work on Queen's Theatre, Hay-market.	Parliament agrees to large increase in size of Marlborough's army.

1704	F lieutenant in army, on recruiting service. V Clarenceux King-at-Arms; (with Congreve and Walsh) <i>Squire Trelooby</i> (Lincoln's Inn Fields).	Battle of Blenheim won by Allies in War of Spanish Succession.
1705	V commissioned as architect with Hawksmoor for Blenheim Palace. Manager (with Congreve) of Queen's Theatre; <i>The Confederacy</i> and <i>The Mistake</i> (Queen's).	Queen's Theatre opened.
1706	F's <i>The Recruiting Officer</i> (Drury Lane). V in Hanover as Herald; loosening ties with Queen's Theatre.	Battle of Ramillies won.
1707	F's <i>The Beaux Stratagem</i> opens 8 March (Queen's). F dies 29 April. V to restore Kimbolton Castle; <i>The Cuckold in Conceit</i> (Queen's).	Act of Union between England and Scotland. Bank of England survives run on its funds.
1708		Two Companies united at Drury Lane. Battle of Oudenarde won.
1709		Thames freezes over. Battle of Malplaquet. Barrier Treaty with Holland.
1710	F's poem <i>Barcellona</i> published. V architect for King's Weston.	General election with huge victory for Tories.
1711		South Sea Company formed.
1712		Peace Congress at Utrecht. Stamp Act passed, effectively censoring newspapers.

1713		Lords Oxford and Bolingbroke in struggle for parliamentary control.
1714	V knighted by George I.	Death of Anne; succession of George I.
1715	V architect for Greenwich Hospital.	Whigs win general election. Death of Louis XIV.
1716	V starts work on Eastbury.	Septennial Act.
1717		Start of Mediterranean crisis.
1718	V designs Floors Castle.	Britain and France sign secret convention to ensure Charles VI's commitment to Triple Alliance in return for help in Mediterranean crisis.
1719	V married Henrietta Yarborough; two-volume edition of his <i>Plays</i> published.	In series of parliamentary crises, Robert Walpole begins his rise to power.
1720	V architect for Seton Delaval.	South Sea Bubble; first major crisis in new capitalist economy; Walpole able to become first 'prime' minister.
1721	V to restore Audley End.	Walpole raises large loan to calm financial crisis.
1722		Jacobite plot discovered, and Bishop Atterbury arrested. Scandal of Wood's half-pence coinage debasement in Ireland.
1723		Lord Bolingbroke pardoned, and returns to England; sets up <i>Craftsman</i> newspaper attacking Walpole, and is at head of extra-parliamentary 'country' opposition to Whig regime. Much of opposition centred on Walpole's

- introduction of new customs and excise laws.
- 1724 Secret discussions between Spain and Austria inconclusive.
- 1725 First Treaty of Vienna reconciles Spanish and Austrian interests, alarming British merchants over future trading disadvantages. Treaty of Hanover signed with France and Prussia.
- 1726 V dies in March in the same year that saw the death of Jeremy Collier. Britain effectively at war with Spain.