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A PERFORMANCE HISTORY OF JOHN DRYDEN AND HENRY PURCELL'S KING ARTHUR

A Dissertation

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

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A PERFORMANCE HISTORY OF JOHN DRDEN AND HENRY PURCELL'S
KING ARTHUR

A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE
GRADUATE COLLEGE

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ABSTRACT

A PERFORMANCE HISTORY OF JOHN DRYDEN AND HENRY PURCELL'S KING ARTHUR

A Performance History of John Dryden and Henry Purcell's *King Arthur* traces the development of an exemplary dramatic opera of the Baroque era through more than three hundred years of adaptations and revivals. Co-authored by a major English poet of the late seventeenth century, John Dryden, and the most important English composer of the time, Henry Purcell, King Arthur was first published and performed in 1691 or early 1692. This dramatic opera, or semi-opera, represents a pre-eminent performance genre of the era; the study-at-hand investigates this genre, and King Arthur's place within it, then pursues its life from its origin until its latest performance within the last several years. Such a performance history reveals the cultural contexts of its many revivals through a close examination of the aspects of its text, music, dance, and stage production.

Primary source documents considered in this study are Dryden's text published in 1691 and reprinted in 1695, and several manuscript scores by Purcell dating from the 1690's and very early 1700's. Additionally, a notated choreography by dance master, Josias Priest, the choreographer for King Arthur, is evaluated, as are several descriptive accounts of his dancing by his contemporaries. Playbooks and scores for later revivals are also valuable as primary sources. Secondary source documents include theatrical records, journalistic commentaries and reviews of the earliest and subsequent performances of King Arthur, as well as more recent treatises that deal with theatrical, dramatic, and musical conventions of the Restoration era and the eighteenth through twentieth centuries.

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The plays of John Dryden have frequently been analyzed for aspects of empiricism, political partisanship, issues of colonialism and even gender; however, the musical portions of his dramas have received less attention from researchers of his works. And while Purcell's theatrical music has been considered for its place within Dryden's dramatic productions, as well as within Purcell's own stylistic development, A Performance History of . . .King Arthur goes further to present the full evolution of three hundred years of performance practices and audience receptions to this multi-faceted and adaptable operatic entertainment. Thus, this study endeavors to create a broad understanding of cultural standards and theatrical traditions from the earliest Baroque-era productions of King Arthur until our time.

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INTRODUCTION

Beginning its life on the stage in 1691 or early 1692, John Dryden and Henry Purcell's King Arthur has followed a path for over three hundred years through the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries into the present. In this performance history of King Arthur, I have pursued its path and investigated its major revivals in order to explore an aspect of cultural history -- specifically, how this semi-opera adapted to, and reflected, public tastes from the earliest performances to the most recent, and in the process, became the major vehicle for transmission of Arthurian legend into drama.

The form of the semi-opera, or, according to Dryden, the "dramatick opera", was a partly-sung and partly-spoken entertainment genre of the Restoration era in England. Within this form, that included Dedication pages, Prologue, and Epilogue, in addition to the Play text itself, Dryden found opportunity to make allusions to governmental politics and policies, while appropriating its subject matter, the legendary British hero, King Arthur, to create tributes to the British monarchy. Many scholars have focused attention upon the issues of topicality in King Arthur, as well as upon the questions of Dryden's sources for the plot and characters of the drama, and whether or not his own political leanings are reflected in the content.

Previous research has also focused upon evaluation of the synthesis of Henry Purcell's music with Dryden's text of King Arthur. Several scholars, including Curtis Price, Peter Holman, and Michael Burden, have recently analyzed Purcell's theatrical compositions, determining conventions of his style of writing, and speculating upon

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the degree of his absorption of Italian and French influences from continental composers, and upon the degree of his inheritance of English precedents, as well. The form of the semi-opera has been repeatedly investigated in the context of its place within Dryden's and Purcell's respective literary and musical opuses, and for its capacity to represent a thoroughly English musico-dramatic genre at the time of the Restoration and afterward.

Dryden's text for the semi-opera, in print from the earliest production in 1691 or 1692, has survived intact, while Purcell's score has been less fortunate. The extant manuscript scores are not complete, none of them is an autograph copy or appears to be a composer's or editor's copy, it is unclear whether any of the early revisions are actually Purcell's, or whether they were made by scribes or assistants who are, as yet, largely unidentified. One is not even certain whether the composer himself conducted the original productions of King Arthur, or perhaps performed the continuo part within the orchestra.

No records of the collaborative efforts of Dryden, Purcell, and Josias Priest, the choreographer for King Arthur, have been discovered, but there is documentation of dates of performances in London and Dublin theatres, a few announcements and advertisements in journals, descriptions from diaries, and occasional published lists of actors, musicians, dancers, and other personnel who were part of the performance proceedings, from the 1690's through many years of revivals. Close examination of the earliest scores, texts, and choreographies in Chapter One, indicate the manner in which this dramatic semi-opera was performed during the author's and composer's lifetimes. From the early performances onward, this performance history will

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emphasize the revisions and consequent evolution of King Arthur through the next decades and centuries, in the qualifying terms of audience receptions to the trends in production that were experienced.

Through the first revivals of the early eighteenth century to those of the nineteenth, Dryden and Purcell's semi-opera functioned as the major vehicle for transportation of the legendary hero, King Arthur, into the theatre and onto the stage. Scores and playbooks for many of the revivals of the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have survived, and a study of these within Chapters Three and Four reveals the adaptations in music, dance, and text that occurred. While some performances appeared to concentrate on the enduring appeal of Purcell's music, at other times King Arthur's parts of spoken drama presented the strongest attractions. In yet another context, the literary transmission of Arthurian legend became the most important focus of on-going publications of the text.

Upon arrival into the twentieth century, the important trend in both Europe and North America toward historically-informed restoration of authentic performance practices brought productions of King Arthur full-circle. Many revivals, particularly those of the 1995 Purcell tercentenary celebrations, have re-established the original prominence of Purcell's and Dryden's synthesis of music, drama, and legend. Twentieth century revivals, and the resultant criticism and commentaries regarding them, are abundant in the forms of theatrical reviews, journal articles and books, and other scholarly publications. These form the basis for my investigation, in Chapter Five, of King Arthur's treatment in the modern era. Lastly, from the vantage point of historical perspective in the twentieth century and beyond, one may view King

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Arthur's path of progress, follow its adaptations, and reconstruct the pattern of the performance history that it has created and that is on-going.

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CHAPTER I

Sources

A performance history such as this presents the opportunity to reflect, as accurately as possible, cultural and aesthetic standards of the time period in which King Arthur was created. Of greatest importance in evaluating the premier performances is the identification of sources dating from the author's and composer's lifetimes. Thus, I have sought to discover what Dryden and Purcell intended for the first performances by examining the earliest printed texts and manuscript scores for King Arthur, and inferring a logical reconstruction of the presentations that they, themselves, established.

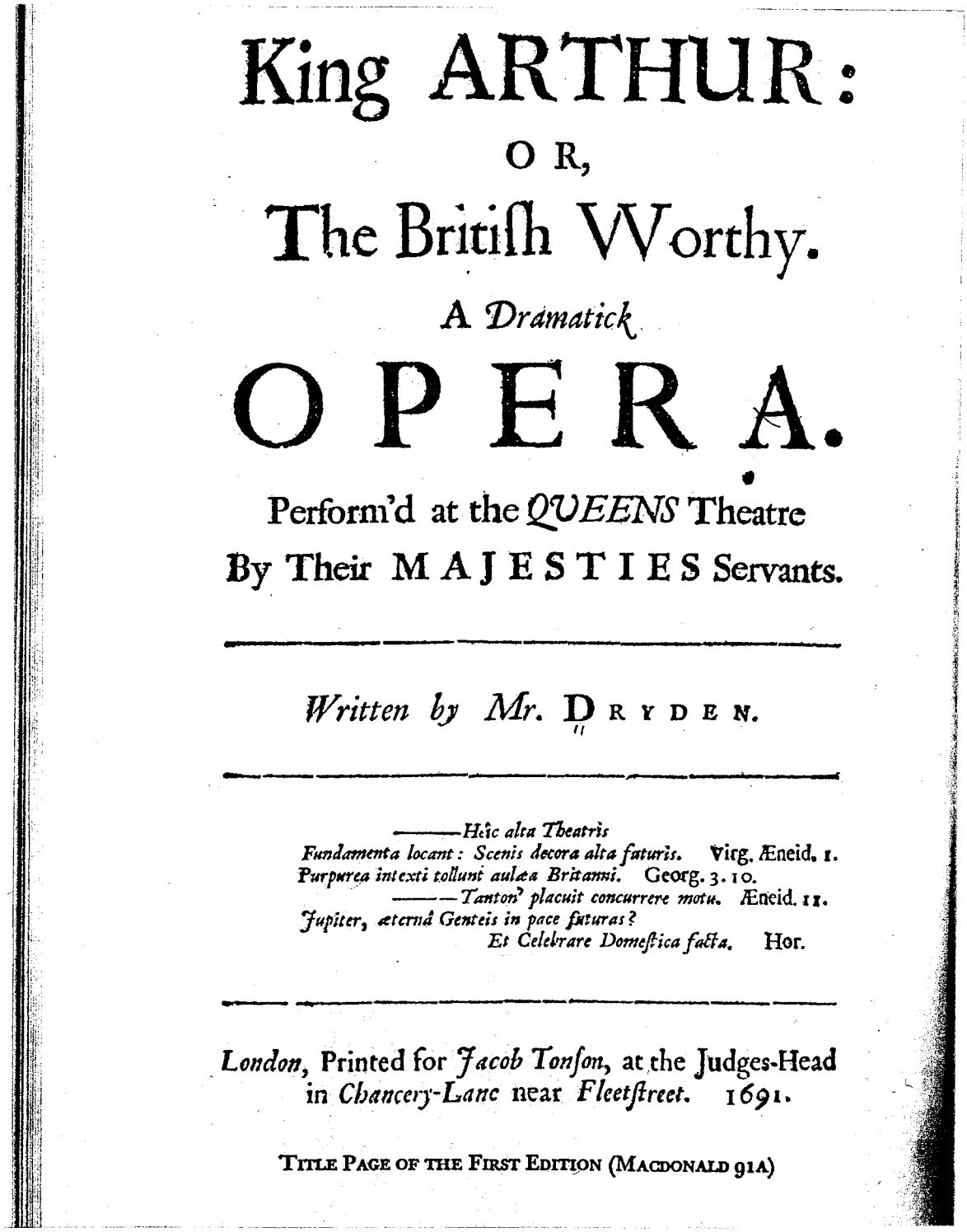
I have consulted the first two printed texts for King Arthur: or, The British Worthy. A Dramatick Opera, Clark Library copies Q1b and Q2, dated 1691 and 1695, respectively, that both contain prologue and epilogue by Dryden, and that were both published in London by Jacob Tonson. (See Figure 1 for the title page, and Appendix 1 for prologue and epilogue.) The 1695 edition is virtually a reprint of that of 1691 with no emendations by the author, and may have been made for a revival of the semi-opera in 1695, though there are no records of such. Publication of the 1691 text was just before or approximately simultaneous to the first performances, thought to have been given in June of that year, according to remarks made by Dryden in the dedication of the work.[1] The first recorded performances took place in January of 1691 at the Dorset Garden theatre in London.[2] According to contemporary John Downes:

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[1] Dryden, in Dedication, expected King Arthur to be "the Chiefest Entertainment ... this Summer".
[2] William van Lennep, Emmett L. Avery, and Arthur H. Scouten, eds., The London Stage, 1660-1800: Part I: 1660-1700, p. 405. There is also, in Part I, a quote from The Gentleman's Journal, of Jan., 1691/92, stating that King Arthur had played several times in the month before (Dec. 1691).

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Figure 1



King ARTHUR:

OR,

The British Worthy.

A *Dramatick*

OPERA.

Perform'd at the *QUEENS* Theatre

By Their MAJESTIES Servants.

Written by Mr. DRYDEN.

——Hîc alta Theatris
Fundamenta locant: Scenis decora alta futuris. Virg. Æneid. 1.
Purpurea intexti tollunt aulæa Britanni. Georg. 3. 10.
——Tanton' placuit concurrere motu. Æneid. 11.
Jupiter, æternâ Genteis in pace futuras?
Et Celebrare Domestica facta. Hor.

London, Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, at the Judges-Head in *Chancery-Lane* near *Fleetstreet*. 1691.

TITLE PAGE OF THE FIRST EDITION (MACDONALD 91A)

Title page, 1691 Tonson edition

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> King Arthur an Opera, wrote by Mr. Dryden; it was Excellently Adorn'd with Scenes and Machines: the Musical Part set by Famous Mr. Henry Purcel; and Dances made by Mr. Jo. Priest: The Play and Musick pleas'd the Court and City, and being well perform'd, twas very Gainful to the Company.[3]

While the first texts for King Arthur were printed, the earliest scores, or those dating from approximately the first ten years of King Arthur's history, are manuscript copies. Those that I have consulted in relationship to the printed texts, and in relationship to each other, are Oxford Bodleian MS Tenbury 785, London Royal Academy of Music MS 21, Oxford Oriel College Ua35, London British Museum Additional MS 31447, and London British Museum Additional MS 5333. None is a complete or autograph copy, all are missing some music, and no definite or obvious order of music for all five Acts is evident in any of them. Moreover, the instrumental act music and dances are missing or poorly represented within these copies, and were, for the most part, published separately. The earliest and most complete publication of these instrumental pieces that I have examined is A Collection of Ayres, compos'd for the Theatre, printed at the request of Purcell's widow, Frances Purcell, by John Heptinstall, in 1697. While it has been generally assumed that the original placement of these tunes within the semi-opera was rearranged according to key scheme for performance by four-part strings (violins one and two, *temore*, and *bassus* parts), it may also be likely that this order facilitated either theatrical or social dancing, both of which were popular practices in London in the 1690's and early eighteenth century. It

[3] John Downes. Roscius Anglicanus. (London, 1708). p. 42.

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has been informative for this present study to consider other sources of Purcell's dance music and dance types as well as those in King Arthur.[4]

The Oxford Bodleian MS Tenbury 785 (referred to from here as Tenbury 785), which is only a fragment of a larger MS that includes Act I of King Arthur along with other music of Purcell's, appears to be the most authoritative and least revised score, partly because identification of the paper supports the dating of the manuscript in the early 1690's, and it is in the hand of a single copyist.[5] Also, the order of the music in it (Act I) follows Dryden's text, (although adjustments in the shaping of the lines for musical setting are Purcell's), as well as the order of scenes in the play, and Dryden's stage instructions. The London Royal Academy of Music MS 21 (LAM 21 from here on) and Oxford Oriel College (Ooc Ua35 from here) are in the same copyist's hand, and possibly represent the scores utilized for the 1697/98 revival of King Arthur. Since both are relatively complete, and since no new edition of the text appeared at this time, it is plausible to examine the contents of the scores in relationship to the 1691 and 1695 publications for congruency of text, scenes, and stage directions. London British Museum Additional MS 31447, ca. 1710, (Lbl Add 31447) seems to correspond to the contents of Ooc Ua35, although it is in a different copyist's hand, and to the earlier texts as well. London British Museum Additional 5333 (Lbl Add 5333), of uncertain date between the late seventeenth century and 1710, and in the hand of copyist William Crofts, presents a shortened version of Acts IV and V;

[4] Purcell provided dance music for many theatrical productions during his career; The Fairy Queen and Dido and Aeneus are noteworthy examples.
[5] Robert Shay and Robert Thompson, Purcell Manuscripts: The Principal Music Sources, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 255-256.

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possibly this score reflects a performance that was altered considerably from Dryden's and Purcell's original intentions.[6]

None of the original choreographies by Josias Priest for King Arthur has survived; there is only one, a "Minuet for Twelve Ladies", published in 1711 in Feuillet notation, that has been attributed to Priest to date, but it is not known from which stage production or other occasion it derives.[7] (Figure 2 illustrates Priest's "Minuet" in Feuillet notation.) It has been valuable, nonetheless, to consider this choreography as well as contemporary accounts of Priest's own dancing, in order to infer a plausible reconstruction of the early performances of King Arthur.[8] An investigation of recent research in baroque-era dance practices informs an understanding of the popularity of both theatrical and social dancing in England during this time period, and of the importance of its visual appeal in productions such as King Arthur.[9]

In addition to the more complete MS scores that have already been named, several other fragmentary scores, part books, and song books dating from early to late eighteenth century are extant, but often are many times removed from original sources and are written in unidentifiable hands. While it has not been productive for purposes

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[6] Shay and Thompson believe the date of this MS to precede 1700, while Margaret Laurie suggests 1710 in the second edition of the Purcell Society score. Perhaps this MS score reflects one of the performances recorded in The London Stage for 1701 or 1706, which will be examined in a later chapter.

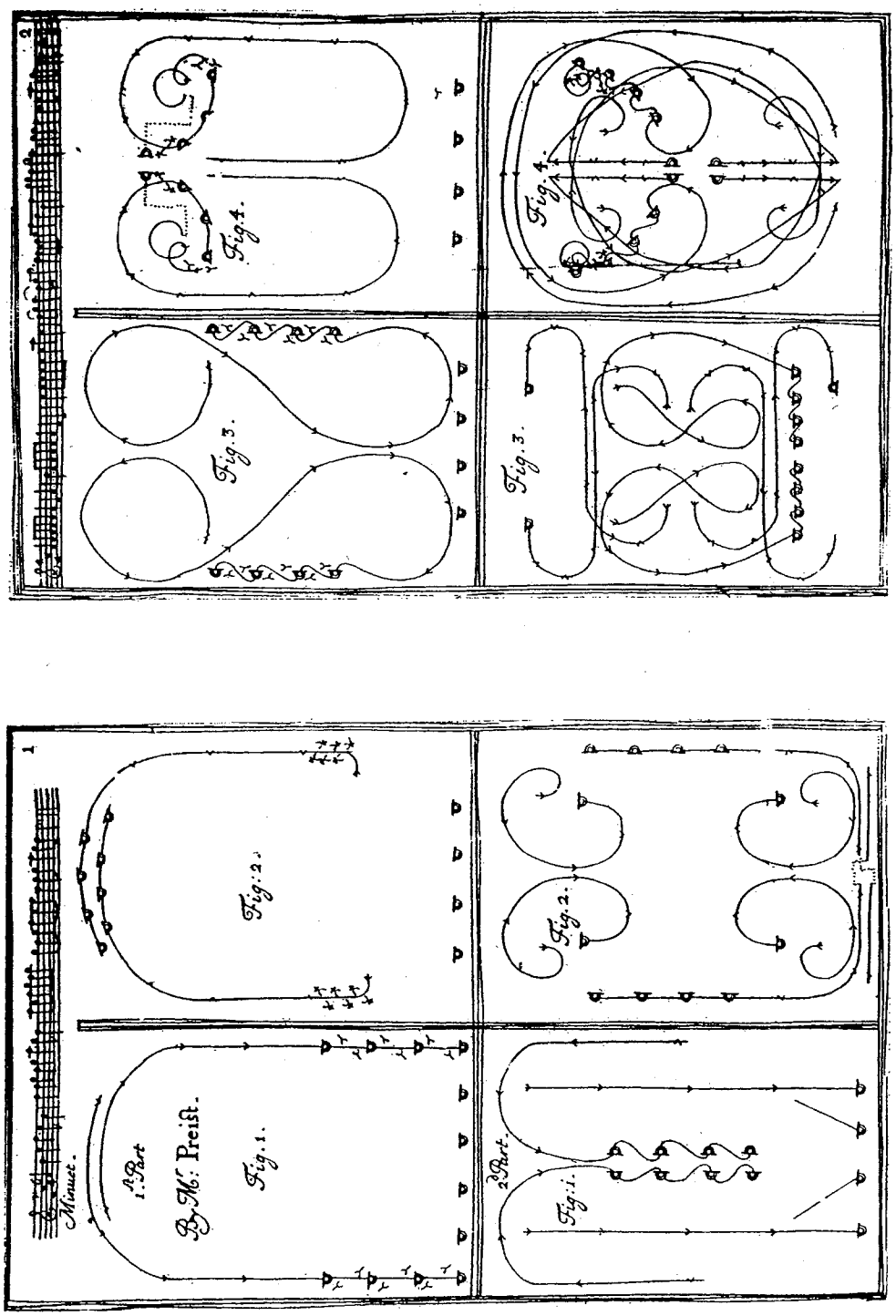
[7] The "Minuet for Twelve Ladies" was published in Edmund Pemberton's An Essay for the Further Improvement of Dancing, (London: 1711). It is generally agreed that this dance, as well as others published in this collection may have been originally created several years before.

[8] One of the most complete accounts of Priest's style of dancing and choreographic activities is that of his contemporary, John Weaver, in Richard Ralph's The Life and Works of John Weaver, (New York: Dance Horizons, 1991).

[9] Carol Marsh, in French Court Dance in England, 1706-1740, (Ph.D. Diss., City University of New York, 1985) offers a thorough analysis of theatrical and social dancing in England at this time.

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Figure 2



"Minuet for Twelve Ladies", choreography by Josias Priest, pub. Pemberton, 1711

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of Purcell's compositional style and orchestration, and they certainly attest to the continued popularity of Purcell's stage music into the eighteenth century. It is possible that some of the song books were published for use in concert performances of King Arthur; consideration of these concerts as well as the fully-staged revivals of King Arthur that took place in the first two decades of the eighteenth century will be examined in Chapter Five.

More pertinent to an investigation into Dryden's and Purcell's intentions for staged productions of King Arthur are the manuscript score, Oxford Bodleian MS Tenbury 338 ca. 1738, (Tenbury 338), and the 1736 reprint by Tonson of Dryden's text, almost unchanged except for the title, King Arthur; or, Merlin the British Enchanter, and for the substitution of a new prologue and epilogue provided by a minor playwright, James Sterling. A pirated edition titled Merlin, or The British Inchanter and King Arthur the British Worthy was also published in 1736; it likewise presented almost no alterations to Dryden's original text. Although it is not possible to determine with absolute certainty that these texts were printed for use in the 1735/36 revival of King Arthur, there seems some likelihood that both were because the slight emendations that each contains appears to be connected to specific performance demands, and because a listing of cast members for December 1735/36 performances is identical for both.[10] Likewise, the Tenbury 338 score itself varies little from the earlier MS scores, and if indeed it represents a score used for the 1735/36 revival, then we have further support for the theory that this prominent

[10] The London Stage, Part III p.537, lists the same cast for Dec. 17, 1735 as that found in Dryden, the Dramatic Works, ed. Montague Summers, (London: Nonesuch Publishers, 1932), vol. 6, p. 234 for the Dec. 19, 1735 performance of Merlin, or The British Enchanter and Arthur, the British Worthy.

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revival was aimed to preserve the authenticity of Dryden's and Purcell's intentions for the semi-opera. Equally important for the investigation of this revival are lists of personnel, including actors, singers, and dancers, published in The London Stage, and commentaries also published in The London Stage and elsewhere that describe scenery and costume designs for the performances. These sources will be discussed in Chapter Three along with other information regarding performance practices and trends that affected this revival of 1735/36, and this era of King Arthur's history.

The source documents for later revivals of King Arthur through the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries are much more extensive; in addition to many playbooks and scores, documentation is extant in the forms of theatrical records and advertisements, and information published in journals and periodicals, diaries, and correspondences. These sources will be investigated and discussed in the context of the revivals with which they are associated within the next several chapters.

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CHAPTER II

The Earliest Performances

In consideration of the early manuscript scores, play texts, and choreographies discussed in Chapter One, I will project, here in Chapter Two, a reconstruction of the earliest performances of King Arthur, with a focus upon Dryden's instructions for the staging of scenes with spectacular occurrences and dancing.[1] King Arthur appeared to be successful, not only in the sound of its well-woven text and music, but also in its visual appeal to audiences, which was enhanced with special effects of stagecraft. The scenes of the spectacular, including magical transformations and expressive balletic dances, had become traditions to which both acting companies and even the designs of theatres subscribed. The Dorset Garden Theatre, where King Arthur was first performed by the Duke's Company in 1691/92, featured a large forestage that extended in front of the proscenium, "traps", and other machines and devices for special effects that accommodated the visual spectacles of the drama. Altogether, King Arthur displayed several scenes of supernatural conjuration, or magic, along with dancing of various sorts: in Act I, there is a battle pantomime, in Act II, a pastoral diversion with shepherds and shepherdesses who dance in between songs, in Act III, a magically conjured "Frost Scene" that features mimed dancing (often referred to as "character" or "grotesque" dancing), in Act IV, an extensive *passacaglia* is danced

[1] For analyses of the music itself, consult the works of Michael Burden, Curtis Price, and Peter Holman that are listed individually in the Bibliography.

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within an "Enchanted Grove" scene, and in Act V, a spectacular "Vision of the Future", is presented in masque form, with extensive singing and dancing that is interspersed within the scenes of magical special effects.

Elaborate theatrical ballet was an important feature within baroque-era opera. Although no notated choreographies for King Arthur are extant, and no records of original dancers have been discovered, an analysis of both Purcell's dance music and Dryden's stage directions for the earliest performances, and consideration of choreographer-dancer Josiah Priest's experiences, reveal the sort of spectacular visual presentation that occurred within King Arthur. As regards Priest's work in the field of choreography, only one notated dance in the French noble style – the "Minuet for Twelve Ladies", published in 1711 -- has been attributed to him, but, as stated above, it is not known from what sort of production or performance it has survived. Nonetheless, this minuet and other information about his career indicates that Priest was certainly adept at creating formal choreographed dances for dramatic stage entertainments, while at the same time he was renowned for his mimed character dances, several of which take place in King Arthur along with the more formal ones. Priest's work will be considered in more detail in Chapter Three.

Several types of dances convey the action of the story. An examination of the earliest MS scores for King Arthur at St. Michael's, Tenbury (Tenbury 785), and the Royal Academy of Music (LAM 21), reveal that Purcell included the French and English dance types of gavotte, *passacaglia,* hornpipe, and *contredanse* (or "country dance") within Acts II through V of the semi-opera, while additionally, there is music with minuet rhythm, a *chaconne*, "entrance" music (or "*entree*"), and act tunes, all of

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which may or my not have been used to accompany dancing as well. However, Dryden's stage directions from his original text (Q1b, Clark,1691), present the clearest indication that the playwright himself designed scenes of dance that would support his development of plot and characters within King Arthur. Moreover, Dryden may even have had knowledge of the predominantly French dance types that were popular, especially on-stage, in London at this time. I will investigate these sources in a synchronous manner in order to project the earliest performances.

In Acts I and II, the action is sustained by Dryden and Purcell's scenes with battle music and a pastoral diversion. In scene iii of Act I, Dryden's instructions indicate a battle "given behind the scenes, with Drums and Trumpets", with "Britons, expressing their Joy for the Victory", singing "Come if you dare". While the trumpets and drums sound their parts offstage, the song is sung on-stage, with an instrumental introduction, marked "Symphony", and an interlude between verses, both of sufficient length for dancers to perform a pantomime. Instructions in the score, Tenbury 785, echo Dryden's indications for victorious celebration with the words "Pantomime the battle" at the beginning of the instrumental Symphony.

In the opening scene of Act II, Dryden instructs, "Merlin, with spirits, descends to Philadel on a Chariot drawn by Dragons" set to a short introduction of music. In scene ii that follows, Emmeline is entertained by pastoral diversion. As the scene begins, Dryden instructs "Enter

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Shepherds and Shepherdesses. (An "*Entree*" in a French-styled entertainment almost invariably was danced.) After the shepherds sing their first song, "How Blest Are Shepherds", Dryden's instructions follow: "Here the Men Offer Their Flutes to the Women Who Refuse Them" as a forty-two measure introduction in gavotte rhythm leads to the second song, "Shepherd, Shepherd, Leave Decoying" to music that is titled "Symphony for Flutes and *Hautbois*" in the Royal Academy score. Surely Dryden intended a short mimed dance here, if not a fully choreographed one for the pastoral characters. A gavotte, in the French style, typically contained a musical structure of duple meter, with four-measure phrases often beginning on the half-measure (although Purcell usually began his on the full measure), that sustained either fast-paced mime or more formal choreography.

The third song "Come, Shepherds, Lead Up a Lively Measure", occurs in hornpipe rhythm, and Dryden's instructions "The Dance After the Song" may call for a repeat of the same hornpipe music, or, as Margaret Laurie has suggested and included in her second edition of The Purcell Society score, another similar one. The hornpipe originated as an English dance type with triple meter, regular four or eight-measure phrases, and frequent syncopation to which the dance steps created cross-patterns.

The dramatic action continues in scene ii of Act III with a magical conjuration of frozen wintertime. To begin the magical conjuration, Dryden instructs "Osmond strikes the Ground with his Wand: The Scene changes to a Prospect of Winter in Frozen Countries. Cupid Descends." The early scores reiterate "Cupid Descends" to music titled "Prelude". The short length (eight measures only) of this prelude suggests just enough time for the descent by machine. After a short song, "What ho! Thou

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Genius" for Cupid, a soprano, Purcell provides a second Prelude and the directions in the score are: "Prelude While the Cold Genius Arises". As in Act II, the descents and ascents of a character (Merlin in Act II, scene i) were accomplished with stage machinery and devices that produced magical effect. After more sung dialogue between the Cold Genius and Cupid, Dryden's next instructions: "Cupid waves his Wand, upon which the Scene opens, and discovers a Prospect of Ice and Snow to the end of the stage." Then, "Singers and Dancers, Men and Women Appear" on the stage during a thirty-six measure prelude of "shivering music" leading to the chorus, "See, See, We Assemble." After this chorus, there are sixteen more measures of music marked "Dance" in Purcell's score; here, it seems plausible that a mimed "shivering dance" might have taken place in both the prelude before the chorus as well as in the "Dance" afterward. Because both the music and text for this "Frost Scene" convey the effects of shivering, this scene was probably mimed by characters who affected a sense of shaking with coldness. After a final chorus, Dryden's instructions for the end of the scene, "A Dance, after Which Singers and Dancers Depart" imply an opportunity for a more formally choreographed dance; unfortunately, music for this dance is not extant.

Dryden's understanding of the visual appeal of magical conjuration and dancing seems especially obvious in his "Enchanted Grove" scene ii of Act IV. In the Enchanted Grove, King Arthur manages to resist the first temptations he encounters: "As he is going to the Bridge, two Syrens arise from the Water; They shew themselves to the Waste, and sing." Musical settings for the Syrens' two amorous songs are not

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extant in any of the MS scores, but we do know that Arthur is not seduced; rather, he continues along his way to observe more pastoral diversion:

> As he is going forward, Nymphs and Sylvans come out from behind the Trees. Bass and two Trebles sing the Following Song to a Minuet. Dance with the Song, all with Branches in their Hands.

After the first verse of this song, "How Happy the Lover", Dryden's further instructions are, "The Dance continues with the Same Measure Play'd alone." Because he specified "Minuet" as the dance type, it is most likely that Dryden knew the prescribed (and choreographed) step-patterns with which this dance was usually performed by couples. Purcell and Priest, however, substituted a *passacaglia*, a choreographed stately and dignified dance that also originated in the French style, often for couples, but without prescribed step-patterns. This Act IV *passacaglia* allowed for the alternation of the verses of song with instrumental *ritornellos* (refrains) which would have accompanied the dancing. In the Tenbury MS 338, two violins alternate *ritornello* phrases with two *hautbois* (oboes), further suggesting that the choreographed steps here were for pairs of dancers. Music for a *passacaglia* (or *passacaille* in French) was a slow and lengthy triple-meter form designed upon a repetitive ground bass. This repetitive form provided a familiar structure to which choreographers and dancers could execute complex floor-patterns with variable step-patterns. Both Dryden and Purcell knew the *passacaglia* structure well; they had both included it in earlier staged entertainments.

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In spite of the attractiveness of such pastoral diversions as the Enchanted Grove, at the end of the dance, King Arthur orders the "Sylvan Trippers of the Green" to be gone, and Dryden instructs: "Here the Dancers, Singers, and Syrens vanish."

Act V of King Arthur presents the final elaborate visual spectacle, frequently referred to as a masque, which features a majestic image of the future of Britain, danced and sung by mythological gods and goddesses, and staged with magical scenic effects to heighten the dramatic vision. Yet, the greatest uncertainties in the presentations of these supernatural scenes, with their dances and songs, are here in Act V. The Royal Academy score, LAM 21, for example, begins with two songs from the previous Act IV, curiously repeating them in Act V. Additionally, all of the early manuscript scores (named above) are missing some of the Act V music -- particularly that of the dances -- and there is disagreement among the scores regarding the order of the songs and dances, and whether or not all are authentic. Careful consultation of Dryden's text is in order for an understanding of the scene as he originally intended it and as it might have originally been performed.

Scene ii begins with a gathering of the Briton and Saxon armies, and a single combat between King Arthur and his rival, the Saxon leader, Oswald, ensues. Here, Dryden details a pantomimed combat between the two:

> They Fight with Spunges in their Hands, dipt in Blood; after some equal Passes and Closeing, they appear both Wounded: Arthur Stumbles among the Trees, Oswald falls over him, they both Rise: Arthur Wounds him again, then Oswald Retreats. Enter Osmond from among the Trees, and with his Wand, strikes Arthur's Sword out of his Hand and Exit. Oswald pursues Arthur. Merlin enters, and gives

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> Arthur his Sword, and Exit, they close, and Arthur in the fall, disarms Oswald.

After which: "A Consort of Trumpets within, proclaiming Arthur's Victory". The other characters gather on-stage and Merlin conjures the final vision of the future:

> MERLIN WAVES HIS Wand; the Scene changes, and discovers the British Ocean in a Storm. Aeolus in a Cloud above: Four Winds hanging, etc.

Here follows in Dryden's text a song by the god Aeolus, "Ye Blust'ring Brethen of the Skies" which Purcell set with "storm-at-sea" effects in the strings' parts. The "storm" (and song) end, and:

> Aeolus ascends, and the four Winds fly off. The Scene opens, and discovers a calm Sea, to the end of the House. An Island arises, to a soft Tune; Britannia seated in the island, with Fishermen at her Feet, etc. The Tune changes; the Fishermen come ashore, and Dance a while; After which, Pan and a Nereide come on the Stage, and sing.

An instrumental Symphony is supplied as the "soft Tune" to which the Island arises.

Because some of the dances are missing in the early scores, it is uncertain to what music the "Fisherman's Dance" may have taken place, but very possibly it was an instrumental version of the song which follows it, "Round Thy Coast". This version is found in the Tenbury MS 338 score (ca. 1738), and is included as an instrumental piece in the Appendix to the Purcell Society's second edition score for King Arthur.

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The piece, both in song and instrumental formats, is in binary form, in duple meter, and features dotted rhythms, easily choreographed for two Fishermen. A duet between the god, Pan, and a Nereide, follows the Fishermen's dance.

Next, according to Dryden, is presented the "Song of Three Parts", set as "For Folded Flocks" by Purcell, again sung by Pan and a Nereide, "after which", states Dryden, "the Former dance is varied and goes on". Perhaps here is the greatest uncertainty: what music was performed at this point, and in what manner would the "Former Dance" (that of the Fishermen, presumably) have been "varied"? While the 3/2 meter of the song and its textual references to the characters of shepherds, farmers, peasants, and "Pan in Arcadia" might seem conducive to a serene arcadian dance-type and/or step-patterns, the fact that only a continuo part is offered as accompaniment casts some doubt upon the use of "For Folded Flocks" for dancing. It is more likely that Dryden's directions suggest that the former step-pattern of the Fishermen's Dance is varied as it is now performed to different music. The "different music" for this dance might have been an instrumental arrangement of the next song, "Your Hay it is Mow'd", a lively piece in 6/4 meter that would have allowed a dance option for the several characters named above. Or possibly, this dance was never set, or was lost in the early performances of King Arthur.

Dryden's directions that immediately precede "Your Hay it is Mow'd" are: "Enter Comus and three Peasants, who sing the following "Song in Parts". The song itself is raucous and irreverent, and suggests, textually, a harvest drinking song as it occasions the opportunity for comical "drunk" dancing, or miming. An indulgence of such humor would have balanced well within the overall stateliness of this Act V

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vision-of -the-future in masque. Dryden follows this song and pantomimed dance with "The Dance vary'd into a round Country-Dance" (or *contredanse*). However, in the absence of choreographies, one must speculate what the dance and its music might have been, and which of the characters performed it. If an instrumental arrangement of the next song, "Fairest Isle" perhaps preceded the song itself, then the "Country Dance" was more than likely danced as a minuet, since that is the form of this triple meter song.[2] In this case, a couple would have almost certainly danced prescribed step-patterns. Again, we must speculate who these characters might have been. Since there is reference to Cupid in the song text to "Fairest Isle", perhaps dancers who represented Venus and Cupid performed a minuet.

An additional song, "You Say tis Love" is designated next for "Mr. Howe" by Dryden. After this song is sung in duet by a man and woman, Dryden states:

> After the Dialogue, a Warlike Consort. The Scene Opens above, and Discovers the Order of the Garter. Enter Honour, Attended by Heroes.

The "Warlike Consort" is a trumpet tune, and the upper part of the back scene opens to reveal "the Order of the Garter" -- perhaps a painted set. The goddess Honor enters with twenty-four dancers in the characters of Knights of the Order (in much the same manner as had the twenty-four dancers in Act V of Albion and Albanius, 1690, had done). Presumably, the twenty-four also sang the final chorus "Our Natives not

[2] The instrumental arrangement of "Fairest Isle" is offered as an introduction to the song itself in the second edition of the Purcell Society score. The editor, Margaret Laurie, includes it here based upon her investigation of a Ms. score for King Arthur in the Paris *Bibliotheque du Conservatoire*, Res. F.202.

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alone Appear" which occurs at the end of Dryden's song "St. George" for the character Honour. Although this solo song for Honour is not found in any of the early MS scores and may not have been written by Purcell, the setting of the chorus appears to be authentic and is in a march rhythm, making possible a ceremonious "entry" for the Knights that was probably danced in march rhythm. As was customary for spectacular endings such as this, Dryden provides instructions for the "Grande Dance". While confusion in the early scores remains, scholars of Purcell's music generally agree that the *Chaconne* in F which is sometimes played as the "First Music" before Act I, presents a plausible danced finale to bring the vision to a close.

Thus, King Arthur, at its premier in the 1691/92 season, emerged as a spectacular dramatic semi-opera that provided the model for subsequent early revivals, the subject of the next chapter.

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CHAPTER III

The Early Revivals: Performance Seasons 1695/96 to 1735/36

The Performances of 1695 to 1701

Although few records exist regarding the performances that occurred within the first ten years after King Arthur's premier in 1691, a fairly clear picture of its treatment emerges when it is viewed within the context of stage practices in the London playhouses of the 1690's. A brief description of these performance traditions is in order if we are to evaluate King Arthur's position among them, particularly in the absence of specific scores, librettos, part-books, or choreographies that might have been used for individual productions. Secondary sources, such as theatre documents, including playbills, listings of personnel, and occasional advertisements, records kept by the Lord Chamberlain, and a number of journals and periodicals provide more information, and I have, thus, consulted these items in my pursuit of King Arthur in the first ten years after its premiere.

Whereas Dryden's original text of 1691 (Clark Library Q1B) lists cast members, no records of casts are found in playbooks for subsequent performances in either of the two public playhouses at Dorset Garden and the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane, in which King Arthur played during the first ten years of life. On the other hand, however, we may observe the emerging practice in the theatres of preserving, on a

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seasonal basis, lists of actors, proprietors, singers, dancers, and occasionally, musicians who performed regularly. During a typical season, the three major theatres, which included Lincoln's Inn Fields in addition to the Dorset Garden and Drury Lane, offered older revised works interspersed with new plays by established English dramatists, among whom Dryden remained a favorite. Plays were presented most evenings, and because both music and theatrical dance traditions were becoming increasingly prominent within drama and as performance genres in their own right, the majority of plays, both old and new, featured various interludes of songs, instrumental music, and dances. These were performed by both acclaimed English musicians and dancers as well as visiting foreign performers. In studying the theatres' lists of dance personnel and performances for the seasons of the late 1690's, one finds that the dancers, who were almost entirely of English and French nationalities, very often performed together, whereas competitive practices developed between the ensembles of English and visiting Italian musicians, who were mostly singers. While on occasion, a playbill or advertisement would announce that an English singer was going to perform songs in both languages in a concert or musical interlude, the reverse situation with a featured Italian singer seems never to have occurred; rather, an antagonism which has already been well-documented, between English and Italian musicians in London, became pronounced in the early decades of the eighteenth century. Here then, were the traditions of drama and music on the London stage where King Arthur was presented in the 1690's, and in seasons beyond.

A projected reconstruction of the premier performances in 1691 has been offered in Chapter Two, and, as also noted, a revival of King Arthur seemingly took

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place in 1695, because a second printing of Dryden's text (Clark Library Q2), that was made at this time. Although no certain documentation of the 1695 revival has ever emerged, there are theatrical records for three performances at Dorset Garden in the 1697/98 season on the dates of February 7, February 25, and March 19.[1] The theatre announced the company of Christopher Rich, proprietor, as the acting troupe for King Arthur, but with no specific names of actors or singers listed for individual roles.

Though the information is scant regarding the productions and treatment of King Arthur in the '97/98 season; however, it seems plausible to assume that LAM 21, the Royal Academy of Music score, which is dated c. 1698 and is one of the most complete of the early manuscripts, was prepared for and utilized in these productions. Moreover, other considerations suggest that Rich, as director, would have given as much attention as possible to authenticity of original sources and intentions of author, composer, and choreographer for this revival. In his experience as proprietor of the Dorset Garden, and later, the Drury Lane acting companies, Rich had already directed, successfully, several other works of Dryden, Purcell, and Priest, some of which were collaborative, so he must have known what the three intended for King Arthur.[2] Beyond Rich's personal understanding and experience of their designs for King Arthur, there are also inferences from contemporaries that this semi-opera, as one among several produced in the 1690's, appears to have been well-accepted by

[1] The London Stage: Part I, *passim*.
[2] Some of their collaborative productions included Dido and Aeneus, The Fairie Queen, and The Indian Queen.

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audiences, and might, therefore, have required few changes within its early productions[3].

Two final considerations are particularly important ones in the establishment of performance traditions during King Arthur's first several years. First, the "magical transformation" scenes in Acts II, III, and V within the original King Arthur sources, almost certainly remained a prominent aspect of the play, since the Dorset Garden stage, where it continued this season, was specially equipped for audience-pleasing magic and spectacular scenes. Second, dance remained an important component of King Arthur. Although no specific names of actors, singers, or dancers are known for the individual performances, the Dorset Garden theatre did, at least, document names of personnel who were employed for several seasons in the 1690's, and these lists of names included several renowned dancers in London.[4] Additionally, one actor, the acclaimed Colley Cibber, who surely played the role of King Arthur, was advertised for the production. Consideration of all of the above circumstances lends support to the theory that King Arthur changed little during its first several years at the Dorset Garden theatre -- it remained a fully-staged semi-opera, with no notable revision, in the original manner that Dryden, Purcell, and Priest had intended, according to the above assessment of performance traditions.

A change of venue for King Arthur in the 1700/01 season must have occasioned some minor revisions, however, due to differences in stage

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[3]In Part I of The London Stage, pp. 395-397, there are quotes from Colley Cibber's Apology and John Downes's Roscius Anglicanus that infer King Arthur's appeal to audiences.

[4] Among the names of prominent dancers of the 1690's in London were Mr. Bray, Mr. Philips, and Mr. Prince.

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accommodations. Three recorded performances of King Arthur in this season took place on January 29, February 1, and April 8 in the Drury Lane theatre, the use of which Christopher Rich had acquired in 1695. Perhaps the most notable changes in these productions were the aspects of staging and use of spectacular effects. Colley Cibber, who again acted in the revival, stated in a description of the theatre's acoustical properties, that the Drury Lane was a "model theatre".[5] Its stage, thought to have been rebuilt by Rich in 1696, was narrower than that of Dorset Garden, and it projected a shortened forward portion, or apron, which forced the actors further back from the auditors. The status of the scenes containing dance are difficult to assess since the theatre's dance personnel are not indicated in records for this season; however, the scenes of spectacle, or magic transformation, were almost certainly less prominent than those seen in earlier productions in the Dorset Garden theatre, since Drury Lane lacked some of the equipment for special effects that Dorset Garden contained.[6]

Presumably, the orchestra performed just in front of the stage, in the "pit", and the singers could be heard well throughout the theatre with this design.[7] The size of the orchestra remains uncertain, due to lack of information in the manuscript sources, but may have been at least 25-30 players, including strings (violins I and II, viola, basso continuo), winds (flutes or recorders, oboe, bassoon), and occasionally brass (trumpet) and percussion (probably kettledrums) for martial scenes. This

[5] Discussed in London Stage, "Introduction" of Part I.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] Samuel Pepys, in his Diaries, describes this location of the orchestra, as discussed by Ivan Taylor in Samuel Pepys, (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967), p. 130.

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orchestration is considered fairly typical for Purcell's theatre music at this time, based upon investigation of his other stage compositions.

In spite of the slight adaptations brought about by change of venue, this, King Arthur's tenth anniversary season, marked the preservation of most of its original performance traditions. King Arthur was one of several works of Dryden and Purcell's, including The Prophetess (or Dioclesan) and The Indian Queen, that continued to be popular during this season in London and for several more years afterward.

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The Performances of 1704 to 1716

King Arthur lived on into the first decade of the eighteenth century, but underwent transformation from the Restoration-era genre of fully-staged semi-opera to that of concert version, musical "afterpiece", and even "concert-ballet", as new forms of theatrical entertainments evolved and took the stage in London. In the two seasons that intervened before the next productions of King Arthur in 1703/04, the Drury Lane theatre began to advertise its offerings somewhat more regularly in the Daily Courant, the first journal to achieve daily circulation in London in 1702; as this journal and others became better-established, their advertisements reflected the expansion of entertainment genres and resultant diversity in the theatres' productions. Theatre repertories still presented a mixture of old and new plays, but now with more frequent and more varied interludes of music and dance between the acts of drama. On some occasions a full concert of "Select Pieces of Musick" was offered in lieu of a play; more often a musical "Afterpiece' was performed after the evening's play had been given. The Afterpiece typically featured a combination of vocal and instrumental pieces that were often excerpts from other plays, or, theatrical dances, also from other plays, although new acts of pantomime or vaudeville were offered on occasion as well.

Both the concerts and Afterpiece traditions of entertainment became important ones for the eighteenth century stage, and the theatres also began to announce the names of their personnel who performed. These included singers, instrumental soloists and composers, and most frequently, the French and English dancers who were popular in London. Within this

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context of expanded genres of entertainment, with listings of personnel, the music from King Arthur was first presented in concert version with dancing, on January 4, 1704 at Drury Lane, and as musical Afterpiece on March 28.

The information regarding the production on January 4 suggests a somewhat unusual format for the concert, in which music was performed in three Acts, with dances interspersed between the songs, as in a "concert-ballet".[8] Mrs. Katherine Tofts, who was one of the most acclaimed singers this season in London, sang vocal solos that were mostly "songs in Italian and English" as well as "select pieces of Musick" from Purcell's works, including King Arthur. The "Frost Musick" was excerpted for this performance, along with two dances and "a song by Mrs. Tofts" for Act II, and "The Sacrifice" and a "Grand Dance" for part of Act III.[9] While no certain identification of the songs and dances taken from the "Frost Scene" (in Act III of the play) can be made, most suitable for Mrs. Tofts would have been the soprano solos for the character Cupid, "Thou doting fool, forbear" and "Tis I that have warmed ye".

According to the early manuscripts (examined in Chapter Two), there are at least two opportunities for dancing in this scene as well. These include 35 measures of "shivering music" at which point, according to Dryden's text, "Singers and Dancers, Men and Women Appear", and another location for the same dance characters, who were designated by Dryden as the "Cold People", at the end of the scene. Also announced for the performance on January 4 were six well-known dancers, including three Frenchmen and

[8] The London Stage, Part II: 1700-1729, cites a "broadside" in the Folger Library as a source for this information, but with no manuscript number or other identification for it. The London Stage's description of the document, however, emphasizes the inclusions of the named dances as part of the three-Act performance.
[9] *Ibid.*

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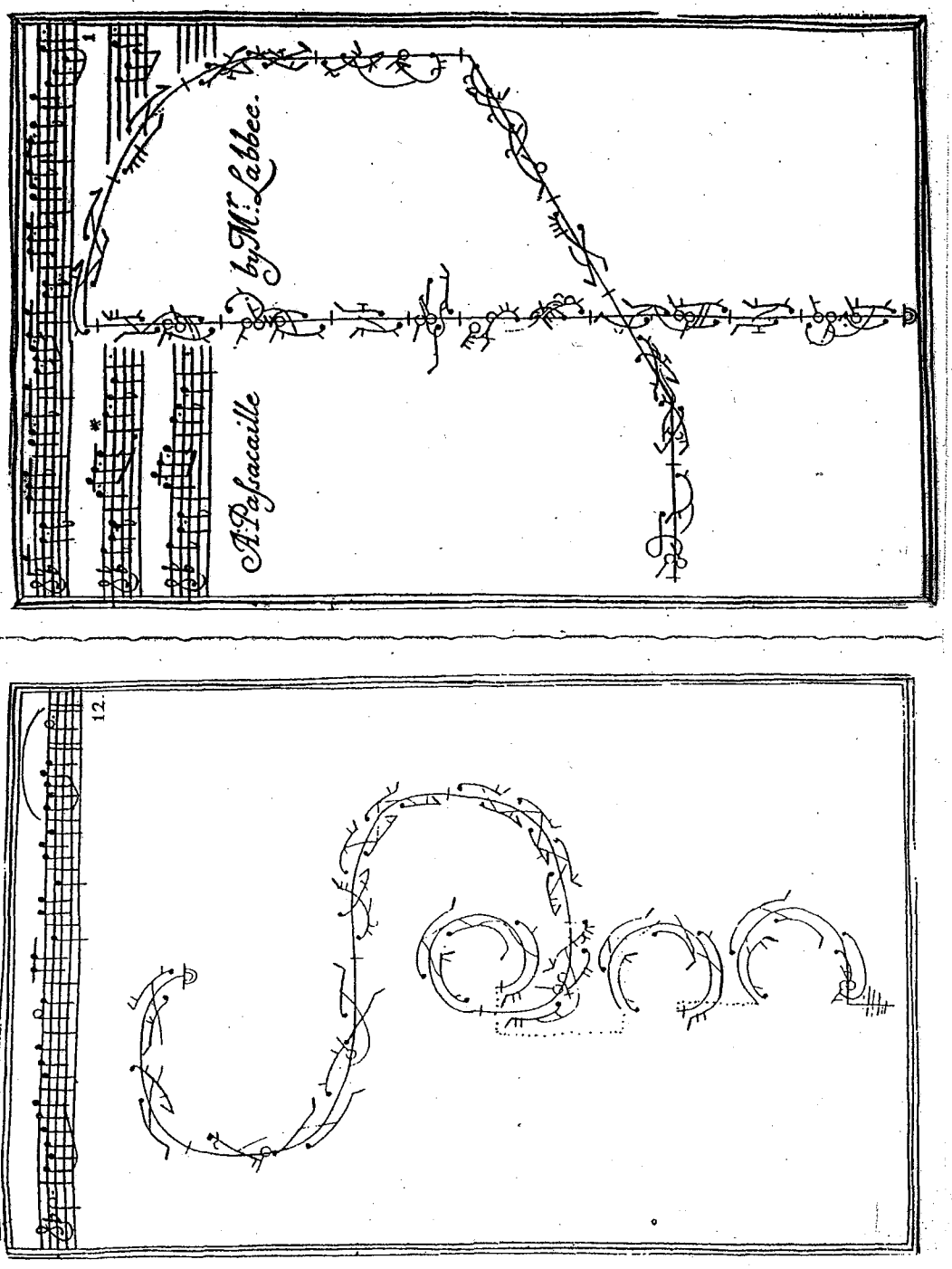
three Englishwomen.[10] While the original choreographies of Josias Priest, now missing, might have indicated mime for the "Frost Scene", it is most likely that the six dancers designed new choreographies for this scene, possibly based upon the older ones, since the six were known for this practice in many of their theatrical performances at this time.[11] Similarly, the "Grand dance" that Dryden indicated for the ending of Act V, and which may have been the "Chaconne in F", (of uncertain location in the early scores), would have presented the six dancers with opportunity for a fairly lengthy and elaborate geometric spatial design of the sort often danced to both *chaconnes* and *passacailles* at this time, and indeed, of the sort known to have been performed by several of the six, according to extant choreographies from other productions. (Figure 3 offers an example of a choreography of this type by one of the six dancers, L'Abbe.) Thus, the production of the "Frost Musick" from King Arthur on January 4 was more than simply the first concert version of songs; it was a three-act concert-ballet of theatrical dances choreographed in the French style with songs interwoven.

On March 28, the "Sacrifice" scene was offered as Afterpiece for the first time, to a play titled "The School Boy", or "The Comic Rivals". Altogether this Afterpiece presented music from three Purcell compositions for stage, and listed "Dancing", also, as part of the entertainment, but with no additional indication of sources for the songs or dances, or listing of personnel. Other performances of Purcell songs that might have been excerpted from King Arthur were indicated in the records of the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields for January

[10] These included L'Abbe, Du Ruel, Cherrier, Mrs. Elford, Mrs. Campion, and "Devonshire Girl".
[11] Contemporary publications featured several of their choreographies, including Edmund Pemberton's Essay ..., and L'Abbe and Roussau's New Collection of Dances, (London, 1725).

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Figure 3



"Pasacaille", section of choreography by Anthony L'Abbee, pub. Pemberton, 1711

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records of the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields for January 18 and February 1, and again at Drury Lane on March 14 and March 29, attesting to the continued enthusiasm for Purcell's music on the stage, whether Concert, "Afterpiece" or "Mainpiece", just as foreign competitors were becoming more common in London.

The music of the "Frost Scene" continued to gain prominence within the Afterpiece tradition during the 1704/05 season at Drury lane. At least five Afterpiece presentations of music from King Arthur, on April 10, April 30, June 5, June 16, and June 30, indicated that songs from the "Frost Musick" would be performed; moreover, at least four of the five advertised the same singers who had dominated performances of the "Frost Musick" during the previous season. The resulting phenomenon was that of an established ensemble of English singers who could be relied upon to perform successful concerts of music from King Arthur, as well as other English stage music, at a time when the first Italian opera troupes began to compete with them in London.

The popularity of the vocal ensemble and their singing of the "Frost Musick" may be seen in the advertisements for the season. The production of April 30 announced the singers, "As on April 10", who were known as Leveridge, Hughes, Mrs. Lindsey, and the "new Boy" as personnel, and again, Mrs. Tofts was advertised to sing songs in Italian and English. The Afterpiece for June 5 announced "A Dialogue from King Arthur performed by "him [Leveridge], and Mrs. Lindsey, [and] also by the new Boy" while the advertisement for June 16 states, "Frost Musick from King Arthur ... by Leveridge, the new Boy, and others", possibly indicating that the male soprano role of Cupid was being sung by the "Boy" this season while Mrs.

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Lindsey might have spoken, or declaimed in recitative, the lines of dialogue with Leveridge, (a bass-baritone) in the character of the Cold Genius, at least for the June 5 and 16 presentations of the "Frost Scene". Similarly, the final duet in the scene may have been sung by Leveridge and the "Boy". The announcement for June 30 added new information: the same music would be performed in the Afterpiece, but this time with "Proper Scenes and Habits", suggesting that the songs were to be sung, and perhaps acted, with the spectacular effects of magic that had been an important element within the earliest productions of King Arthur -- those of the 1690's. Altogether, the ensemble of popular singers performed frequent concerts of selected scenes from King Arthur, with repeated success, in the two seasons between 1703/04 and 1705/06.

Following upon the Afterpiece entertainments of 1704/05, a fully-staged revival of King Arthur took place at Drury Lane on March 2 and 12 of the 1705/06 season. This revival featured several of the singers from the previous season as the competition from the Italian operatic companies at the Queen's Theatre continued. King Arthur, or the British Worthy was announced for March 2, 1706 at Drury Lane, "with all the Original Musick composed by the late Mr. Henry Purcel, and ... performed by Leveridge... Mrs. Lindsey, and the Boy", and was claimed to have been "Not Perform'd these Five Years". The advertisement for March 2 also stated, "Dancing as January 10", referring to the acclaimed French dancers du Ruel, Mrs. du Ruel, and Cherrier, among others, as personnel; the same three were listed for "Proper Dances" for the March 12 performance. No singers are listed for March 12; however,

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the performance was given as a "Benefit [for] Cibber".[12] And, in all probability, the singers Leveridge, Mrs. Lindsey, and the Boy would have sung, even though not listed, as they had on March 2, ten days earlier. Thus, King Arthur regained its status as a fully-staged semi-opera, but now, in 1705/06, with an established cast of prominent English singers, actors, and acclaimed French dancers.

In the season of 1710/11, the Italian opera, Rinaldo, of George Friderick Handel (1685-1756) burst upon the London stage, further expanding the repertoire of entertainment that was being offered. Rinaldo immediately dazzled English audiences, and played frequently that season at the Queen's theatre, often competing against King Arthur. On two of the dates that Rinaldo played, April 11 and May 9, 1711, King Arthur also appeared, in concert version at Stationer's Hall, an existing establishment that became a new venue for music in London. Both performances of King Arthur advertised "select Entertainments out of the Following English operas: The Fairy Queen, King Arthur, The Indian Queen, and Dioclesian...all composed by that great Master the late Mr. Henry Purcell," and both were given as benefits for some of the singers, a tactic that may have helped to draw audiences back again from performances of Rinaldo, at least for those dates.

Competition among the theatres continued as Italian opera became increasingly popular during the next five years between the seasons of 1710/11 and 1714/15, with the staging of more new works by Handel and by other composers of the genre as well. However, the "Frost Scene" from King Arthur also reappeared in the 1714/15 season, this time at the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre, as an Afterpiece to a play titled The Island Princess. With a total of not less than eight performances

[12] Box office proceeds were paid to the recipient named in a "Benefit" performance.

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during the months of January and February of 1715, the "Frost Scene" again played opposite Rinaldo. The productions of January and February advertised a new cast of singers, and sometimes dancers, with only Mr. Leveridge remaining from the former ensemble of the seasons 1703/04 through 1705/06. Two more "Frost Scenes" were given in April of 1715, and one more in May.

In the autumn of 1715, Mr. Leveridge and the new ensemble of singers performed three more "Frost Scenes" as Afterpieces to The Island Princess, and at least five more occurred in the winter and spring of 1716. However, during this, the 1715/16 season, the "Frost Scenes" were no longer played opposite Italian opera at the Queen's theatre as had happened frequently during the previous season, seemingly bringing a halt to the competitive pattern just as Italian opera itself struggled financially to continue on the stage. Two final "Frost Scenes" crystallized at Lincoln's Inn Fields on November 28 and December 17 of 1716; King Arthur then disappeared from the London stage, this time for almost twenty years. For more than ten years in the seasons prior to 1716, however, King Arthur had displayed the adaptability to succeed in various forms, from concert-ballet to Afterpiece to fully-staged semi-opera and back again to Afterpiece. Holding its own against the forces of the Italian Rinaldo, King Arthur, with its troupes of popular English singers and its enduring "Frost Musick", reigned.

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The Revival of 1735/36

When King Arthur returned to the stage at Goodman's Fields in 1735, its new prologue officially announced it as the English competitor to Italian opera. Written by "Mr. Sterling"[13] and spoken by Henry Giffard, actor-manager of the Goodman's Fields theatre, the prologue commences:

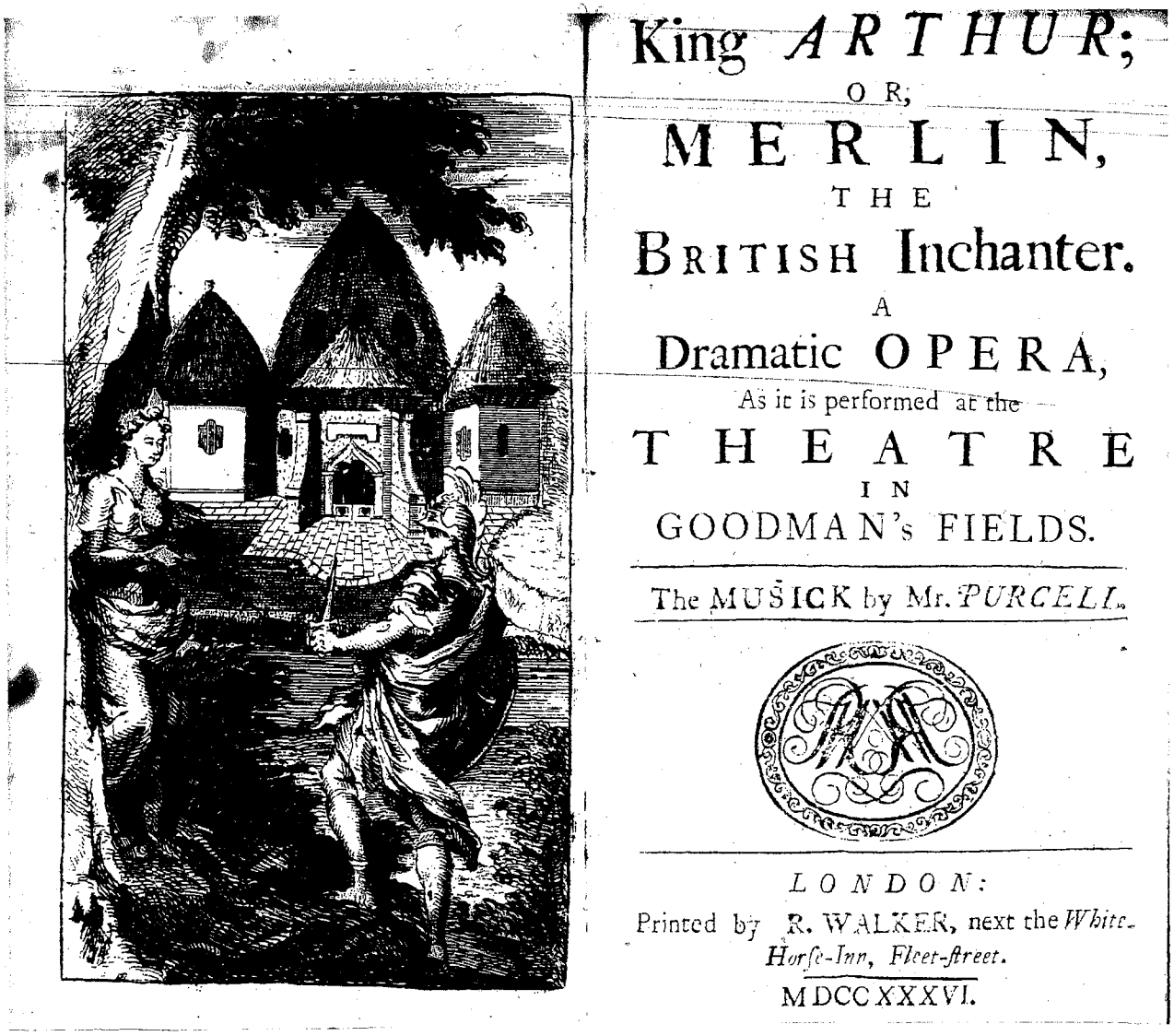
> Our scenes no soft Italian Air dispense;
> Guiltless of Meaning, Innocent of Sense;
> But lo! A Feast! For British Palates fit!
> 'Tis Purcell's Music, serv'd with Dryden's Wit.[14]

With the exceptions of the newly provided topical Prologue and sexually suggestive Epilogue, an appended page of "Alterations" (eighteen lines of patriotic dialogue added for characters Arthur and Merlin), and a change in the title itself to King Arthur, or Merlin, the British Inchanter, the published playbooks of 1736, in two editions, are virtual reprints of Dryden's original text, indicating that King Arthur was revived this season in relatively unaltered form.[15] (See Figure 4 for title page, and Appendix III for prologue, epilogue, and "Alterations".) A score, Tenbury Ms.

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[13] Presumably James Sterling, a minor playwright whose drama, The Paracide, was performed by Giffard's company during this same season.
[14] See Appendix II for the entire prologue.
[15] The second publication in 1736 has been regarded a "piracy" printing due to its further change of title to Merlin, the British Inchanter, or Arthur, the British Worthy; that both were intended for use in the 1735/36 performances seems obvious since both contain the same extensive lists of personnel, the same new prologues and epilogues, and the same appended pages of "Alterations".

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King *ARTHUR*;

OR,

MERLIN,

THE

BRITISH Inchanter.

A

Dramatic OPERA,

As it is performed at the

THEATRE

IN

GOODMAN's FIELDS.

The MUSICK by Mr. *PURCELL*.

LONDON:

Printed by R. WALKER, next the *White-Horse-Inn, Fleet-ſtreet.*

MDCCXXXVI.

Title page, 1736 Walker edition

Figure 4

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338, ca. 1738, in the hand of John Travers (ca.1703-1758), might have been based upon the 1735/36 revival; it likewise presents very few alterations to Purcell's music from the earlier scores of 1692 and 1698, Tenbury 785 and Lam 21, respectively.[16] No additional information regarding orchestration for the 1735/36 revival has been discovered.

In addition to its inherent role as a model of English operatic entertainment, King Arthur also reflected several other important developments in theatrical and cultural trends of the 1720's and 1730's in London. Many of Dryden's dramas of the Restoration era, including King Arthur, established connections to the reigning monarch through Dedication page, Prologue, and/or text itself, and as the tradition continued to evolve into the eighteenth century, King Arthur served to flatter the monarchy of Queen Caroline (r. 1727-1737). Thus, one of the most prominent aspects of the major revival of 1735 was King Arthur's achievement of Caroline's royal approbation, and an accompanying sense of royal identity during the season that was accomplished in an imaginative manner.

At its first production on December 17, 1735, Henry Giffard, the manager of the Goodman's Fields theatre, who also acted the part of Oswald, advertised the play with the following commentary and description of the scenery modeled after Queen Caroline's country estate at Richmond Gardens:

> Not Acted these forty Years. Written by Mr. Dryden. And new Scenes, Machines, and other Decorations, particularly An Exact Representation of Merlin's Cave, as in the Royal Gardens at Richmond.[17]

[16] Tenbury 338 includes a setting of the song, "St. George, Patron of Our Isle" not found in Tenbury 785 or Lam 21.
[17] TheLondon Stage: Part III, vol. 1, p. 537.

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Not only was the presentation a tribute to the Queen, it also represented a new trend in scenery design in the London theatres in which stage sets were created to look like actual places that the viewers could recognize. The frontispiece of the playbook of King Arthur was an engraving of a picture drawn by London stage designer, John deVoto, of his elaborate *scena per angolo* constructions for the 1735/36 revival. These constructions for the stage were modeled upon an actual rococo-styled grotto known as "Merlin's Cave", built within Richmond Gardens for the Queen.

Reports in London daily journals emphasized both the royal connection and the new trend in scenery designs. According to the Daily Advertiser, on January 21, 1736, the twenty-eighth night of the run, "Mr. Giffard, of Goodman's Fields, being introduc'd by the right Hon. the Earl of Grantham, had the Honour of presenting a Manuscript of King Arthur . . . as it is now acted . . . to her Majesty, which she was pleas'd to receive most graciously."[18] On January 27, 1736, the London Daily Post and General Advertiser published the following statement regarding the designs for King Arthur: "We hear the Designs of Merlin's Cave, that were presented last Week to her Majesty by Mr. Giffard, have been so well approv'd of, by many Persons of Quality, that Mr. Devoto, who made the Draughts, has had several Copies bespoke by the Nobility."[19]

Of the "Frost Scene", the poet Thomas Gray, who attended a performance, recorded the following observations in a well-known letter to Prime Minister Horace Walpole on January 3, 1736:

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[18] *Ibid.*, Part III, vol. 1, p.lxxxiv.
[19] *Ibid.*, Part III, vol. 1, p. 547.

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> ... the Frost Scene is excessive fine; the first Scene of it is only a Cascade, that seems frozen: with the Genius of Winter asleep & and wrapt in furs, who upon the approach of Cupid, after much quivering, & shaking sings the finest song in the Play: just after the Scene opens, & shows a view of arched rocks covered with Ice & Snow to ye end of ye Stage; between the arches are upon pedestals of Snow eight Images of old men & women, that seem frozen into Statues, with Icicles hanging about them & almost hidin frost, & from ye end come Singers, viz: Mrs Chambers, &: & Dancers all rubbing their hands & chattering with cold with fur gowns & worsted gloves in abundance.[20]

DeVoto's sought-after designs were very much in vogue.

While the new sets dazzled audiences of 1735/36, the tradition of theatrical dancing within stage productions such as King Arthur also remained an important one, and, according to the lists of personnel that the theatre published for King Arthur, ten well-known dancers performed, including the celebrated Mr. Haughton and Mrs. Bullock, as well as several Frenchmen and Frenchwomen. During the next season, Giffard transferred the revival of King Arthur to the theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields, where, on September twenty-eighth, Mlle Roland was advertised as one of the dancers. Extremely popular, Roland must also have been a very strong draw for the performances. During the early 1730's, the new style of *ballet d'action* created a focus upon expressiveness within formal theatrical dance, and choreographies of the era reveal complex geometric patterns of steps, often referred to as "Grand Ballets" in the advertisements, in which serious characters rendered dramatic expression, and, usually, comic characters exercised pantomime. Thus maintaining an elevated status as a regal operatic entertainment, suitable for the Queen's court, King Arthur continued to offer Dryden's text and Purcell's music with renewed

[20] The Correspondence of Thomas Gray, ed. Paget Toynbee and Leonard Whibley (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1915), I, pp. 36-38

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concentration upon connections to monarchy, settings of spectacular scenery derived from royal locale, and components of formal theatrical ballet.

All of these elements, many of which were enhancements to the earlier Restoration-era designs, contributed to King Arthur's ability to hold the stage and compete with not only Italian opera from visiting foreign companies, but also with several other new genres of entertainment that were introduced in the 1720's and 1730's: in particular, ballad opera, the English oratorio, satirical comedy, and the inception of a Shakespeare revival in London that lasted throughout the eighteenth century. By the mid-1730's, as many as four or five playhouses operated in London, and the height of theatrical activity paralleled that of the late Elizabethan stage. Theatre managers, including Henry Giffard, Henry Fielding, and G.F. Handel, created extended seasons that now included summer months and some holidays in order to accommodate and promote the new productions. Moreover, Giffard himself established some of the first revivals of Shakespearean dramas in the eighteenth century; he also made frequent practice of appending new prologues and epilogues to older works, such as King Arthur, to update a play's appeal to both the town and the crown.

King Arthur was acted more than forty times in the 1735/36 season, a few more during the next, and was revived for four more performances in 1740/41, the same year that Giffard introduced the legendary actor, David Garrick, onto the stage. In fact, Garrick became the re-inventor of the character of Arthur in the next major revival in London in 1770; however, the productions of 1735/36 presented the last time in the eighteenth century in which King Arthur made unaltered appearances on the London stage, as per Dryden and Purcell's original design. Even as the revival appealed to audiences of 1735/36 in many aspects of its production, King Arthur began to be viewed

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1735/36 in many aspects of its production, King Arthur began to be viewed by some as old-fashioned. In the same letter to Horace Walpole in which he had praised DeVoto's sets, Thomas Gray found Purcell's music and other aspects of the semi-opera amusingly out-dated:

> I went to King Arthur last night, which is exceeding fine; they have a new man to supply Delane's place, one Johnson, with ye finest person and face in the world to all appearance; but as awkward, as a Button-maker; in short, if he knew how to manage his Beauties to advantage, I should not wonder, if all the women run mad for him: the inchanted part of the play, is not Machinery, but actual magick: the second scene is a British temple enough to make one go back a thousand years, and really be in ancient Britain: the songs are all Church-musick, and in every one of ye Chorus's Mrs. Chambers sung ye chief part, accompanied with Roarings, Squawlings and Squeakations dire. Mrs. Giffard is by way of Emmeline, and should be blind, but, heaven knows! I would not wish to see better than she does, and seems to do; for when Philidel restores her to sight, her eyes are not all better than before; she is led in at first, by a Creature, he was more like a Devil by half, than Grimbald himself; she took herself for Madame la Confidente, but every body else took her to be in the Circumstances of Damnation: when Emmeline comes to her sight, she beholds this Mrs. Matilda first, and cries out "Are Women all like thee? Such glorious Creatures!" [quotation marks are mine] which set the people into such a laugh, as lasted the whole Act . . ..[21]

Undoubtedly, Gray's opinion was shared by other viewers of the 1735/36 performances, and in fact, the process of revision of King Arthur was about to begin.

[21] *Ibid.*

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CHAPTER IV

The Revivals, 1750 To 1803

1740 to 1770: The Interim Years

In the 1740's when David Garrick (1717-1779) began his career of creating, or recreating, dramatic characters, often including those of Shakespeare, the composer, Thomas Augustine Arne (1710 - 1778), also began his revisionist processes of the theatrical music of Purcell. In the interim years before 1770, when they together adapted a new path for King Arthur, a varied climate of opinion toward the dramatic works of both Dryden and Purcell was forming. Consideration of eighteenth century criticism of the works of the two provides a valuable context in which to investigate the 1770 revival of King Arthur. This investigation will reveal the overall acceptance of most of the revisionist practices of the era, and more specifically, will reveal the types of criticism that generated in reaction to Dryden's and Purcell's stage productions.

Although Purcell's songs were performed often in concerts in the early decades of the eighteenth century, and some of his sacred works given in annual festivals in London, music scholars generally believed that the accomplishments of G.F.Handel, when he arrived in London in 1711, overshadowed those of Purcell's short career (he died at age thirty-six). Indeed, this consensus of opinion was well-formulated when

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the eminent historian, Charles Burney, offered his evaluations of the two composers in 1785: "Purcell's Te Deum, in design and expression of the words, is, perhaps, superior to all others; but in grandeur and richness of accompaniment, nothing but national partiality can deny Handel the preference."[1] As comparisons were a part of Burney's empirically methodical approach, he also undertook to measure Arne's compositions with those of Purcell, expressing his preference thus: "... though [Arne] ... had formed a new style of his own, there did not appear that fertility of ideas, original grandeur of thought, or those resources upon all occasions which are discoverable in the works of his predecessor, Purcell ... yet, in secular Music, he must be allowed to have surpassed him in ease, grace, and variety ...".[2] By the time Arne began resetting Purcell's music for Theodosius with new music in 1744, and similarly, reset the songs for The Prophetess, or Dioclesian, in 1758, his processes of adaptation of Purcell's composition were judged perfectly acceptable by contemporary standards. And, by the time he began to collaborate with Garrick on their 1770 production of King Arthur, Arne had achieved high regard as a leading composer in England.

Critical assessment of Dryden's voluminous authorship is complex and extensive. The tradition began with Dryden himself, as he adapted works of other authors, including Shakespeare, for the Restoration stage. In the 1750's, when Garrick began his reinterpretations of some of Dryden's texts, the literary practice of

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[1] Charles Burney, An Account of the Musical Performances in ...Commemoration of Handel, (1785). p.iii. Quoted in "Or rather our musical Shakspeare", Richard Luckett, Music in Eighteenth Century England, eds. Richard Luckett and Christopher Hogwood, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp 49-79.

[2] Burney, A General History of Music. These statements of Burney's are Luckett's topic of discussion in "Or rather our musical Shakspeare", in Music in Eighteenth Century England.

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revision of older dramas had become customary, and Dryden's own works, in particular, were the topics of analysis by those writers who followed immediately afterward in his Augustan footsteps.

Dryden was admired and revered. His status as Poet Laureate (1668-1688), his skill in many literary genres, his style of writing, and his address of topical issues provided his fellows the materials that became models for their own literary endeavors. Early in the eighteenth century, Dryden's prominent peers such as William Congreve and Alexander Pope expressed their viewpoints regarding his works and style; later on, Dr. Samuel Johnson, a colleague of Burney's and himself a most esteemed and prolific writer in the Augustan vein, made the following remarks in his Life of Dryden:

> Dryden may be properly considered as the father of English criticism, as the writer who first taught us to determine upon principles the merit of composition. . . . His works abound with knowledge and sparkle with illustrations. There is scarcely any science or faculty that does not supply him with occasional images and lucky similitudes; every page discovers a mind very widely acquainted both with art and nature, and in full possession of great store of intellectual wealth. [3]

Dryden was not always so well-respected, however, and his drama occasionally received criticism of a different sort. The theatre historian, George Colman, in a letter to David Garrick in 1761, was much less reverential in his descriptions of Dryden's use of heroic themes in his plays:

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[3] Samuel Johnson, Life of Dryden, vol. 3 of Prefaces Biographical and Critical to the Works of the English Poets, 10 vols. (1779-1781), passages reprinted in Dryden, The Critical Heritage, eds. James Kinsley and Helen Kinsley, (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), pp. 285-313.

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> Indeed the Heroick Nonsense, which overruns the Theatrical Productions of Dryden ... must nauseate the most indulgent Spectator. ... Nobody can have a truer Veneration for the Poetical Genius of Dryden, than the Writer of these Reflections, but surely that Genius is no where so much obscured, notwithstanding some transient Gleams, as in his Plays ...[4]

Whether or not Colman's opinion made an impression on Garrick, it is obvious that it was not Garrick's plan to preserve Dryden's dramatic texts *verbatim*. Garrick's practices of revision were well-accepted in the theatre, he was himself well-liked, and as he and Arne began their collaboration to produce King Arthur, they were continuing, successfully, the process of adaptation that had begun a few years earlier, in 1750 and in 1763, in Dublin. Analysis of three playtexts that are extant for the Dublin revivals reveals that they were large-scale productions; these materials must be considered before progressing to Garrick's and Arne's revival of 1770.

[4] George Colman, Critical Reflections on the Old English Dramatick Writers , (London, 1761), pp. 16-17.

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The Dublin Revivals, 1750-1763, and the Playbook, 1769

The theatrical scene in Dublin was closely connected with that in London; plays and personnel were often exchanged between the stages of the two cities, although records for Dublin productions of the mid-eighteenth century are less complete than those of London theatres. In the case of the first known revival of King Arthur in Dublin, by an unknown adapter, it appears that eight performances took place during the 1749/50 season at the Smock Alley theatre in Dublin, then continued in an extended run during the same season in the larger Aungier Street theatre.[5] Montague Summers, in his Dryden, the Dramatic Works, records a total of seventy-six performances that took place in 1750 at the theatre in Aungier Street, with a list of cast members that included several actors known to be well-established in Dublin at this time.[6]

Records for the 1763 revival are more substantial than those of 1750. They exist in the form of two playbooks from the Theatre Royal at Crow Street, (the Dublin counterpart to the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane in London), and are titled: King Arthur: or, The British Worthy, a Dramatick Opera . . . By Mr. Dryden, published by James Hoey in Dublin in 1763, and King Arthur: or, The British Worthy. A Masque ... Altered from Dryden. The Music by Purcell, published by J. Potts, also in Dublin in

[5] Brian Boydell, "The Dublin Musical Scene, 1749-50", in Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association, No. 105, (1978-79), 78-89.
[6] Montague Summers, Dryden, The Dramatic Works, vol. vi, pp. 234-236.

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1763.[7] (See Figure 5.) The two playbooks are related in several ways, and together they represent the first important adaptation of King Arthur; however, they contain some significant differences that suggest that this revival was a large-scale one which could successfully sustain an on-going revision process, even during the run of the performances. A third edition, published in 1769 by Potts, bears the same title as the 1763 Potts playbook; it is closely related to the 1763 Potts edition in several ways, while showing similarities to the Hoey edition in others.[8] (See Figure 6.) An investigation of the 1769 exemplar will follow that of the two 1763 playbooks.

Both the 1763 playbooks state on their title pages that King Arthur was being performed at the Theatre-Royal in Crow Street; owing to this statement and to both their dates of publication in the same year, it is plausible to assume that both were intended for use with the same revival. Other evidence within the cast lists (see Figure 7.), and within the texts, supports this inference. However, the differences between the two suggest that musical personnel, and possibly dancers, and even some scenery changes may have been varied at some point during the run of the revival. No editor or adapter is named in either; neither is a composer listed, but an "Advertisement" page in the Potts edition credits Robert Carver, a scene painter who worked later at the Theatre Royal in London, with the "Paintings" for the play, and recommends a few of the solo performers, Mr. Barry, Mrs. Dancer, and Signora Passerini, as well. (See Figure 8.)

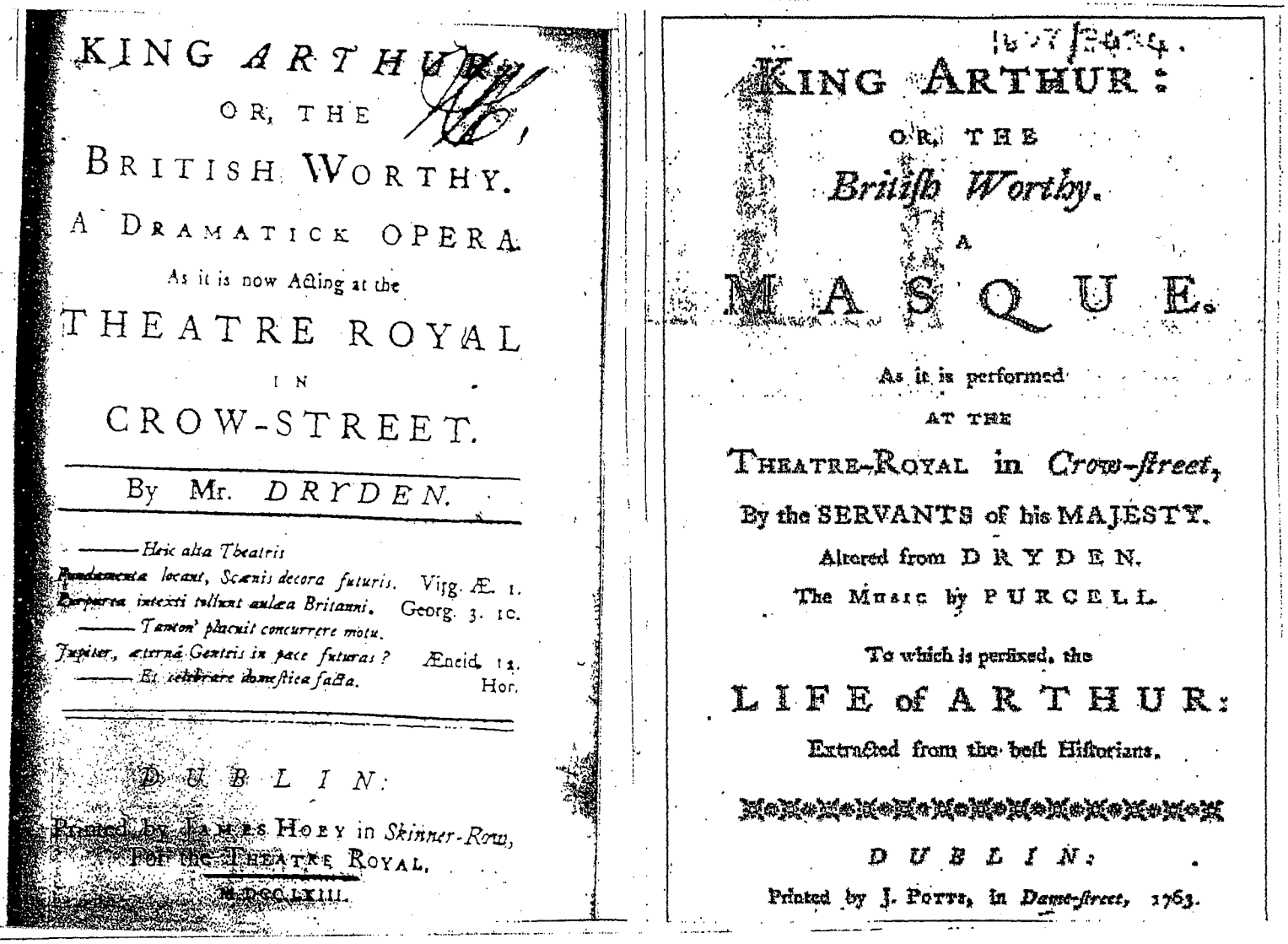
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[7] Exemplar of Hoey edition in Bodleian, Oxford. That of Potts is in British Library. The title of the Potts edition also states: "To which is prefixed, the Life of Arthur: Extracted from the best Historians."

[8] Exemplar in Bodleian, Oxford.

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KING ARTHUR,
OR, THE
BRITISH WORTHY.
A DRAMATICK OPERA.
As it is now Acting at the
THEATRE ROYAL
IN
CROW-STREET.

By Mr. DRYDEN.

——Hæc alta Theatris
Fundamenta locant, Scænis decora futuris. Virg. Æ. 1.
Purpurea intexti tollunt aulæa Britanni. Georg. 3. 10.
—— Tanton' placuit concurrere motu.
Jupiter, æterná Gentis in pace futuras? Æneid. 12.
—— Et celebrare domestica facta. Hor.

DUBLIN:
Printed by JAMES HOEY in Skinner-Row,
For the THEATRE ROYAL.
M.DCC.LXIII.

KING ARTHUR:
OR, THE
British Worthy.
A
MASQUE.

As it is performed
AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL in Crow-street,
By the SERVANTS of his MAJESTY.
Altered from DRYDEN.
The Musick by PURCELL.

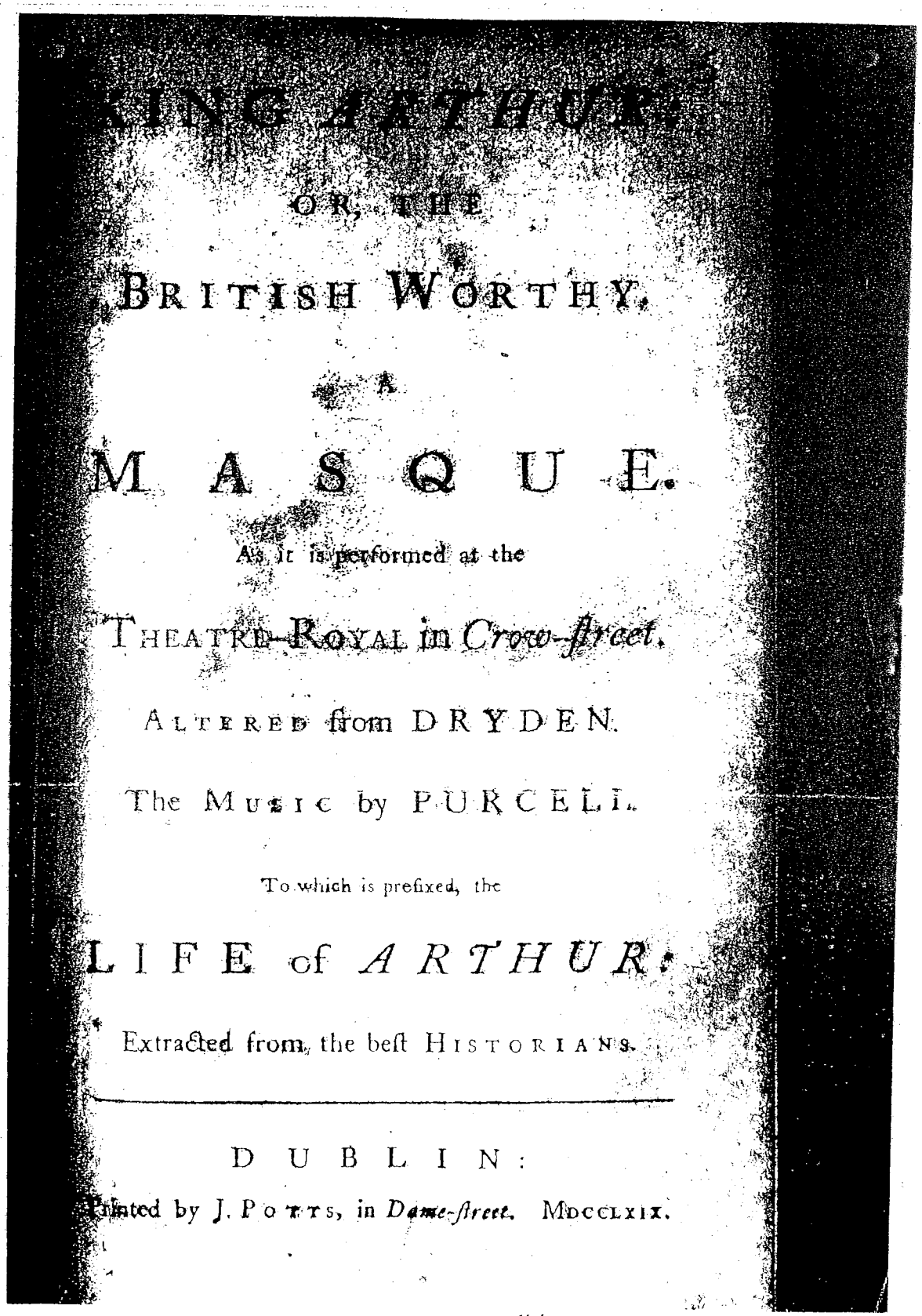
To which is prefixed, the
LIFE of ARTHUR:
Extracted from the best Historians.

DUBLIN:
Printed by J. POTTS, in Dame-street, 1763.

Figure 5

Title page, 1763 Hoey edition, and Title page, 1763 Potts edition

Figure 6



KING ARTHUR:

OR, THE

BRITISH WORTHY.

A

MASQUE.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in *Crow-ſtreet.*

ALTERED from DRYDEN.

The MUSIC by PURCELL.

To which is prefixed, the

LIFE of *ARTHUR:*

Extracted from the beſt HISTORIANS.

DUBLIN:

Printed by J. POTTS, in *Dame-ſtreet.* MDCCLXIX.

Title page, 1769 Potts edition

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Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

King ARTHUR.	Mr. *Barry.*
OSWALD, *King of* Kent, *a* Saxon *and a Heathen.*	Mr. *Heaphy.*
CONON, *Duke of* Cornwall, *Tributary to King* ARTHUR.	Mr. *Heatton.*
MERLIN, *a famous Inchanter.*	Mr. *Sowden.*
OSMOND, *a* Saxon *Magician, and a Heathen.*	Mr. *Reddish.*
AURELIUS, *Friend to* ARTHUR.	Mr. *Adcock.*
ALBANACT, *Captain of* ARTHUR's *Guards.*	Mr. *Austin.*
GUILLAMAR, *Friend to* OSWALD.	Mr. *Stuart.*

WOMEN.

EMMELINE, *Daughter of* CONON	Mrs. *Dancer.*
MATILDA, *her Attendant.*	Mrs. *Mason.*
PHILIDEL, *an Airy Spirit.*	Mrs. *Mahon.*
GRIMBALD, *an Earthy Spirit*	Mrs. *Glover.*

Officers and Soldiers, Singers and Dancers.

SCENE *in* KENT.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

MEN.

ARTHUR, *King of* Britain,	Mr. BARRY.
OSWALD, *King of* Kent, *a* Saxon,	Mr. HEAPHY.
CONON, *Duke of* Cornwall, *Friend to* ARTHUR.	Mr. HEATTON.
AURELIUS, *a* Britiſh *Courtier.*	Mr. ADCOCK.
ALBANACT, *a* Britiſh *Officer.*	Mr. AUSTIN.
GUILLAMAR, *a* Saxon *Officer.*	Mr. OLIVER.
MERLIN, *the* Britiſh *Prophet.*	Mr. SOWDON.
OSMOND, *a* Saxon *Magician.*	Mr. REDDISH.

WOMEN.

EMMELINE, *Daughter to* Conon.	Mrs. DANCER.
MATILDA, *her Attendant.*	Miſs MASON.

DEITIES, SPIRITS, *&c.*

VENUS,	Signiora PASSERINI.
CUPID.	Maſter PASSERINI.
ÆOLUS.	Mr. WILDER.
HONOUR.	Mr. SADLER.
PHILIDEL, *an Airy Spirit.*	Mrs. MAHON.
GRIMBALD, *a Fiend.*	Mr. GLOVER.

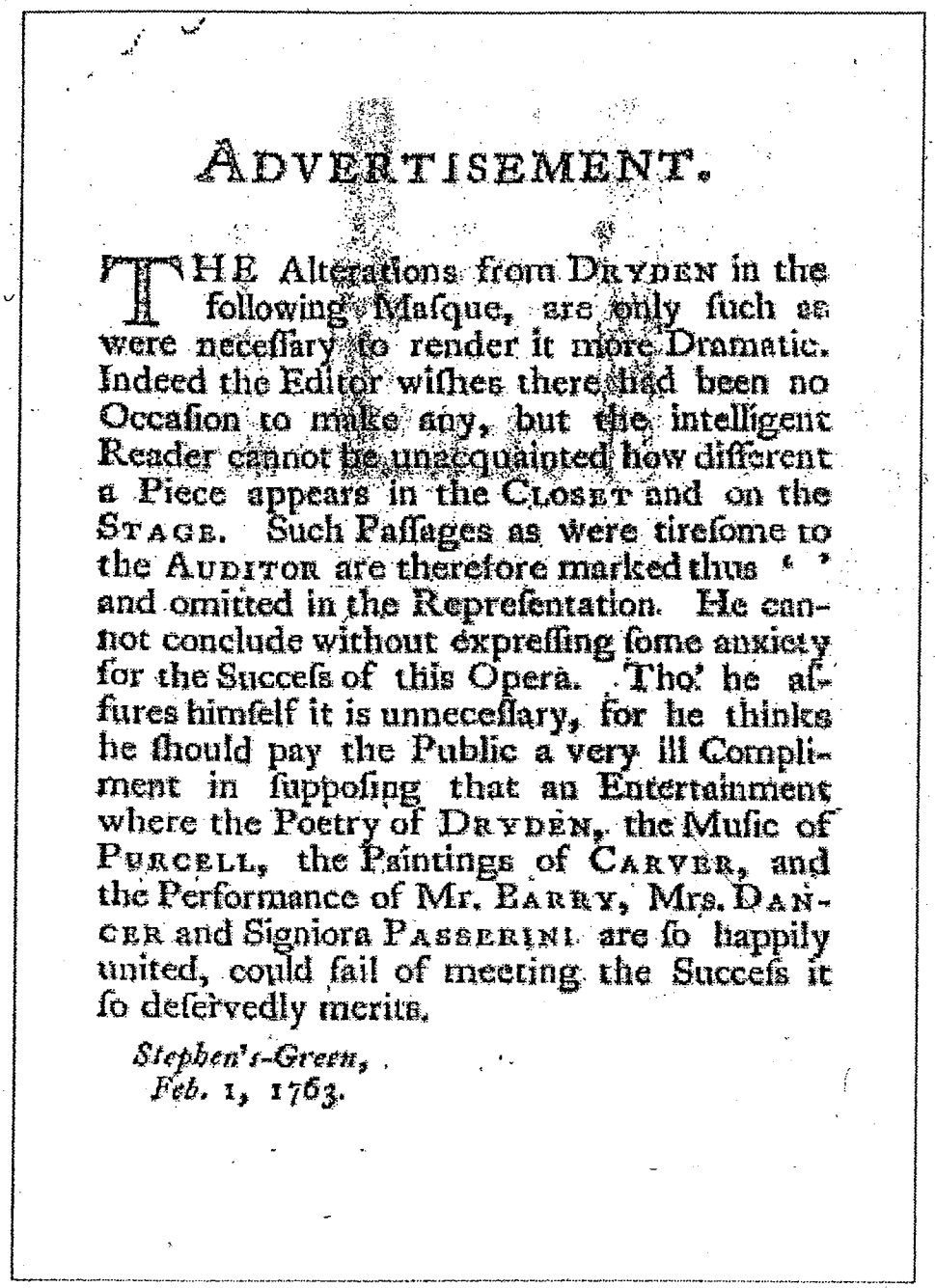
Officers, Prieſts, Shepherds, Nymphs, &c. &c.

SCENE *lies in* KENT.

Figure 7

Cast list for 1763 Hoey edition, and Cast list for 1763 Potts edition

Figure 8



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Alterations from DRYDEN in the following Maſque, are only ſuch as were neceſſary to render it more Dramatic. Indeed the Editor wiſhes there had been no Occaſion to make any, but the intelligent Reader cannot be unacquainted how different a Piece appears in the CLOSET and on the STAGE. Such Paſſages as were tireſome to the AUDITOR are therefore marked thus ' ' and omitted in the Repreſentation. He cannot conclude without expreſſing ſome anxiety for the Succeſs of this Opera. Tho' he aſſures himſelf it is unneceſſary, for he thinks he ſhould pay the Public a very ill Compliment in ſuppoſing that an Entertainment where the Poetry of DRYDEN, the Muſic of PURCELL, the Paintings of CARVER, and the Performance of Mr. BARRY, Mrs. DANCER and Signiora PASSERINI are ſo happily united, could fail of meeting the Succeſs it ſo deſervedly merits.

Stephen's-Green,
Feb. 1, 1763.

Advertisement Page, 1763 Potts Edition

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The lists of characters and cast in the Hoey edition are similar to Dryden's original format, while that of the Potts edition is much more complex. A discrepancy occurs in the listing of personnel in the two playbooks: in the case of the character, Guillamar, a "Mr. Oliver" is named in the Potts edition, while a "Mr. Stuart" is given in the Hoey. While some of the same singers are listed in the casts in both books, they are assigned differently to the songs that occur within the two texts. And, in the list of singers in the Potts edition, the names for the characters of Aeolus and Honour are included as "Deities and Spirits, etc.", with additional characters referred to as "Officers, Priests, Shepherds, Nymphs, etc., etc.". (See Figure 7 for comparison.)

A study of both the similarities and differences in the songs of the two playbooks supports the theory that revision continued to take place during the run of performances during the 1763 revival. Several new songs are created for the soprano, Signora. Passerini, but are in different places in the two playbooks. For example, Sga. Passerini sings a song added for a "Priestess" in Acts I and II in the Hoey edition, but not in the Potts; in Act V, Passerini and her son, "Master Passerini", sing added recitatives and a duet for the characters Venus and Cupid, but again, these songs are not included in the Potts edition. Similarly, another singer, Miss McNeil, is listed for some solos within each of the texts, but those songs that list her are different ones, in different scenes, within the two playbooks.

Other slight differences in the revisions of the music occur between the two playbooks. Several of Purcell's songs are cut in Acts III, IV, and V in both books; the song texts are printed in virgole in the Potts edition, but a statement within the Advertisement page explains that these were "omitted in the Representation" of the

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play. In other cases, where Purcell's songs are retained, occasionally only a verse or two is included in the Hoey edition, while the Potts maintains all of the verses. Vocal forces are sometimes changed from one playbook to the other as well: a song might be indicated for chorus in one book, while printed as a solo in the other. Only a few of Purcell's and Dryden's dances are indicated as in the original text and scores; in the 1763 playbooks, discrepancies in titles of dances occur from one text to the other, so that it is uncertain what types of dances were included. In Acts IV and V, dances appear to be staged very differently within the two editions; according to stage directions, Act V exhibits the most changes of all in both songs and dances from one edition to the other. Dryden's text fared somewhat better: some omissions of text occur in both editions; otherwise, only very occasional changes in wording are found in each.

The two playbooks differ prominently in the descriptions of scenery that each contains. In the Potts edition, elaborate descriptions that are not found in the Hoey suggest that the scene painter, Carver, was perhaps brought in to complete the scenery after productions had begun. In the Potts playbook, for example, the scenery for Act I, scene ii, calls for "A Royal Apartment", and in Act II, "A Cave" is announced, while in the "Grove" setting of Act IV, an additional directive calls for the scene to open, and "... discover a pleasant River, shaded with Trees, a Golden Bridge over it", before Arthur goes forward to discover two syrens in the water.

As can be seen, the above-described discrepancies between the two texts are strongly indicative of the theory that the 1763 production was a large-scale one that could sustain an on-going revision process during the run of the performances.

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Performing personnel, including actors, musicians, dancers, and even scene designers who were often shared between the Dublin and London theatres, were substantial enough in numbers to allow for substitutions and adjustments to occur. Furthermore, this trend of progressive adaptation appears to have continued within another Dublin revival during, or prior to, the 1768/69 season, according to a second edition of J. Potts's playbook for King Arthur, dated 1769.

The playbook printed in 1769 repeats the same title of the 1763 Potts edition: King Arthur or, The British Worthy. A Masque. As it is performed at the Theatre-royal in Crow-street. Altered from Dryden. The Music by Purcell. To which is prefixed, the "Life of Arthur": Extracted from the best Historians. (See Figures 5 and 6.) Although evidence of a revival in the 1768/69 season is insubstantial, consideration of the contents of the 1769 text itself and an investigation of other sources of information suggests that another production of King Arthur indeed took place later in the 1760's, probably in March of 1766. An article titled "Robert Carver", in A Biographical Dictionary of Actors ... and Other Stage Personnel in London addresses Carver's occupation as a scene painter, and describes, specifically, his sets for a revival of King Arthur at the Crow Street theatre in Dublin in 1766 as follows:

> Other productions for which Carver executed scenery at Crow Street over the next seven years included . . .a revival of King Arthur in March of 1766 in which 'the sudden Changes of the beautiful Variety

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> of Scenery, seemed to surprise and alarm the Audience, as the Effect of real Magic . . .and not the Invention of theatrical Art.'[9]

The specific source of this quotation within the article, "Robert Carver", is not clearly indicated; however, one of several sources that are listed, Theatre Notebook, cites another article, "Checklist of Scene Painters Working in Great Britain and Ireland in the 18th Century", which confirms Carver's occupation at the Crow Street theatre until 1768, when he relocated in London.[10] While it remains difficult to reconcile or explain the discrepancy in the dates of the revival in 1766 and the playbook of 1769 in efforts to relate the two, a strong possibility exists that the 1769 playbook is a reprint of a 1766 text that is now missing or that remains unidentified. Moreover, the reprinting of the appended "Life of Arthur", originally prefixed to the 1763 Potts edition, suggests a great expansion of interest in King Arthur on the stage at this time. Thus, I will examine and compare the 1769 playbook to those of 1763 for similarities, derivation of content, or other information that might help to confirm the book's usage in a later revival; I will follow this with a further investigation of the prefixed "Life of Arthur" that is found in both the 1763 and 1769 Potts editions of the text.

The playbook of 1769 is related to both those published by Potts and by Hoey in 1763, but it is not merely a reprint of either of the two. Rather, the 1769 Potts edition reflects some portions of, or similarities to, each of the earlier texts, but in

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[9] "Robert Carver" in Philip Highfill, Kalman Burnim, and Edward Langhans, A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), vol. iii, 93-95.
[10] Sybil Rosenfeld and Edward Croft-Murray, "A Checklist of Scene Painters Working in Great Britain and Ireland in the 18th Century", in Theatre Notebook, Nos. 19 and 20, (1965).

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different respects. No cast list is printed in the 1769 edition; however, some of the singers' names listed for songs within the text are the same ones found in the 1763 Potts edition, while other singers' names and songs in the 1769 edition are those found only in the 1763 Hoey text. The same process of derivation of material is notable in other aspects of the three playbooks, as well. In some scenes, the 1769 edition repeats text and stage directions found only in the 1763 Potts; in others it follows those characteristic only of the Hoey. And further, Carver's scenes described in Potts's 1763 edition, but not in Hoey, are repeated in the 1769 playbook. The greatest complexities among the three books occur in Act V in which the 1769 edition again reprints portions of one, and then the other, of the earlier texts, but at the end of the Act, includes both a chorus and a grand dance that neither of the 1763 editions contain. Thus, the contents of the 1769 playbook support the theory that another revival of King Arthur did, in fact, take place sometime later in the 1760's.

However, the prefixed "Life of Arthur" provides the greatest testimony to the on-going success of repeated King Arthur revivals, and to the enduring appeal of Arthurian legend itself, for late eighteenth century audiences. (See Appendix III.) In essence, the 1763 and 1769 playbooks, with appended "Life of Arthur", present a literary championing of the legend of Arthur that surely inspired patriotic feelings for both readers and viewers of performances alike. What better opportunity to promote a nationalistic British image than in musical drama and text at a time when foreign competition in opera abounded? Yet, the appended "Life of Arthur" presents new uncertainties and unresolved questions in itself.

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Since no adapter/editor for the revival(s) and the three playbooks of the 1760's has been identified, who made the decision to prefix the "Life of Arthur", and for what reasons? The account indicates some of the same early sources and chronicles that Dryden himself claimed to have studied for the construction of his plot; moreover, the unknown adapter/ editor registers an awareness of this at the end of the account, perhaps in order to validate Dryden's research, or to provide on-going empirical context for Arthurian legend. Perhaps the decision to append the "Life of Arthur" was made, not by the adapter, but by the publisher, or an assistant. Might their interests in providing it have been other than those of an adapter? And, how influential were the revivals and playbooks with "Life of Arthur" in prompting other playwrights to pursue the legendary hero?

Surprisingly few dramatizations of Arthur's stories were performed, or even penned, for that matter, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; thus, Dryden's King Arthur, from the time of its first performances in the late seventeenth century, to those of the newly-adapted form in 1763, provided the most prominent vehicle for delivery of Arthur *et al* into the theatre, as well as into print, for over one hundred-fifty years.[11] As enthusiasm strengthened after 1763, the actors David Garrick and John Philip Kemble, in turn, revived and sustained King Arthur with their adaptations well into the nineteenth century. Garrick's revival that began in 1770 in London continued the "promotion" of King Arthur for British audiences as he proceeded with the revisionist practices that had begun in Dublin in 1763.

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[11] Two minor productions were William Hilton's "Arthur, Monarch of the Britons"(1776), and Aaron Hill's "Merlin in Love' (1760). Both are described in Alan Lupack's Arthurian Drama: An Anthology, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991).

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The London Revivals of 1770 and 1781

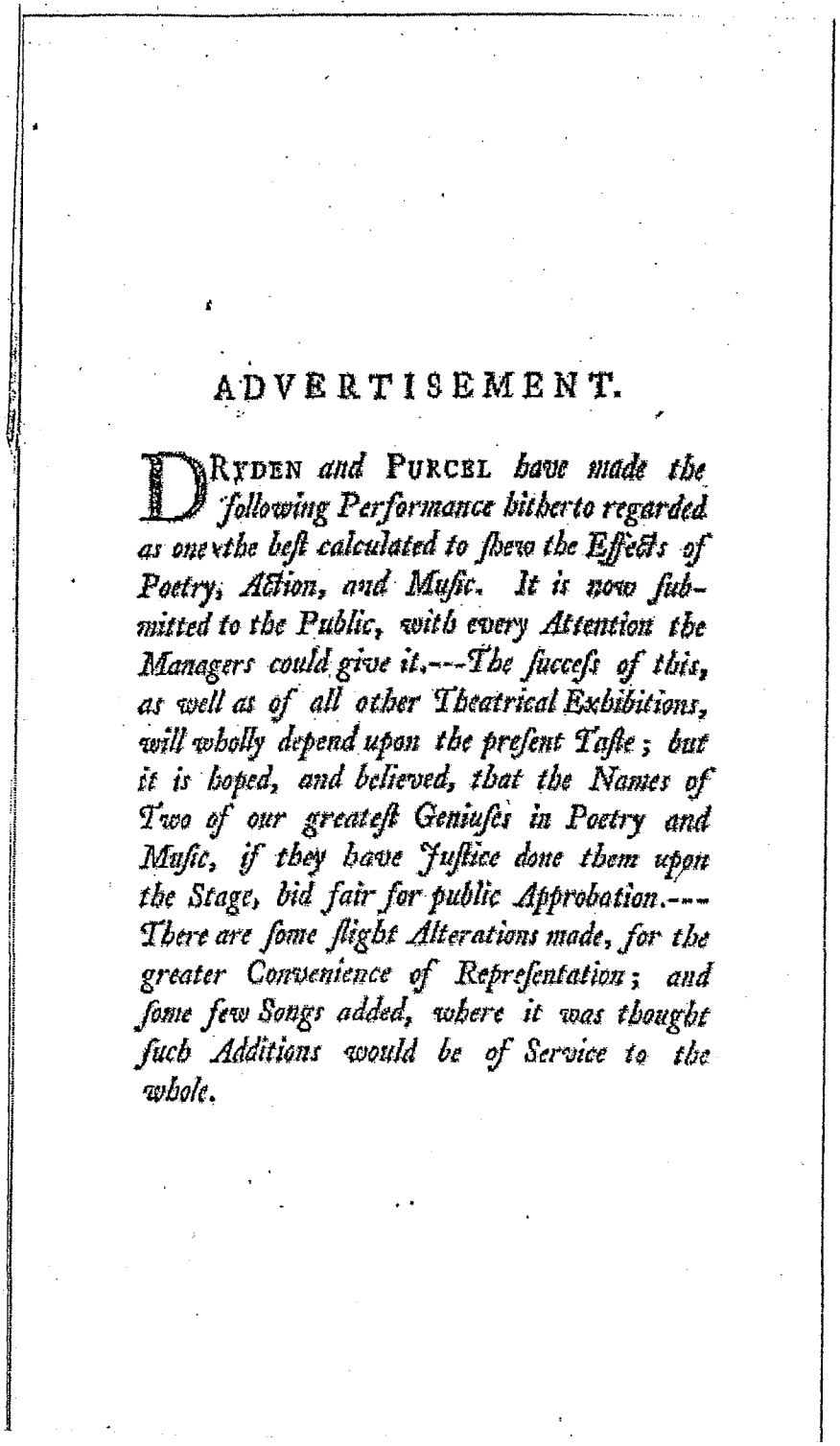
As stated above, David Garrick's revision of King Arthur in 1770 was a continuation of a process of adaptation that began several years before, in Dublin. This current investigation of the 1770 and 1781 revivals will first establish their connection to the earlier revivals, and it also will consider the efforts and abilities of Garrick himself to successfully continue presentation of the legendary King Arthur to London audiences in an "enlightened" theatrical era.

Garrick's adaptation of Dryden's text, that he titled King Arthur, or the British Worthy. A Masque by Mr. Dryden,[12] was a more extensive revision than that which had occurred within the 1763 and 1769 texts; however, one can identify several ways in which the earlier productions were at least somewhat influential upon Garrick's effort. Beyond the frequent exchange of plays and personnel that took place between the two Theatres Royal in London and in Dublin, a specific link between the 1763 and 1770 productions of King Arthur was a Mr. Reddish, whose name is listed for the character of Osmond in the 1763 production, and who played King Arthur in 1770. (See Figures 7 and 10.) Moreover, the lists of characters (not names of personnel) including all the singing and acting roles, as well as the additional Nymphs, Soldiers, Priests, etc., are the same in the 1763 Potts edition as in the 1770 edition, with the slight exception of two "Airy Spirits" who were added in 1770. The title pages and "Advertisement " pages for the 1763 and 1770 playbooks are almost identical; however, the 1770 exemplar does not include a reprint of Dryden's Prologue and

[12] Exemplar in British Library.

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Figure 9



ADVERTISEMENT.

DRYDEN *and* PURCEL *have made the following Performance hitherto regarded as one of the beſt calculated to ſhew the Effects of Poetry, Action, and Muſic. It is now ſubmitted to the Public, with every Attention the Managers could give it.---The ſucceſs of this, as well as of all other Theatrical Exhibitions, will wholly depend upon the preſent Taſte; but it is hoped, and believed, that the Names of Two of our greateſt Geniuſes in Poetry and Muſic, if they have Juſtice done them upon the Stage, bid fair for public Approbation.--- There are ſome ſlight Alterations made, for the greater Convenience of Repreſentation; and ſome few Songs added, where it was thought ſuch Additions would be of Service to the whole.*

Advertisement page, 1770 Garrick edition

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Epilogue, and neither does it contain an account of the "Life of Arthur", as did the Potts 1763 edition.

Perhaps the addition of new songs in the 1763 revival inspired Garrick to include new ones of his own, while eliminating the 1763 additions. Certainly his editorial practices are extensive for both the spoken and sung parts of the drama. As Ellen Harris has carefully explained in *King Arthur's Journey into the Eighteenth Century*, Garrick's process of revision includes adding text in some scenes while eliminating it in others, transposing scenes within some Acts, and writing of new song texts in several Acts[13]. This process begins with the very first scene of Dryden's in Act I, which Garrick transposes to another location in the Act, while replacing it with the musical scene of sacrifice instead. Similarly, Garrick transposes more text material in both Acts I and II, includes new songs that are set by Arne, and interpolates them into scenes that contain Purcell's original settings. In some cases, Purcell's settings of Dryden's song texts are retained, but shortened; in other cases, Arne provides entirely new music for Dryden's songs as well as the new songs of Garrick's. Harris has evaluated that, in several places throughout the five Acts, Arne restructures Dryden's lines into recitative form and follows these newly-created recitatives with aria-type settings of Garrick's new songs, creating recitative-aria pairs that are more exemplary of classical-styled composition than Purcell's seventeenth-century baroque style[14].

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[13] For a thorough discussion of the changes that Garrick brought about, Ellen Harris's article may be found in Purcell Studies, ed. Curtis Price, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 257-289.

[14] *Ibid.*, Harris includes a detailed analysis of Arne's additions and changes to Purcell's score that elucidates these revisions of melody and rhythm, and a tendency on the part of Arne to simplify, regularize, and shorten Purcell's music.

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In the case of Purcell's lengthiest music, the *Passacaglia* of Act IV, which is both sung and danced in the original version, Arne severely cuts back both the song text and the instrumental interludes of dance. Other dances are cut, also; new ones by a minor composer and colleague of Arne's, Charles Dibdin, are included. In common with the 1763 productions of King Arthur, Garrick drastically shortens Act V.

Seemingly, Arne had wished to replace even more of Purcell's music, a venture not encouraged or accepted by Garrick, according to correspondences between the two that are extant. Within several letters to Garrick, Arne suggested his re-writing of the music because Purcell's songs were "... very short of that Intrepity and Spirited Defiance pointed at by Dryden's words and sentiments..." and were "...infamously bad; so very bad, that they are privately the objects of sneer and ridicule to the musicians...".[15] Arne asks of Garrick, "I wish you wou'd only give me leave to Doctor this performance, I would certainly make it pleasing to the Public, which otherwise, may have an obstruction to the success of the Revival."[16] And in another passage, "...Purcell's music, ... (though excellent in its kind) was Cathedral and not to the taste of a modern audience."[17] Although Arne named several specific songs he wished to reset, Garrick apparently ignored these requests, as they are not included in the 1770 score.[18]

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[15] Printed in Hubert Langley, Dr. Arne, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938), pp.68-69.
[16] *Ibid.*, p.69.
[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80. For a more complete discussion of Arne's letters, refer to Harris, "King Arthur's Journey ...", in Purcell Studies, cited above.
[18] Songs,etc. in the Masque of King Arthur, by Purcell and Arne, (London, ca. 1773) is discussed by Harris in "King Arthur's Journey..." cited above.

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Perhaps most important to King Arthur's success in 1770 was Garrick's comprehension of the tastes of theatre-goers when he created his adaptation of Dryden's and Purcell's original work; undoubtedly he was aware of the popularity of the Dublin revivals during the years just before 1770. With his experience and popularity in the capacities of both actor-manager and playwright-adapter, Garrick led the way in establishing high standards of theatrical artistry, including the "natural" acting style that was very much admired by audiences in the middle and late eighteenth century. Moreover, he surrounded himself with other competent theatre personnel, including actors, musicians, dancers, and stage designers.

During Garrick's lengthy career, London theatres continued to offer several genres of entertainment that succeeded on the stage, including tragedies, comedies, tragicomedies, operas and oratorios, masques and Shakespearean drama. Many within these categories were revisions of older works, such as Garrick's. In a typical evening, a theatre traditionally featured a five-Act "Mainpiece" with Prologue and Epilogue, Dancing or "Diversion" (usually in the French theatrical style), Music (both vocal and instrumental), and a two-Act "Afterpiece" with more music and dance. In his collaboration with Arne in the re-make of King Arthur, Garrick maintained its status as a musical drama that flourished amidst the competition of the 1770 season. With eight theatres in London in operation at this time, and with Shakespearean drama and Handelian oratorios achieving especial popularity, King Arthur was in good company.

King Arthur played at least twenty times in the 1770/71 season at the Drury Lane theatre, and several more in 1772/73. The following remarks in the Advertisement page, presumably written by Garrick himself, introduced the play:

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> Dryden and Purcel have made the following Performance hitherto regarded as one of the best calculated to Shew the Effects of Poetry, Action, and Music. It is now Submitted to the Public, with every Attention the Managers could give it. ... The Success of this, as well as of all other Theatrical Exhibitions, will wholly depend upon the present Taste; but it is hoped, and believed, that the Names of Two of our greatest Geniuses in Poetry and Music, if they have Justice done them upon the Stage, bid fair for public Approbation. ... There are some slight Alterations made, for the greater Convenience of Representation; and some few songs added, where it was thought such Additions would be of Service to the whole.[19]

Regarding its success, theatre treasurer and historian, Benjamin Victor, offered this account of the revival:

> King Arthur, A Dramatic Opera. This celebrated performance was written by Dryden, and the Music composed by Purcell -- two eminent Geniuses! In this improved, enlightened age we are apt to laugh at some of Dryden's bombastical strokes. Purcell's music retains its due force and merit, because founded on nature. The revival of this Dramatic Opera has answered the expectations of every adventurer, and Managers who have Singers are always right to have King Arthur in their stock.[20]

When Garrick's King Arthur was again revived in 1781, for at least ten performances, the republished playbook was identical to that of 1770, with only a short additional statement on the title page, "Scenes by French and Carver". According to the descriptions in both the 1770 and 1781 playbooks, Carver, whose sets continued to be very much admired, recreated for Garrick in London the same

[19] See Figure 9.
[20] Victor, Benjamin. History of the Theatres of London, (London, 1761), vol. iii, p. 172.

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KING ARTHUR:

OR, THE

BRITISH WORTHY.

A

MASQUE.

By Mr. DRYDEN.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in DRURY-LANE,

By HIS MAJESTY'S Company.

The MUSIC by PURCELL and Dr. ARNE.

LONDON,
Printed for W. STRAHAN, L. HAWES and Co. T. DAVIES,
T. LOWNDS, T. BECKET, and W. GRIFFIN. 1770.

[Price 1s.]

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Arthur, King of Britain,	Mr. Reddiſh.
Oſwald, King of Kent, a Saxon,	Mr. Jefferſon.
Conon, Duke of Cornwall, Friend to Arthur,	Mr. Packer.
Aurelius, a Britiſh Courtier,	Mr. Keen.
Albanact, a Britiſh Officer,	Mr. Branſby.
Guillamar, a Saxon Officer	Mr. Wheeler.
Merlin, the Britiſh Prophet,	Mr. Aikin.
Oſmond, a Saxon Magician,	Mr. Palmer.

WOMEN.

Emmeline, Daughter to Conon,	Miſs Hayward.
Matilda, her Attendant,	Miſs Platt.

DEITIES, SPIRITS, &c. &c.

Venus,	Mrs. Scot.
Cupid,	Miſs Rogers.
Æolus,	Mr. Champnes.
Honour,	Mr. Vernon.
Philidel, an airy Spirit,	Mrs. Baddeley.
Airy Spirits,	Mrs. Wrighten, Mrs. Dorman.
Grimbald, a Fiend,	Mr. Banniſter.

Officers, Soldiers, Prieſts, Shepherds,
Nymphs, &c. &c. &c.

Scene lies in Kent.

Title page and Cast list,1770 Garrick edition

Figure 10

scenery he had designed for the Dublin revivals in the 1760's, only now in collaboration with another scene painter at Drury Lane, John French. Yet another link between the 1770 and 1781 productions was the actor, Mr. Bannister, who played Grimbald in both the revivals. And among the new members of the cast, Miss Phillips, in the character of Venus, was apparently quite exceptional. An admirer who saw her perform, wrote the following lines that appeared in a London daily newspaper: "To Miss Phillips, on seeing her in the character of Venus, in the Opera of King Arthur."

> Methinks I see you in your ivory car,
> Sparkling in gems, like the bright morning star:
> In purple clothed, your brows with roses crown'd,
> And your moist hair with golden fillets bound:
> Drawn by your doves, as through the air you fly,
> The wind, enamour'd, breathes a gentle sigh:
> As upward, to the blest abodes you move,
> All heaven all earth, harmonious, sing their love.[21]

The success with which King Arthur was repeatedly revived clearly indicates that the practices of adaptation and revision were not only accepted, but were generally regarded to be improvements, in their time. Some critics considered Dryden's original text "bombastical" and Purcell's music "Cathedral"; nonetheless, their King Arthur was now almost one hundred years old, and had become a well-established phenomenon within musical drama. Moreover, the Dublin revivals of the 1760's had achieved exceptional heights of popularity for King Arthur, and after

[21] Printed in Introduction to King Arthur score ed. by Edward Taylor, for the Musical Antiquarian Society, (London, 1843).

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Garrick's successes in London, John Philip Kemble was the next of the famous actors to assume the role of the legendary hero and thus maintain the "Life of Arthur".

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The Afterpiece, *Arthur and Emmeline* of 1784, and Beyond

In 1784, King Arthur was re-titled Arthur and Emmeline, and was shortened to a two-Act Afterpiece that succeeded upon the Drury Lane stage for several years under the direction of John Philip Kemble (1757-1823). The adaptation is generally thought to have been made by Kemble himself, with musical revisions by Thomas Linley, a minor composer of the era who was associated with the Drury Lane theatre. The advertisement for Arthur and Emmeline, as it opened on November 22 at Drury Lane, stated that it was an afterpiece "Consisting of Dialogue, Music, and Machinery, Altered from [Garrick's adaptation of] King Arthur, by Dryden, with great Variety of very capital Scenery, New Dresses, and Decorations". The production was assessed by Kemble's historian, James Boaden:

> At Drury Lane a great deal of pains has been taken with a masque called Arthur and Emmeline, an alteration of Dryden's King Arthur, or the British Worthy. Miss Farren was the heroine, and her innocent blindness interested in a very high degree. Kemble sustained Arthur in a most chivalrous style, and the Grimbald and Philidel of Bannister and Miss Field (not to speak it profanely) formed no despicable stage companion to the magic of the Tempest. Linley made some tasteful additions to the divine music of Purcell.[22]

Several publications of playbooks for Arthur and Emmeline, in 1784, 1786, 1789, and 1790/91[23], reflect the success that this abbreviated version experienced as it continued in performance at Drury Lane between the 1784/85 and 1790/91 seasons. Cast lists in the four playbooks indicate that Kemble played Arthur throughout all

[22] James Boaden, The Memoirs of the Life of John Philip Kemble, vol.i, 225.
[23] Exemplars in British Library and Harvard Houghton Library.

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these years of performances, and that most other cast members remained constant, as well. Playbills and advertisements made for the productions also support this information regarding the stability of the cast.

Apart from the similarities in the listings of personnel, the four exemplars contain several differences in text from one other which probably indicate that adjustments were made during the performances of the revivals, as was seen previously in the 1763 playbooks for the Dublin revival. All of the playbooks, however, reflect even more omissions of both Dryden's and Purcell's original text and music, as well as that added by Garrick and Arne in 1770. Two new songs are included by Kemble and Linley, as seen in the 1784 text; though a score for this revival has not been identified.

Once again, it is possible to discover some connections to the previous major revival, that of Garrick and Arne. The actor, Mr. Bannister, who played the character, Grimbald, in both of Garrick's earlier productions, played the same in all of Kemble's later ones, and the scenery designs by Mr. Carver for King Arthur are described again, identically, within the Arthur and Emmeline playbooks. Kemble, like Garrick before him, was well-known for the heroic roles that he portrayed, and his "Arthur" returned, (with Emmeline), for a final performance at Covent Garden in 1803.

Revivals of King Arthur had, in one form or other, been almost continuous throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century, occurring every few years in Dublin or in London from 1763, or even before, until 1791. While several great actors, most of whom were also adapter/editors, were responsible for the continuing legacy of Dryden and Purcell's King Arthur, Arthurian legend itself began to take on

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a life of its own as the performances grew in popularity. Whereas in the early eighteenth century, Purcell's music sustained the semi-opera via the various adaptable genres of afterpiece and concert performances, in the later part of the century, Dryden's dramatic legend endured, even through the processes of extensive revision that had occurred. Thus, the stage was set for the resurgence of interest in Arthurian drama that developed in the early romantic era.

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CHAPTER V

Revivals of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Revivals of the Nineteenth Century and 1909

After a few initial productions in the early nineteenth century, revivals were sparse until the very late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when King Arthur became subject to several new and diverse trends in adaptation, some of them curiously experimental ones. I have not examined or inventoried all revivals of King Arthur in this time period; rather, I have investigated those that represent major trends in revision. The revivals in 1819, 1827, and 1842 will be the subjects of investigation in the first part of this chapter, with an inquiry into two later productions, in 1897 and in 1909, that developed a new stage for King Arthur. Several revivals within the "early music" movement of the twentieth century, beginning with that of Dennis Arundell at Cambridge University in 1928, and continuing to the present, are the topics of the final portion of this chapter. Special attention is given throughout the chapter to the question of whether or not the resurgent popularity of Arthurian legend has influenced more recent productions.

Even as publishers printed the first collected works of Dryden and Purcell in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (discussed in Chapter Four), King

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Arthur followed a new and different direction in theatrical presentation. Within it, adapters dropped the music of Thomas Arne, for the most part, and instead, added compositions from Purcell's other works for stage. Such adjustments in the selection of music by "arrangers" of course necessitated further revision in Dryden's text, as well. This sort of interpretation for stage did not draw upon the scholarship and authenticity of the newly-published collected works of Dryden and of Purcell; rather, the process of revision in the early nineteenth century, as in the late eighteenth century, represented a dramatic tradition in its own right, independent of literary scholarship. As expected, adapters and directors of dramatic productions pursued the elements of successful performances, and not necessarily historic authenticity of text and music.

Two early nineteenth century revivals in London, at Covent Garden in 1819, and at the English Opera house in 1827, illustrate the new trend to drop the music of Arne, and include music of Purcell's other stage works, instead. Montague Summers, in the Commentary to his Dryden, the Dramatic Works, noted that the production of 1819 was a revival of John Philip Kemble's Arthur and Emmaline, of 1784, while the editors of the recent University of California edition of the Works of John Dryden, record a version of David Garrick's King Arthur given that year, but without the music of Arne.[1] Possibly both versions played that season in London; in the case of either one, however, the omission of Arne and the inclusion of other music of Purcell marks the beginning of the new experiment in adaptation. This experiment became even

[1] Summers. Montague, ed. King Arthur in Dryden, The Dramatic Works, vi, pp. 236, and Vinton Dearing, ed., King Arthur, xiv, p.284, in The Works of John Dryden, eds. Edward Hooker, H.T. Swedenburg, Jr., and Vinton Dearing, (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of Califonia Press, 1996).

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more manifest in the revival of 1827, a large-scale production with prominent cast, that altered Dryden's text and included extra music from The Indian Queen and Dido and Aeneus[2]. Apparently the cast was a quite capable one, and according to a review in The Times, Miss Kelly was remarkable in the part of Emmaline:

> The scene in which Emmaline is restored to sight was acted by Miss Kelly to the life. The surprise and delight of Emmaline, when she first perceives the glorious light of heaven, were exquisitely described by Miss Kelly. Pure nature breathed in every artless word she uttered -- in every look she gave -- and in every action and gesture which the unexpected gift of a new sense induced.[3]

The "romantic era" had begun.

The new trend extended still further in 1842 when another major revival of King Arthur commenced, this time at Drury Lane, with added pieces from Purcell's The Libertine and Bonduca, and again, from The Indian Queen, and Dido and Aeneus.[4] This adaptation retained some of Arne's songs as well. In spite of the piecemeal approach to Purcell's music, the 1842 revival was an immensely successful romantic-era production, due to the efforts of actor-manager William Charles Macready (1793-1873), who refocused attention upon the spectacular and magical aspects of King Arthur, according to Dryden's original text. Like Garrick and Kemble before him, Macready experienced popularity and admiration for his interpretations of dramas, including restoration of Shakespearean plays to more original form, but also for his

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[2] Edward Taylor, in his Introduction to his edition of the score for the Musical Antiquarian Society, King Arthur, states the production was of Arthur and Emmaline, rewritten in three Acts, while Montague Summers, noted above, refers to the same production, with the same cast, as King Arthur.
[3] The Times, (London), July 3,1827, Is. 13321, p. 2.
[4] Edward Taylor, p.12.

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concentration upon a sense of unity, or continuity, within productions, and modernization of stagecraft to achieve this sensibility. Summers provides extensive information, gained from an article in *The Times*, regarding the 1842 revival, with its pastiche of Purcell's various compositions for stage and its emphasis upon settings of romanticized splendor. His report is valuable to consider at length to inform an understanding of the impact of this endeavor. After listing the cast, which retained one actor from the previous 1827 revival, Summers quoted several passages from *The Times* that the production was:

> ... one of the most remarkable spectacles that can be imagined ... there is a vastness in its magnificence that renders its first impression on an audience almost bewildering. There seems no end to the gorgeous displays, but decorative effects are produced in masses.[5]

Summers registers that "sad liberties [were] taken with Dryden" within the adaptation, then continues his explanation of the performances with more statements from *The Times*. Within his reports of the Infusion scene and the Enchanted Wood scene, he includes another quote:

> When Emmaline recovers her sight, '... Philadel regales her eyes with a sight of the garden of Flora, a pretty fantastic scene, with meandering streams about it, and a little temple in the Temple, and sings in the meanwhile Dr. Arne's song, *Oh Sight, the mother of Desires!* ... On Arthur's entering the wood, it changes into a beautiful grove of roses, which gradually receding discovers an extended piece of water, with a

[5] The Times, 1842, quoted in Summers, p.237.

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> bridge across it. Light pink tints and the transparent hues of the water predominate in this scene...[6]

Summers believed that "The finale was especially gorgeous", and that Britons strike home (from Bonduca) was most exceptional. He again quotes:

> By this chorus the audience were wound up to so high a pitch of enthusiasm that when they thought it could not be repeated when they had demanded an encore they almost threatened a disturbance. All tumult was, however, hushed by the splendid last scene, a view of the sea, in the midst of which stands the allegorical figure of Britannia, while the song *Fairest isle, all isles excelling*, sung by Miss Romer as Venus, this magnificent spectacle concludes. The audience who had been most enthusiastic throughout, burst into a violent shout for Mr. Macready. . . .They *would* have Mr. Macready, who at last appeared, and was greeted by a waving ocean of hats and handkerchiefs.[7]

King Arthur played thirty-three successive nights with obvious enthusiastic response to its new musical arrangement and elaborate, expansive decorations. However, with this production, the "debauchery" of King Arthur began, according to Michael Burden, in his discussion of a negative review that castigated the revival.[8] Apparently there were some in the 1842 audience who felt that Macready's romanticization had let King Arthur too far astray from its origins.

The trend in musical arrangement that included compositions from other works of Purcell, continued within stage presentations even as the scholarly practice of preserving authenticity continued within publication, although the two practices

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[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] Michael Burden, "Purcell Debauch'd: Performing the Dramatick Operas" in Performing the Music of Henry Purcell, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 145-162.

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were clearly divergent ones. The revival of 1842 is a notable case-in-point: just as Macready adapted King Arthur with extra music in the manner described above, Prof. Edward Taylor, in 1843, edited the first complete score of King Arthur, based upon manuscript sources, for the Musical Antiquarian Society, founded in 1840. Moreover, the Purcell Club, established in 1836, for performance and publication of Purcell's sacred music, also aimed toward historic preservation as opposed to revision or rearrangement. Once again, practices of adaptation in theatrical performance served entirely different purposes in suiting audience tastes than those of scholarly publication in the early nineteenth century.

After the grand and romantic revival of 1842, Purcell and Dryden's King Arthur seldom made appearance for the next fifty-five years. Reasons for this desertion bear investigation. Foremost among them is the fact that, after 1842, the stagings of baroque-era operas, including the semi-operas of Purcell, were rare in the nineteenth century. While contemporary grand and comic operas were often seen on the London stages, few of them were of English origin; instead, almost all of them within both categories were written by Italian, German, and French composers, and were imported into England. For that matter, few Restoration-era plays of any sort were given in the nineteenth century. Augustan drama and poetry of neoclassical structure, such as Dryden's, were rejected in the romantic era; very little new writing occurred in either genre. Instead, simple melodramatic works were often given on stages that continued to feature picturesque scenery and sensational special effects. King Arthur, as a dramatic semi-opera of baroque-era

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origin, did not fit the categories of grand or comic opera; neither did it belong to the genre of melodrama.

Purcell's theatrical music and Dryden's dramatic works continued to be collected and venerated, however, even if not often performed. Occasional notable performances, such as that of the Commemorative Festival of 1858 in London, that celebrated the bicentenary of Purcell's birth, offered a few selections of songs from the theatrical works, including King Arthur, among the wider spectrum of sacred works that were given. Generally speaking, however, Purcell's theatrical music was frequently still regarded as merely "incidental" to drama, and less distinguished as a genre than his religious compositions, until the founding of the Purcell Society in 1876. At that time, Purcell's sacred and secular compositions began to achieve a more equal status, especially in terms of publication.

As regards fully-staged performance, however, one might speculate still further upon the reasons for King Arthur's continued absence from the theatre until 1897. Given King Arthur's legendary popularity within the late eighteenth century revivals and that of 1842, and given the romantic-era penchant for medieval legend and tragic heroism, it seems inevitable that Arthur would resume a stage career at some point in the nineteenth century, even if further revised from original baroque-era trappings. Possibly the long delay had to do with the tremendous appeal of, and competition from, Alfred, Lord Tennyson's Idylls of the King, printed in 1859, that featured more of the traditional Arthurian heroes than did Dryden's King Arthur. Nineteenth-century readers might simply have preferred to enjoy the adventures of the original medieval knights that Tennyson's poetry celebrated on the printed

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page. Furthermore, the attempts of several minor playwrights of the mid-to-late nineteenth century to deliver Arthur and his cohorts from page to stage resulted in a few new dramatizations of Arthurian legend, but none was especially successful, with the possible exception of J. Comyns Carr's King Arthur, with music by Sir Arthur Sullivan, at the Lyceum Theatre, London, in 1895.[9] Whatever the reason for the slowness of King Arthur's return, Dryden's characters, Emmaline, Matilda, Saxon warriors, and others, certainly had gained historic renown themselves at two hundred years of age, and, in 1897 and in the early twentieth century, they returned, though once again, not in their original baroque fashion.

The revivals of 1897 and 1909 forged another new direction for King Arthur, one that pursued a better integration of music with drama. The adapters of both revivals identified and focused upon a "lack of unity" between music and dramatic action, and sought to improve upon Dryden and Purcell's original collaboration, thus, "mending" King Arthur's ways.

At the Birmingham Music Festival of 1897, J.A. Fuller-Maitland, a member of the Purcell Society, produced a concert version of King Arthur in which he made efforts to restore the integrity of Purcell's music without considering the merits of the play. In his discussion of the results of this procedure, Michael Burden points out that Fuller-Maitland treats King Arthur as only a "number opera", and

[9] William Brough's burlesque, King Arthur, or The Days and Nights of the Round Table, experienced little success on the stage; Henry Newbolt's Mordred: A Tragedy, fared somewhat better. American playwrights who also wrote Arthurian drama at this time in the 1890's were Ralph Adams Cram, whose Excalibur: An Arthurian Drama was written in 1893, but not published til 1909, and Richard Hovey, who produced a collection of Arthurian plays, in Launcelot and Guenever. A Poem in Dramas (1890's). All are discussed in A. Lupack's Arthurian Drama, cited above.

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quotes from Fuller-Maitland's notes to the libretto of the new production: "the musical numbers are almost entirely incidental, that is, they seldom have anything to say to the main action of the play."[10] An article in The Times echoed this opinion in its support for Fuller-Maitland's adaptation:

> This evening saw the revival, after a period of many years' neglect, of Purcell's music to Dryden's fustion drama of King Arthur---a play in which it seems now incredible that so many illustrious actors and actresses of the past should have made successful appearances. The well-known *Come if you dare*, the intensely dramatic "Frost scene" of remarkable modern effect, and the pretty duet, *Two daughters of this aged stream*, are well known to musical people; but the sacrificial scene of the opening act and the interesting *Passacaglia* -- one of the most, if not the most, extended of single musical movements in existence at the time of its production -- well deserve to be generally known. ... The want of dramatic connexion and unity , which undoubtedly mars its general effect (the musical numbers are altogether apart from the action of the play), makes it a matter of comparative indifference whether the work be given in its entirety or not, and the many omissions of short instrumental movements and of one "dialogue" from the performance of this evening was hardly to be regretted...[11]

The "dialogue" omitted was that sung by the Shepherds and Shepherdesses within the *passacaglia*, and Fuller-Maitland offered the following explanation for its omission:

> The words of the duet in the "Sylvan scene" ... had to be changed ... Dryden's original words at this point are not very wicked, as they only represent a couple of cautious nymphs who require definite contracts of marriage from their swains before joining in the dance; still, having in remembrance the action of a provincial choir which declined to sing Stanford's *Phaudrig Crohoore* because it contained the word "thigh",

[10] J.A Fuller-Maitland, ed., Heny Purcell, The Music in Dryden's King Arthur as Performed at the Birmingham Festival 1898, quoted by Burden in "Purcell Debauche'd ...".
[11] "The Birmingham Festival", in The Times (London). Oct. 7,1897, p.4.

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> Stanford's *Phaudrig Crohoore* because it contained the word "thigh", and guessing at the susceptibilities of the singers and audience at the Birmingham Festival, I thought it wiser to be on the safe side.[12]

In spite of minor omissions and alterations, however, Fuller-Maitland spared King Arthur many of the cuts it had sustained in previous revivals, reinstating most of Purcell's composition, even though dismissing Dryden's text. Thus, concern for authenticity of music was expressed at the Birmingham Festival, taking precedence over concern for literary transmission of legend.

The idea that King Arthur lacked dramatic unity and thus needed revision predominated its next adaptation by Gustav Holst for a revival at Morley College in 1909. Although generally a promoter of Purcell's music, in his article about the composer published in The Heritage of Music, Holst described the problems of producing the semi-operas, including King Arthur:

> The Fairy Queen, King Arthur, and Dioclesian offer almost insuperable difficulties. They are too dramatic for the concert platform, too incoherent for the stage. Producers must be prepared to cut, to alter the disposition of some numbers, to make discreet changes in the words of others, and above all, to toil and struggle for a scheme that will inform the work with a semblance of dramatic unity.[13]

Since no documentation of the revival survives, one must presume that Holst indeed made the cuts, alterations, and other changes he described in order to create

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[12] J. A. Fuller-Maitland, "Purcell's King Arthur" in Studies in Music by Various Authors,, ed. Robin Grey, (London: Simpkin, *et al*, 1901), pp. 156-174 .

[13] Gustav Holst, "Henry Purcell. The Dramatic Composer of England" in The Heritage of Music, ed. Hubert J. Foss, (London, 1927), quoted in M. Burden, "Purcell Debauch'd".

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the sense of dramatic unity that he believed King Arthur, in its original form, lacked.[14]

Although Fuller-Maitland and Holst both rescued King Arthur's music from the "pastiche" methods of earlier nineteenth century revivals, neither of them viewed Dryden and Purcell's original semi-operatic production as a cohesive blend of music and drama: instead, each of them in his own way, continued the processes of alteration of King Arthur.

[14] M. Burden, in "Purcell Debauch'd", explains that documentation of Holst's performances was destroyed during WW II.

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Revivals of the Twentieth Century and Beyond

The twentieth century initiated a period of recovery for King Arthur, and other baroque-era operas, as part of the "early music" revival of the1920's and 1930's. The actual movement toward complete historically informed production, including efforts to utilize original texts, baroque period instruments, orchestration, and vocal styles, baroque stagecraft, and even dance styles, did not come about until after WW II; however, the first attempts in the direction of authenticity could be evidenced in revivals of King Arthur as early as that produced by Dennis Arundell at Cambridge University in 1928.

In his Introduction to the playbook that he titled King Arthur: A Dramatic Opera by John Dryden[15], Arundell states, " The present revival at Cambridge is therefore perhaps the first complete revival since the seventeenth century in the spirit and --- as far as possible--- in the manner intended by Dryden and Purcell". The 1928 playbook is virtually a reprint of Dryden's original text, and Arundell lists in it the manuscript sources that he consulted for both the revival and the Purcell Society score that he edited for publication in the same year. Also, in his Forward to the second edition of the score, revised in 1971 by Margaret Laurie, Arundell offers a careful discussion of the premises of historic performance practices for baroque opera:

[15] Dennis Arundell, ed. King Arthur; A dramaick opera by John Dryden, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928).

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> All performers of any period music, especially when there is no contemporary printed score, depend on scholarly editions which interpret out-of-date time-signatures, rhythms and ornamentations. Unfortunately, however meticulous he may be, no composer even today can ever write exactly what he means. . .so in the days when composers wrote in their scores little more than "fast" or "slow", "loud" or "soft", and performers depended on the practice of the day for their interpretation, it is not surprising that even their contemporaries who wrote about music did not always agree, and still less surprising is it that reliable scholars in after years may be at variance. . . .Still, though scholars may disagree and often with reason, the practising musician should carefully study the views of any specialist while remembering that the ultimate aim must be the best possible performance with the material available and that the clue lies in the emotion created by the composer's setting of the words and actions.[16]

The suggestions of Arundell and other "early music" exponents helped to set standards for many modern performances of baroque-era operas, such as King Arthur.

A revival in 1956 at the University of Nottingham focused upon other aspects of historic performance practices. Produced jointly by the departments of Music, English, and the Dramatic Society of Nottingham, the performances took place in the Great Hall of the University, which was fitted with the acoutrements of a Restoration-era theatre, with an extended forestage, elaborate period scenery, and specially devised props and equipment for the staging of magical transformation and conjuration scenes, in accordance with Dryden's original directions. In his review of the production, Percy J. Hitchman quotes Dryden's stage directions and explains how the props were designed to accomplish them:

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[16]Dennis Arundell's "Forward" to King Arthur, Margaret Laurie, ed., (London: Novello, 1971), pp. xxxiii-xxxv.

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> Dryden's stage direction reads, 'Arthur strikes at the Tree and cuts it; Blood spouts out of it; a groan follows, then a shriek'. It was necessary to produce a spout of blood that would well out and trickle down the tree and be clearly visible to the audience. After much experiment a suitable liquid was concocted by the University Chemistry Department. ... When Arthur stabbed the tree with his sword a stagehand squirted the blood from a pipette.[17]

Hitchman notes several other memorable details from the production: "Dresses in the style of the late seventeenth century were magnificently elaborate (with King Arthur in full-bottomed wig looking remarkably like Charles II), and Purcell's enchanting music was given a performance that powerfully evoked the period", and also, "The Head of the Department of English, Prof. V. de S. Pinto, wrote a new verse-prologue for the occasion, which was spoken by an actor in the character of John Dryden."[18] Apparently, Nottingham's efforts in authentic performance practice entertained in a very imaginative way.

Even though both Cambridge and Nottingham provided exemplary precedents within the early opera movement, not all revivals of the twentieth century accomplished baroque-era standards, or even intended to do so. Two notable exceptions to baroque-era rule, presented by the Atlanta [GA] Opera Company in 1968, and by Colin Graham and the English Opera Group in 1970, greatly altered King Arthur's journey along the path of historically informed restoration. In both cases, the adapters reiterated the viewpoint expressed by Fuller-Maitland in 1897,

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[17] Percy J. Hitchman, "King Arthur at Nottingham: A Notable Revival", in Theatre Notebook. No. 11, (1956-1957), 121-128.
[18] *Ibid.*

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and by Holst in 1909, that Dryden's play was "unworkable, "could not stand on its own", and "needed enormous revision". Blanche Thebom, of the Atlanta Opera Company, claimed that, "Editing Purcell's music and Dryden's lines puts one in an unenviable position. Yet, without cutting and rearranging, the piece would remain unworkable and without a story line, perhaps even unperformed." Thebom explained further that she revised King Arthur five times before achieving a version that worked "dramatically and musically".[19]

Colin Graham's revival for the English Opera Group in 1970 gained, perhaps, the greatest notoriety for King Arthur to date. Graham offered his own account of his adaptive practices in the article, "King Arthur Revised and Revived", claiming that Benjamen Britten, a long-time champion of Purcell's music, had encouraged him to pursue the adaptation.[20] Graham described his processes thus:

> To meet present-day theatrical standards the story and characters must be strengthened, in some cases entirely reshaped and, of course, the characters must be allowed to sing. ... In this new version I have, therefore, cut and adapted the play, revising the plot and characters, and re-ordering the music to make it possible for the protagonists to do all the singing . . .and have introduced music from Purcell's lesser-known dramatic music and airs to complete the score. Although there has been enormous revision of the spoken text, the music is more or less intact with the exception of small interior cuts. ... This makes way for the additional songs I have introduced.[21]

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[19] Blanche Thebom, "Birth of a King", Impresario, Magazine of the Arts, VIII, No. 3, (1968-69), 8.
[20] Colin Graham, "King Arthur Revised and Revived", Opera, XXI, (1970), 904-909.
[21] *Ibid.*

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Most audiences and reviewers alike supported this reorganization; however, a few found the revival to be reprehensible in its corruption of King Arthur. David Charlton states, "No good would be done by reviving Colin Graham's bizarre version of the work, which minced up and flavoured the original score for mass consumption."[22] Greater criticism came from Malcolm Greenhalgh:

> This is deplorable both musically and dramatically, as songs from different contexts are dropped into ones for which they were never intended. Such transpositions make a mockery of the composer's stylistic development . ...This is the more surprising when one considers that Mr. Graham has had to find music from a variety of sources mainly because he had already thrown out a good third of Purcell's original score.[23]

Perhaps the severe criticism earned by Graham's production was due, in part, to its failure to honor historically-informed performance practices, that, by this time, predominant and extensive within early music restoration.

Thus, after the productions of 1968 and 1970, King Arthur resumed the process of recovery, and most further revivals refocused upon authenticity of musical interpretation. Creative staging often accompanied these efforts, though this sometimes facilitated over-zealous revision of Dryden's text. With only a few exceptions, such as that of the Cambridge revival in 1928, Dryden's play sustained many decades, even centuries, of mutilation and re-writing. Many adapters took advantage of the old excuse that the play was unworkable and lacked dramatic

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[22] David Charlton, "King Arthur: Dramatick Opera", Music and Letters, No. 64, (1983), pp. 184-192.
[23] Malcolm Greenhalgh, "Arthurian Legend?" The Musical Times, No. 112, (1971), 1168-1170.

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unity; yet, the result has been that entirely new adaptations of the text simply don't measure up to Dryden's neoclassical original. And regrettably, twentieth-century historic performance practices of Purcell's theatrical compositions have not often extended far enough into preservation of the dramatic texts that they accompany.

The recent Purcell tercentenary of 1995 has gone far, however, in re-stimulating King Arthur's rebound with an abundance of revivals modeled closely after Purcell and Dryden's original, but with one noticeable problem. Even here, among the models of tercentenary historic preservation, little effort has been extended to include early dance practices. In light of substantial current research into baroque choreography and dance styles that were once an integral element of operatic production, too few opera companies, including both professional and university-level teams, appropriate the necessary funding to incorporate baroque dance choreographies and dance professionals into their productions. Illustrative of this problem is the Buxton revival of King Arthur in 1986, directed by Malcolm Fraser. Although this production maintained many aspects of authentic performance traditions, including baroque musical practices and spoken roles enacted by an established cast (including motion picture actor, Alan Bates, as King Arthur,) the dances suffered. According to reviewer Peter Heyworth, "The main difficulty is that the chorus has to dance, which it does with the obtrusive enthusiasm that always marks the amateur [dancer] on the stage."[24] The problem is an age-old one; baroque dances have long been regarded as only "incidental" to both the drama and

[24] Peter Heyworth, "Purcell's Arthurian Incidental Music" in The Observer, VII, No.27, (1986), p.97.

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the music, and thus, have suffered even more severe cuts, revision, and adaptation than other elements of opera.

The 1995 tercentenary celebration of Purcell's music placed King Arthur on many maps at once. Three revivals are especially representative of the combined trends in historic restoration and creative staging: the Early Music Festival performances in Boston, MA, directed by Jack Edwards, Peter Holman, and Paul O'Dette, the Royal Opera's King Arthur at Covent Garden by Graham Vick with William Christie's *Les Arts Florissants*, and Nicholas McGegan's concert version with the Philharmonia Baroque orchestra and singers in San Franscisco and Berkeley, CA (that repeated McGegan's earlier King Arthur concert given at the Ojai, CA Festival in 1988). The performances in Boston followed Dryden and Purcell's seventeenth-century original with the Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, and the early music group, The King's Noyse, performing. Both the Boston performances and those of McGegan's Philharmonia Baroque in California received acclaim for their restoration of early performance practices; *Les Arts Florissants* at the Covent Garden revival also excelled in authentic musical reproduction, earning a Grammy Award for their recording of the music in 1997. Furthermore, the Covent Garden revival, directed by Vick, maintained Dryden's original text as well, included well-performed scenes of dance, and added an especially imaginative ending to Act V of King Arthur. In review of the production, Richard Langham Smith describes:

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> Vick's trump card was his sudden transformation of distant past into near present. After our *Fairest Isle* has been created ---in tune with Dryden's Arthur, ultimately a believer in peace and harmony ---a couple hesitantly appear in modernish dress. It is tentative and touching. For the final scene, the stage slowly floods with British stereotypes: a squaddy, a bobby, a nanny, a wolf-cub. Vick achieves this artfully and movingly and raises this spectacle to a level far above historical interest.[25]

After 1995, early music groups, such as The King's Noyse and *Les Arts Florissants,* have continued to propel King Arthur further toward and into the twenty-first century, with more revivals at the Purcell Conference and Festival of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1995), at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (1999), at Trinity College in Greenwich (2000), and at the Bloomington Early Music Festival in Indiana (2002), among others worldwide that are on-going.

King Arthur withstood the romantic forays and enchantments of the early nineteenth century, the critical interludes of the turn-of-the-century, and continued the journey on through the twentieth century trends in historic preservation. Dryden and Purcell's dramatic semi-opera has been, and is, a heroic work for all seasons, and -- King Arthur is still adapting.

[25] Richard L Smith, "Our Fairest Isle Revived", in Musical Times, No. 136, (1995), pp. 368-69.

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CONCLUSION

Perhaps the greatest asset of King Arthur's origin as a semi-opera has been its inherent ability to facilitate, for over three hundred years, as many readings and performances as there have been revisions of its text and music. From the beginning Dryden and Purcell fashioned the flexible semi-operatic form to adjust to the changing tastes and policies of the various monarchies of the Restoration era. Just as Dryden adapted the plot and characters for King Arthur from his readings of early sources of Arthurian legend, so could they further evolve to represent Charles II, then James II, and finally, William III.

Moreover, Purcell's enduring music carried King Arthur through the stages of the early eighteenth century, where the semi-opera adapted to meet the demands of new forms of entertainment: King Arthur was presented as "Afterpiece", in Concert version, as a shorter Diversion of Music and/or Dance, and as fully-staged "Mainpiece". Within these first adaptations, King Arthur withstood the foreign invasions of both Italian and Handelian operatic forces of the century, emerging as a champion of English musical sovereignty. In the later 1700's in Dublin, the subject itself of the semi-opera, the medieval British hero, Arthur, received emphasis not only in many successful performances on the stage, but also in the publication of the "Life of Arthur", derived from the early sources of the legend, some of which Dryden himself had consulted, and prefaced to the printed text for audiences' further appreciation of the story of Arthur. Furthermore, the King Arthur that was originally a semi-operatic genre now prevailed in adapted versions that allowed great actors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

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including David Garrick, John Phillip Kemble, and William Charles Macready, to play their parts in sustaining the legend.

In the late nineteenth century, as other playwrights began to focus on the resurgent popularity of Arthurian legend, new plays about the medieval hero appeared in the theatres of Great Britain and North America; however, none had the background of a flexible format and the music of Purcell that had enlivened the semi-opera for two hundred years thus far, and that continued to create possibilities for further variations upon the theme. Within both the progressive and retrospective viewpoints that coincided in the twentieth century, Baroque-era operatic entertainments, such as King Arthur, re-flourished, in part because the semi-operatic genre had maintained its ability to adapt to modern re-interpretation. Additionally, the twentieth-century trend toward historically-informed performance practices encouraged some of the finest reproductions of King Arthur's music and text, while also supporting imaginative stagings and even including occasional presentations of Baroque-era dances. Moreover, rapid development of recording technology not only preserved authenticity of sound, but helped to create an expanded and glorified media image of King Arthur, as well.

As the legendary hero, Arthur, gained international exposure, Dryden and Purcell's semi-opera continued to exhibit its great abilities to transform and transcend, surviving musical and dramatic experiments and recreating its form again and again. Finally, in the 1990's, at three hundred years of age, this Baroque-era entertainment achieved the state of regeneration that acknowledges within its modern image, all of the precedent phases of adaptation that have metamorphosed into the present moment of the life of Dryden and Purcell's King Arthur.

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Figure 11

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rehearsal of King Arthur by British composer Henry Purcell



*Michael Maerten as **King Arthur** and Sopran Barbara Bonney, from left, during a rehearsal of **King Arthur** by British composer Henry **Purcell** and dramatist John **Dryden**. ap*

August 5, 2004 Rehearsal for Salzburg Festival

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APPENDIX I

Prologue and Epilogue, 1691 Tonson Edition

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Prologue to the OPERA,

Spoken by Mr. *Betterton.*

SURE *there's a Dearth of Wit in this dull Town,*
When silly Plays so savourly go down:
As when Clipp'd Money passes, 'tis a sign
A Nation is not over-stock'd with Coin.
Happy is he, who, in his own Defence,
Can Write just level to your humble Sence;
Who higher than your Pitch can never go;
And doubtless, he must creep, who Writes below.
So have I seen in Hall of Knight, or Lord,
A weak Arm, throw on a long Shovel-Board,
He barely lays his Piece, bar Rubs and Knocks,
Secur'd by Weakness not to reach the Box.
A Feeble Poet will his Bus'ness do;
Who straining all he can, comes up to you:
For if you like your Selves, you like him too.
An Ape his own Dear Image will embrace;
An ugly Beau adores a Hatchet Face:
So some of you, on pure instinct of Nature,
Are led, by Kind, t' admire your fellow Creature:
In fear of which, our House has sent this Day,
T' insure our New-Built-Vessel, call'd a Play:
No sooner Nam'd, than one crys out, These Stagers
Come in good time, to make more Work for Wagers.
The Town divides, if it will take, or no;
The Courtiers Bet, the Cits, the Merchants too;
A sign they have but little else to do.

Q1a lacks prologue.
17 *ugly Beau*] M1; *ugly* Beau Q1b, Q2, F, D.
19 *Creature:*] M1; ~. Q1b, Q2, F, D.
21 *Play:*] ~. Q1b, Q2, F, D; ~; M1.
22–23 These . . . Wagers] *in italics in Q1b, Q2, F, D.*

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Betts, at the first, were Fool-Traps; where the Wise
Like Spiders, lay in Ambush for the Flies:
But now they're grown a common Trade for all,
And Actions, by the News-Book, Rise and Fall.
Wits, Cheats, and Fops, are free of Wager-Hall.
One Policy, as far as Lyons *carries;*
Another, nearer home sets up for Paris.
Our Betts, at last, wou'd ev'n to Rome *extend,*
But that the Pope has prov'd our Trusty Friend.
Indeed, it were a Bargain, worth our Money,
Cou'd we insure another Ottobuoni.
Among the rest, there are a sharping Sett,
That Pray for us, and yet against us Bett:
Sure Heav'n it self, is at a loss to know,
If these wou'd have their Pray'rs be heard, or no:
For in great Stakes, we piously suppose,
Men Pray but very faintly they may lose.
Leave off these Wagers; for in Conscience Speaking,
The City needs not your new Tricks for Breaking:
And if you Gallants lose, to all appearing
You'll want an Equipage for Volunteering;
While thus, no Spark of Honour left within ye,
When you shou'd draw the Sword, you draw the Guinea.

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The *EPILOGUE.*

Spoken by Mrs. BRACEGIRDLE.

I'VE *had to Day a Dozen* Billet-Doux
From Fops, *and* Wits, *and* Cits, *and* Bowstreet-Beaux;
Some from Whitehal, *but from the* Temple *more;*
A Covent-Garden *Porter brought me four.*
I have not yet read all: But, without feigning,
We Maids *can make shrewd Ghesses at your Meaning.*
What if, to shew your Styles, I read 'em here?
Me thinks I hear one cry, Oh Lord, forbear:
No, Madam, no; by Heav'n, that's too severe.
Well then, be safe———
But swear henceforwards to renounce all Writing,
And take this Solemn Oath of my Inditing,
As you love Ease, and hate Campagnes and Fighting.
Yet, 'Faith, 'tis just to make some few Examples:
What if I shew'd you one or two for Samples?
Pulls one out. *Here's one desires my Ladiship to meet*
At the kind Couch above in Bridges-Street.
Oh Sharping Knave! That wou'd have you know what,
For a Poor Sneaking Treat of Chocolat.
Pulls out another. *Now in the Name of Luck, I'll break this open,*
Because I Dreamt last Night I had a Token;
The Superscription is exceeding pretty,
To the Desire of all the Town and City.
Now, Gallants, *you must know, this pretious* Fop,
Is Foreman of a Haberdashers-Shop:
One who devoutly Cheats; demure in Carriage;
And Courts me to the Holy Bands of Marriage.
But with a Civil Inuendo *too.*
My Overplus of Love shall be for you.

Q1a lacks epilogue.
28 Inuendo] Q1b (*second state*), Q2, F, D; Invenudo Q1b (*first state*).

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Reads.——— Madam, I swear your Looks are so Divine,
When I set up, your Face shall be my Sign:
Tho Times are hard; to shew how I Adore you,
Here's my whole Heart, and half a Guinea for you.
But have a care of *Beaux;* They're false, my Honey;
And which is worse, have not one Rag of Money.
See how Maliciously the Rogue would wrong ye;
But I know better Things of some among ye.
My wisest way will be to keep the Stage,
And trust to the Good Nature of the Age;
And he that likes the Musick *and the* Play,
Shall be my Favourite Gallant to Day.

32 Tho] Q1b (*second state*), Q2, F, D; Th' Q1b (*first state*).

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APPENDIX II

Prologue, Epilogue, and Alterations for 1735/36 edition of text

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PROLOGUE.

By Mr. *Sterling*. Spoken by Mr. *Giffard*.

OUR Scenes no ſoft Italian Air diſpenſe;
Guiltleſs of Meaning; Innocent of Senſe:
But lo! a Feaſt! for Britiſh Palates fit!
'Tis Purcell's Muſic, ſerv'd with Dryden's Wit!
Old Merlin's Ghoſt Riſes with honeſt Rage
To mend your Taſte, and vindicate the Stage:
Superior Magic here inchants your Souls,
And feeble Thrills with manly Charms controuls!
To Night the Sage my raptur'd Breaſt inſpires,
And the Muſe labours with the Prophet's Fires!
Hear, Albion's Sons!---by me ſhe ſhall unfold
What to fam'd Arthur he reveal'd of Old!
Dire Wars ſhall waſte our Realms through various Reigns
Of conqu'ring Saxons and invaſive Danes!
Lo! Civil Rage, and Diſcord light their Brand;
See! the fell Furies half conſume the Land!
----What Holy Fires, inſatiate to devour!
Religious Butchery! and Mitred Pow'r!
---But, now----I ſee----wrapt into diſtant Times----
(He ſprings to Light) a Prince to purge our Crimes:
With Regal ſtate to joyn the gen'rous Mind;
And riſe the Benefactor of Mankind!
See, Strife and Faction grin with hideous Yell!
See, the chain'd Monſters ſhrink within their Cell!
He comes, he comes!----Old Ocean hears the Word,
Smooths his rough Face, and hails his Sovereign Lord!
To other Worlds the Britiſh Thunder rolls,
Beholds New Stars, and viſits both the Poles!
Now ſhall fair Commerce, Arts, and Wealth explore,
And her Sails whiten Earth's remoteſt Shore!
While Heav'n-born Juſtice breaks Oppreſſion's Bands;
And lifts her Scales with uninclining Hands!
Let Purple Tyrants the ſcourg'd Globe deface,
And riot in the Blood of Human Race!
War's Ravage; Thou, O warlike Prince, reſtrain!
Be thine the Glories of a Milder Reign!
Guardian, as Arbiter, of Peace reſtor'd,
Save bleeding Europe from the ruthleſs Sword!
Of Sacred Liberty great Patron Shine;
And prove by Godlike Worth the Right Divine!

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EPILOGUE.

By Mr. *Sterling*. Spoken by Mrs. *Giffard*.

WHich of us, think ye, Ladies, was moſt blind?
I, in my Eyes; or Arthur in his Mind?
He wiſh'd a Wife might ſee! nay more—aſſur'd me,
That had I been born dumb,—he wou'd have cur'd me!
Good natur'd Hero! moſt convenient Suitor! [Hector:
No Conjurer! tho' Merlin was his Tutor! (
Women, who've Tongues, tho' blind, have Pow'r to
And without Eyes may read a Curtain Lecture!
But—had I never got my Sight—what then?
Is there no way—but one—to come at Men;
Faith! Spouſe ſhou'd know, when in a Mood for Billing,
I had not loſt my noble Senſe of feeling;
Touch grows acuter, by the Loſs of ſight:
And Eyes in Bed—can give us no Delight!
To my Good Man, now mark, what fine Excuſes
I might have fram'd, for conjugal Abuſes;
" Indeed! My Dove! (for thus I'd take my cue)
" Indeed! I thought the filthy Man was You!
" Sure 'twas your Voice, and—ſo, without reſiſtance
" I but Injoy'd my Deareſt—at a Diſtance!
Thus while he fought for fame in Saxon Quarrels;
Perhaps, he might wear Horns inſtead of Laurels!
Well!—Spite of all this Rout to Night, ſure no
Inſpells, and potent Arts can vie with Woman! [Man
For, charm'd to her inchanted Circle, woo her:
You'll find the Devils themſelves are Aſſes to her!
Tho' Sight, Taſte, Smell, groſs Touch, and Hearing
Ladies their Loſs by a Sixth Senſe Supply! (die,
Our *Magna Charta* that! for Sages ſay,
This *your Jout pute* and never will decay!
But Raillery apart!——In this bleſs'd Iſle,
How many ſhining Sorcereſſes Smile,
Your Power to night exert, Ye generous fair;
And prove what lovely Witchcraft triumphs there.
'Tis Yours our Merlin on the Stage to ſave,
(A Royal Name protects him in his Cave)
Awe yon raſh Critics if rude Cenſures riſe,
By the reſiſtleſs Magic of your Eyes.

FINIS.

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III.

Our Sovereign High, in awful State,
His Honours ſhall beſtow;
And ſee his Scepter'd Subjects wait
On his Commands below

(A full Chorus of the whole Song: After which the grand Dance.

Arth. (to Merl.) Wiſely you have, whate'er will pleaſe, reveal'd;
What wou'd diſpleaſe, as wiſely have conceal'd:
Triumphs of War and Peace, at full ye ſhow,
But ſwiftly turn the Pages of our Woe.
Reſt we contented with our preſent State;
'Tis anxious to enquire of future Fate.
That Race of Heroes is enough alone
For all unſeen Diſaſters to atone.
Let us make haſte betimes to reap our Share,
And not reſign them all the Praiſe of War.
But ſet th'Example; and their Souls inflame,
To copy out their great Forefathers Fame.

Alterations upon the Reviſal of this OPERA, *viz.*

Pag. 7. ACT II. Scene draws, and diſcovers *Merlin.*

I muſt, I will be watchful for the State of Britain!
In Honour to a long Illuſtrious Race,
Whoſe future Glory riſes to my View.
And ſee that Fantom whoſe uncertain Look
Demands Inſpection and my Art commands.
What art thou Saint, of what Name and Order, &c.

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Pag. 29, Line 25th. *Merlin*, thus to *Arthur*.

And Lo, it opens to my wondrous View
A glorious Scene of future Amity:
After the toils of long inteſtine War
Of Crowns ſubjected, and Religion chang'd
A Scaffold bluſhing with the Blood of Kings
A Reign of many Tyrants——Reſtoration,
New Woes again——an abdicated King
A glorious Stranger——born for Reformation,
And Britain's Peace——and Lo a little forward
Where from the German ſhore a ſtately Horſe
Advances joining to our Britiſh Lyon
England date thence the whiteſt Hour of State,
Thence in a gay ſucceſſive Order ſhine
Peace and her golden Train——nor can the Eye
Of long Futurity foreſee a Change
But happineſs muſt laſt time Decay.
(*Waves his Hand.*

Pag. 32. After the Song, *Honour*, thus to *Arthur*.

Nor thou, brave *Saxon* Prince, diſdains our Triumphs,
Britons and *Saxons* ſhall become the People,
One common Tongue, one common Faith ſhall bind
Our Tarring Bands, in a perpetual Peace.

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APPENDIX III

"Life of Arthur" prefixed to 1763 and 1769 Potts Editions

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Some ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE of *ARTHUR*.

THO' the many fabulous relations of this Hero, with which the old romances abound, have with ſome perſons, in this ſceptical age, created a doubt whether he ever exiſted at all; yet the generality of hiſtorical Writers have taken ſuch notice of him, as muſt ſufficiently authenticate his having flouriſhed about the beginning of the ſixth Century. *Cambden. Bede. Rapin.*

He was, according to the account of *Geoffry* of *Monmouth*, the Son of *Uther Pendragon*, by *Igerna* the wife to *Gorlois* Duke of *Cornwall*, with whom *Uther* fell deſperately in love, and finding every art to alienate her affections from her Huſband ineffectual, he had recourſe to the Magical aſſiſtance of the Prophet *Merlin*, by whoſe means, like *Jupiter* in his amour with *Alcmena*, he aſſumed the ſemblance of *Gorlois* and was admitted to the arms of the fair *Igerna*. It was this intrigue that produced the celebrated *Arthur*, who was born at *Tindagel* in *Corn-* *Lib. 8.* *A.D.* 452.

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Cornwall; his reputed Father *Gorlois* being killed ſoon after, *Pendragon* married *Igerna*, acknowledged *Arthur* for his Son and put him under the care of the General of his army, who was at that time employed againſt the *Saxon* Invaders.

In the Year 470 *Arthur* commanded an army againſt *Hoel*, a petty King on the borders of *Scotland*, whom he drove into the Iſle of *Angleſey* and ſlew with his own hand. After the death of *Uther*, his Father, he was crown'd King of *Britain*, and ſignalized himſelf in many engagements *A. D.* 508. againſt the *Saxons*; the moſt remarkable of which was the Battle of *Badon-hill*, near *Bath*, where he routed *Cerdic*, the *Saxon* Chief, at the head of a numerous army, after a long and bloody conflict. He then went againſt the *Picts*, who were allies to the *Saxons*, and met *A. D.* 527. with his uſual good fortune. Some years after, a peace being concluded with his enemies, he applied himſelf to ſettle the affairs of his Kingdom, and ſhewed that his talents in the Cabinet were not inferior to thoſe he poſſeſſed in the Field.

In the Year 528 he took the title of Emperor, and aſſumed the Imperial Purple. About this time the King of *Armorica* being invaded by the *Viſagoths*, implored the aid of *Arthur*, who, after leaving to his Nephew *Modred* and his Queen *Guanhamira* the care of his Kingdom, departed with an army to the aſſiſtance of the *Armorican* Prince.

A. D. 530. He was but a ſhort time gone, before the perfidious *Modred*, finding the Wife and Empire of his Uncle in his power, uſurped his Throne and Bed, and made an alliance with *Cerdic* againſt *Arthur*.

After

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After a few years abſence our Hero returned to his Kingdom, and tho' broken with age and illneſs, reſolved to undertake the recovery of his right, and revenge himſelf on his ungrateful Nephew. A great number of his old Soldiers deſerted the Uſurper and reſorted to the Standard of their former Maſter. With an army infinitely inferior to *Modred*'s he obtained a complete Victory over him: the faithleſs Uſurper however, by the Treaty he made with the *Saxons*, was ſoon in a condition to face his Uncle again; and accordingly near *Camelford* in *Cornwall* a deciſive Battle was fought, wherein *Arthur* and *Modred* met hand to hand, who ruſhing on each other, *Modred* was killed on the ſpot, and *Arthur* being mortally wounded, was conveyed to *Glaſſenbury*, where he expired, univerſally lamented, in the arms of Victory, after a reign of thirty-four and a life of ninety Years.

Ann. Dom. 535.

A. D. 537.

A. D. 542.

Thus fell the famous *Arthur*, who to the King united the characters of the Soldier and the Chriſtian. His morals were unblemiſhed and his generoſity unlimited: With him fell too the liberties of his Country; for as none of the *Britiſh* Chiefs after his death poſſeſſed the talents of government, the People were ſoon after enſlaved by their *Saxon* enemies.

Arthur was buried in the Monaſtery of *Glaſſenbury*, where his Body was found in the Year 1189, by King *Henry* II, who removed it to the new Church and erected a Monument to his Memory, which was deſtroyed amidſt the general ruin of the Monaſteries, in the reign of *Henry* VIII. His Sword, called *Caliburn*, was preſerved in *England* till the reign of

Stow's Chron.

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of *Richard* the firſt, who, in the Year 1192, preſented it as a Token of his affection to *Tancred* King of *Sicily*. King *Edward* III, in the Year 1344, revived *Arthur*'s Feaſt of the Round Table, at *Windſor*, where in a ſpacious Hall he entertained a great number of Knights for fourteen Days together.

Echard.

Tho' it is much to be deplored that there is ſuch a mixture of Fable in all the accounts of the old Writers concerning this Hero, when his Actions would have given him a ſufficient right, had they been related in the moſt exact and veritable manner, to have been enrolled in the eternal Records of Fame; yet to theſe fictitious anecdotes is DRYDEN indebted for the following Poem, which tho' it has very little foundation in Hiſtory, has ever been eſteemed one of the moſt beautiful of his Productions.

PRO-

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