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Excerpt

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THE MAD LOVER

edited by

ROBERT KEAN TURNER

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[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

In the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1679, a list of the principal actors of *The Mad Lover* (Greg, *Bibliography*, no. 637) includes the names of Robert Benfield and Nathan Field. Since the former was not associated with the King's Men until about 1615 and the latter until about 1616, the play is thought to have been first produced in late 1616. On 5 January 1616/17 Lady Anne Clifford saw *The Mad Lover* at Court, and it was revived on 5 November 1630, perhaps as the first play acted in the renovated Cockpit in Whitehall. Sir Humphrey Mildmay attended a performance on 21 May 1639.¹

As a step toward the publication of the Folio of 1647, the stationers Humphrey Moseley and Humphrey Robinson asserted a claim to twenty-seven titles by an entry in the Stationers' Register made in September 1646. Shortly thereafter the entry was altered by the deletion of one title and the addition of four, among them that of *The Mad Lover* (see vol. I of this series, pp. xxvii ff). What exact significance the addition has is unclear; perhaps it means no more than that the King's Men, with whom Moseley must have negotiated for copies, and who seem to have drawn up a list of titles from which the entry was transcribed, discovered four plays more than those originally bargained for. Since the additions were made before the fee was calculated, Moseley may have anticipated that his first collection of manuscripts would somehow be augmented. *The Mad Lover* now stands first in the Register's record, and it was accorded pride of place in the Folio itself, occupying sigs. 1 B 1–1 D 4 (1 D 4' blank). Although the entry ascribes the plays generally to Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Mad Lover* has always been regarded as Fletcher's composition exclusively.²

¹ Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage* (7 vols., Oxford: Clarendon, 1941–68), I (1941; 1966), 28–9; II (1941; 1966), 374–6; III (1956; 1967), 373–6.

² See Sir Aston Cokayne's commendatory poem 'On the Deceased Authour, Mr. John Fletcher, his Plays; and especially, *The Mad Lover*' (F1: a3^v–4) and Cyrus Hoy, 'The Shares of Fletcher and his Collaborators in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon (i)', *Studies in Bibliography*, VIII (1956), 129–46.

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[More information](#)

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Section 1 of the 1647 Folio, one of the shortest in the book, contains *The Mad Lover*, *The Spanish Curate*, and *The Little French Lawyer*. It was manufactured in the printing-house of Thomas Warren, for whom late 1646 and early 1647 seem to have been busy times. Work on other books was in progress concurrently with his share of the printing of the Beaumont and Fletcher plays, and typesetting for the Folio was fairly often interrupted or retarded by the diversion of one or both of its compositors to other tasks. The pages of *The Mad Lover* appear to have been composed in the following order by two workmen who sometimes were simultaneously engaged and sometimes were not:

Compositor *A*: B₂^v B₂ B₁^v B₁ B₄^v C₂ D₂^v D₃ D₂ D₃^v D₄ D₁^v D₁Compositor *B*: B₃ B₃^v B₄ C₂^v C₃ C₃^v C₁^v C₄ C₁ C₄^v

There is nothing extraordinary about this pattern insofar as the order of the pages is concerned (the Folio generally was set from the inside of each quire to the outside), but it is rather unusual for the compositors occasionally to typeset entire formes instead of one page apiece and, of course, for one compositor to produce Quire C (less a page) and the other Quire D entire. The atypical division of the material perhaps can be attributed to the reassignment of first the one and then the other man.¹

One cannot very well assess the proficiency of these workmen on the basis of this text alone. As we shall see, the copy from which they typeset probably was difficult, and very likely proof-correction affected some formes of which the corrected or uncorrected states have not been discovered. Yet there is hardly a page of *The Mad Lover* that is not blemished by at least one substantive or semi-substantive reading of the sort that arises from compositorial error, and some pages contain ten to a dozen such mistakes. For what it may be worth, considering that the quality of the copy no doubt varied, Compositor *A*'s rate of error was approximately three per page and Compositor *B*'s four. Neither seems to have had much sense of how to punctuate; when the pointing is not wrong or misleading, it is

¹ See Turner, *The Printers and the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1647: Section 1 (Thomas Warren's)* (University Microfilms, 1973). This study is summarized in *Studies in Bibliography*, xxvii (1974), 137–56.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

likely to be absent altogether. Even by the relaxed standards of seventeenth-century dramatic printing the work of both is slovenly in technical matters: a variety of comma in the fount takes lightly and, one suspects, sometimes not at all; many letters are broken or deformed; and spacing and alignment are frequently irregular.

A mistrust of the compositors' abilities perhaps explains why proof-correction of *The Mad Lover* seems to have been heavy, although direct evidence of this is lacking. An examination of twenty-nine copies has disclosed that of the eleven and a half formes of type required to print *The Mad Lover* only four are press-variant (see pp. 114–16). Two of these 1 C ii(i) and 1 D i(o), contain so few variant readings as to indicate that they represent late stages of correction; however, the other two, 1 B i(i) and 1 C ii(o), have thirty-four and eighteen changes respectively. The alterations are chiefly of spelling and, more prominently, of punctuation, the sense of the text being hardly touched; yet according to his lights the proof-reader reviewed these formes thoroughly. That they represent the standard is suggested by two factors. In the rest of the section twelve more variant formes have been discovered so far, and of these five contain between fourteen and twenty-seven variants, an indication that the entire section was pretty minutely scrutinized by a corrector. And in *The Mad Lover* itself the improvement in punctuation is so pronounced in certain formes as to show that they were press-corrected, although the collation turned up no uncorrected states.

The text shows many signs of having been set up from foul papers in which an essentially complete version of the play was represented but in which also many details necessary to a production were irregularly handled or not thoroughly worked out. As designations for different characters, 'Page' and 'Boy' are confusingly employed. Early in the play a page, whose name, we learn later, is Picus, is introduced as 'Page' in a stage-direction and in the immediately following speech-prefixes (I.i.252ff), although in the dialogue here and subsequently he is naturally enough called 'Boy' (e.g. I.i.261). By the end of the scene his prefix is 'Boy' (I.i.338), and when we next see him, although he is brought on as 'Page' (II.ii.o.1), his prefix is 'Boy' once again. This variation would not be so bad were Stremon's Boy not also called 'Boy' ('Boy.2.' at II.ii.28), a duplica-

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE MAD LOVER

tion leading to a minor obfuscation when Stremon, accompanied by a simple 'Boy' (his own actually) plans the masque of beasts in III.v. At V.iv.116, however, the 'Boy' in the stage-direction is Picus. And to make matters slightly worse, the Priest of Venus as well has 'a good child' known as 'Boy' (III.i.o.1ff). Occasionally, as at III.ii.142, it is an open question which boy is meant.

Fletcher's intentions in these instances generally are not difficult to disentangle, but genuine mix-ups were left in IV.v, where Eumenes, Stremon and the two Captains prepare to pass off the Whore as Calis, and in V.iv, where Polidor's letter to Calis is read. Early in the action the two Captains function mainly to swell the scene, and Fletcher does not differentiate their personalities until, needing someone in III.ii to find a strumpet to impersonate Calis, he begins to conceive of 2. Captain as a womanizer. Although Memnon calls them Pelius and Polibius at II.i.65–6, they are 'Captains' in stage-directions and '1. Captain' and '2. Captain' in speech-prefixes, the names being sorted out only by Eumenes' addressing 1. Captain as Polibius at IV.v.12. In IV.v. the relatively innocent 1. Captain is given a speech obviously intended for 2. Captain, the procurer, and 2. Captain gets 1. Captain's appreciative remark on the Whore's rotundity (see the textual note on IV.v.1–8). Because the speeches are separated by several lines, the confusion does not appear to be compositorial; it looks as though Fletcher simply forgot for a moment which Captain was which. And the Captains are rather like the Boys in causing further trouble later. In addition to Pelius and Polibius (and Siphax), Eumenes is also a captain, a fact that may have led Fletcher to tag his speech at V.iv.248 as 'Capt.' That Eumenes is supposed to be the reader of Polidor's letter is evident from the marginal notation – Fletcher's, I think – '*Eumen reads*' (transformed in this edition to the speech-prefix at V.iv.252), but the ambiguity leads to 1. Captain's temporarily taking Eumenes' part (see the textual note on V.iv.248).

Other indications of foul papers are numerous. Speech prefixes are sometimes omitted (e.g. at III.ii.90; III.vi.21; V.ii.12; V.iv.202; V.iv.246), so are necessary stage-directions (e.g. Demagoras' exit and re-entrance at III.ii.34ff), and speeches are misassigned (e.g. at

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

II.ii.14 and III.iv.114). Some of these errors could be compositorial, but it is hardly possible they all are. Mislineations are plentiful, perhaps indicating carelessness on Fletcher's part or more likely his reworking of initially unsatisfactory passages. There are many verbal errors, some of which could be typographical but which in the aggregate appear to be misreadings (e.g. 'ye' for 'he' I.i.55; 'By' for 'Ly' I.i.267; 'Word' for 'World' II.i.151; 'find' for 'fire' III.iv.89; 'and' for 'as' IV.i.73; 'what, ye could' for 'what ye would' V.iv.246). A number of stage-directions are of an authorial character; they often are supplied when the business cannot be inferred precisely from the text. For example:

I.i.108.1 *He kneeles amaz'd, and forgets to speake.*

I.ii.36.1 *Memnon walks aside full of strange gestures.*

III.iv.23.1 *Plucks out the Cup.*

IV.i.5 *Stand close.*

V.iv.16.1 *Enter Siphax, walkes softly over the Stage. . . .*

At the same time, however, the text reveals unmistakable traces of a prompter's hand. The clearest of these are anticipatory or duplicated stage-directions:

I.i.30 *Drum within*, duplicating *Drum* (I.i.31), where *within* seems to have been omitted inadvertently.

III.ii.134 *A bowle ready*, anticipating *Plucks out the Cup* (III.iv.23).

III.vi.4 *Knock*, duplicating *Cleanthe knocks within* (same line).

V.iii.o.1 *Calis at the Oracle, Arras*, anticipating line 21, where there is no stage-direction.

V.iv.209 *The Hearse ready Polidor, Eumenes & Captains*, anticipating *Enter Funerall, Captaines following, and Eumenes* (V.iv.246.1).

In other features of the text a prompter's influence is less certain but possibly present. Misled by the irregular speech-prefix 'Capt.' for 'Eumenes' at V.iv.248, the prompter may have erroneously altered the similar prefix at line 252 to '1. Capt.', thereby in effect transferring two of Eumenes' speeches to Polibius (see the textual note on V.iv.248). Both the incorrect 'Cloe' at IV.v.63 and the inappropriate 'Curtisan' at V.iv.207.1 seem to have been his doing (see the textual notes on IV.v.7.1 and V.iv.207.1). The prompter may also have been responsible for the anomalous 'Exit Lady' at

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Volume V

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE MAD LOVER

I.ii.119.1 (instead of 'Princess' or 'Calis'), but in this instance, because Memnon has addressed Calis as 'Lady' several times in the scene, Fletcher may have casually followed suit.

The most interesting of the prompter's notations are found in two stage-directions mentioning actors' names:

II.ii.20 *Enter Stremon and his Boy Ed. Hor.*

IV.i.o.1 *Enter a Servant and R. Bax, and Stremon at the doore.*

Both names are fairly obvious additions to authorial directions; the first clearly assigns the part of Stremon's Boy to Edward Horton, the second, less certainly because of the intrusive 'and', the part of the Servant to Richard Baxter (see the textual note on IV.i.o.1). Neither name appears in the F₂ list of actors; neither actor was a principal, but more to the point is that neither was a member of the company when the play was first performed, Horton having worked with the King's Men not much earlier than 1629 and Baxter apparently not before 1628 (Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, II 360–2, 479). As Professor Bentley remarks, the names 'may well have been added to the manuscript for the performance of 1630' (III, 375). Thus the printer's copy for F₁ *The Mad Lover* seems to have been Fletcher's ancient foul papers, which were exhumed for the purpose of creating a new book of the play, annotated by a prompter as a preliminary to transcription (or annotated anew, for it is impossible to tell whether the same papers may have served as the basis for an earlier prompt-book), and subsequently released for publication. The F₁ text is thus suspect. It derives from messy authorial copy partially worked over at least once by another agent, who may have tampered with the dialogue in undetectable places as well as with the controlling apparatus. My impression, however, is that the lines were left pretty much as Fletcher wrote them.

Following its first printing in the Folio of 1647, *The Mad Lover* reappeared in the Folio of 1679, whose editor made a great many attentive and commonsensical alterations to the words and especially to the punctuation of F₁, although not always correctly. In the interest of clarity and according to later standards of correctness, he modernized Fletcher's grammar and word usage, curbed his wilder flights of syntax, and regularized metre. He appears to have deleted two passages (III.iii.16–20 and IV.ii.33–4) because of their indecency.

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[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

In short, he 'improved' the text where he could, and in the process he set right some obvious errors, although he left some tangles still entangled. In one instance he inserted five apparently genuine words (I.ii.109), and he did repair the confusion between Eumenes and 1. Captain at V.iv.252, by no means an obvious correction. It is conceivable that these alterations originated in a corrected state of F1 that has not yet been found, but the likelihood is greater that from time to time he compared F1 with another authoritative version of the play. In editing other texts he seems occasionally to have referred to sources other than F1 (see, for example, the discussion of his changes to *Beggars' Bush*, vol. III of this series, pp. 241–3; to *The Woman's Prize*, IV, 13–14; and to *Valentinian*, IV, 275), and of *The Mad Lover* there was at least one manuscript in existence other than those which belonged to the King's Men.¹ Thus each F2 variant must be considered on its merits. Because of the editor's sophisticating habits, I have followed F1 in doubtful matters, but F2 has supplied not only some words but also much punctuation needed to clarify the badly pointed F1 text. F2 was the last seventeenth-century edition of the play.

The lyrics in *The Mad Lover* took up an independent and complicated life of their own; most of them appear in at least one early manuscript or printed poetical collection and some in several. They are frequently accompanied by music. Since they have a history different from that of the text proper, I have dealt with them in an appendix (pp. 138–48).

F. G. Fleay says merely: 'The Prologue and Epilogue are by Fletcher.'² The two, companion pieces in their nautical imagery, are evidently by the same writer, but there is nothing to show who he was. An ambiguity in the Prologue may be interpreted to mean that he thought the play to have been a collaboration. Line 2 mentions 'the Writers care' and is followed by

*Would we [actors] knew what to doe, or say, or when
To find the mindes here equall with the men.*

¹ It was at one time in the hands of Sir Aston Cockayne, who intended to have the play 'printed single'. See Bentley, *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, III, 375–6, and Greg, *Bibliography*, III (London: The Bibliographical Society, 1957), p. 1017.

² *Englische Studien*, IX (1886), 22.

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[More information](#)

THE MAD LOVER

'*Writers*' may be genitive plural and the '*men*' the playwrights, whose superior wit is sometimes beyond the reach of the audience; or '*Writers*' may be genitive singular and the following words an allusion to the proverb 'So many men, so many minds', which, as Bond notes, possibly implies that 'if each man brought a *mind* with him, the play could not fail to please'. That the poems evidently accompanied the foul papers does not signify much considering the several opportunities that would have been available for their addition.

James Hammersmith and Virginia Haas helped to prepare the apparatus of this edition, and George Walton Williams, Richard Knowles, Stanley Boorman and, especially, Andrew J. Sabol answered my many questions about the lyrics and their music. L. A. Beaurline lent me his Xerox copies of the manuscripts. Joel Hurstfield and Charles Cruickshank also kindly responded to queries. I am grateful to them and to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee for a grant in aid of research.

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[More information](#)

Persons Represented in the Play.

Astorax, *King of Paphos.*Memnon, *the General and the Mad Lover.*Polidor, *Brother to Memnon, beloved of Calis.*Eumenes, *an eminent Souldier.*1. *Captain* [Polybius].2. *Captain* [Pelius].Chilax, *an old merry Souldier.*Siphax, *a Souldier in love with the Princess.*Stremon, *a Souldier that can sing.*Demagoras, *Servant to the General.*

10

*Surgeon.**Foole.**Page* [Picus].[Stremon's] *Boy.*[Priest's] *Boy.**Courtiers* [*Servants, Souldiers, etc.*]

WOMEN.

Calis, *Sister to the King, and Mistresse to Memnon.*Cleanthe, *Sister to Siphax.*Lucippe, *one of the Princesses Women.*

20

*Priest of Venus, an old wanton.**A Nun.*Cloe, *a Camp Baggage.*

[Venus.]

o. 1 Persons Represented] *based on the list in F 2; om. F 1*