

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher
Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE
BURNING PESTLE

edited by

CYRUS HOY

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

The Knight of the Burning Pestle (Greg, *Bibliography*, no. 316) was first published in 1613 by Walter Burre. No entry is preserved in the Stationers' Register for this edition, and the title-page of the first quarto names neither dramatist nor printer. The play is quite certainly the unaided work of Beaumont, and the printer's ornaments and devices on display in the first quarto text show that it issued from the shop of Nicholas Okes. The ornament on the title-page of *The Knight* (no. 4 in Miller; McKerrow 269) also appears on the title-page of Gervase Markham's *Second and Last Part . . . of the English Arcadia*, also printed by Okes in 1613. The ornament at the head of sig. B 1 of *The Knight* (no. 27 in Miller) had been used at the head of sig. B 1 in Okes's 1608 quarto of *King Lear*, and was used again in 1613 in Okes's editions of Heywood's *Silver Age* (sig. B 1) and *Brazen Age* (sig. B 1). The factotum (no. 7 in Miller) on sig. B 1 of *The Knight* is found throughout (e.g., sigs. F 1^v, I 4^v, P 2, R 1^v) Arthur Hopton's *Geodeticall Staffe*, which Okes had printed in 1610.

Printing of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* was performed using two skeleton-formes per sheet for imposition, and the text was typeset by the same two compositors who, in the same year, set the already mentioned first quarto texts of Heywood's *The Silver Age* and *The Brazen Age* for Okes. Their shares can be differentiated with some precision, for they display some distinctly contrasting spelling habits. Compositor *A* spells *Il'e, hee'l, wee'l, you'l, they'l, i'th, I' faith, or'e, pre'thee, alasse, beene, note, stroke, adue, clamors*. Compositor *B* spells *I'le, she'le, we'le, you'le, i'th', i' faith, ore, prethee, alas, bene, noate, stroake, adiew, clamours*. Compositor *A* always spells the name of the apprentice *Rafe*; compositor *B* sometimes spells *Rafe*, sometimes *Raph*. With a single exception, compositor *A* spells *Humphrey*; compositor *B* sometimes spells *Humphrey*, sometimes (most notably in his work in sheets B and C) *Humfrey*. Compositor *A* spells *Merri-thought* (or *Merithought*, or *Merrithought*); compositor *B* spells *Merie-thought* (or *Merriethought*) and *Mery-thought* (or *Merry-thought*). The impression is

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

strong that, so far at least as the names of the characters are concerned, compositor *A*'s work more clearly reflects the spellings of his copy: spellings which are sometimes reflected in the work of compositor *B* also, but sometimes not. On the basis of such evidence, the shares of the two workmen are as follows: compositor *A* set sigs. B 1–B 2^v (Induction; I.1–3), C 2^v–D 1 (I.253 [*Tim* shall be]–II.29), D 2^v (II.104 [be Gyants]–140), E 3^v–F 2^v (II.451–III.168), G 3–H 2^v (III.455–IV.142), H 4 (IV.211–245), and I 3–K 2 (V.1–238). Compositor *B* set sigs. A 1–A 2^v (title-page, To . . . Keysar), B 3–C 2 (I.4–253 [elder Prentice]), D 1^v–D 2 (II.30–104 [here]), D 3–E 3 (II.141–450), F 3–G 2^v (III.169–454), H 3–H 3^v (IV.143–210), H 4^v–I 2^v (IV.246–4. Interlude, 60), and K 2^v–K 4 (V.239–343, Epilogus).

The manuscript from which the first edition of *The Knight* was printed was a good one, and must have been either Beaumont's original manuscript, or a transcript of this. The unusual contracted form *am* (for *them*) which occurs twice in the first quarto text (at I.61, and IV.331) is found as well in the 1607 quarto of *The Woman Hater* (III.iii.125); and *toot* (for *to't*), which occurs at I.63, also occurs in the 1619 quarto of *A King and No King* (V.iv.42). The manuscript behind the first quarto of *The Knight* may or may not have been used in the theatre; there is no evidence that it was, but then perhaps none is to be expected in the case of a play which had held the stage for no longer period than this had done when it was first printed. The Latin stage direction 'Manet', which occurs at II.239.2, and the designation of act endings ('Finis Actus primi', 'Finis Actus secundi', etc.), suggest an author's manuscript rather than a playhouse one. It may be noted that the designation of act endings is a regular feature of the first quarto editions of plays in the Beaumont and Fletcher canon (e.g. *The Woman Hater*, *A King and No King*, *Philaster*, *The Maid's Tragedy*, *The Scornful Lady*) in which Beaumont's is the dominant presence. The first quarto is the only substantive edition of the play.

A second quarto, printed from Q 1, was published in 1635. The printer again was Nicholas Okes, whose initials are this time given on the title-page. Greg suggests (*Bibliography*, vol. 1, p. 459) that the publisher, identified by the initials I. S. on the Q 2 title-page,

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

TEXTUAL INTRODUCTION

was 'probably John Spencer'. The Q₂ title-page declares the play to have been 'Written by Francis Beaumont, and Iohn Fletcher, Gent.' In the second quarto, the Q₁ Dedication to Keysar is omitted; a new address 'To the Readers of this Comedie' is added, together with a Prologue which was taken almost verbatim from Lyly's *Sapho and Phao*. Some time between 1635 and the publication of the second Beaumont and Fletcher Folio in 1679, a third quarto, printed from Q₂, appeared. The title-page of Q₃ carries the same information as that of Q₂, from which it is most readily distinguished by its mis-spelling of Beaumont's name ('Beamount'). Like Q₂, it bears the date 1635, but to judge from the numerous orthographic changes which it makes in the text of Q₂, it was printed some years after that date, probably in the early 1650's. It was from Q₃ that Kirkman printed the redaction of III.312-466 in *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport* (1662), where the episode of Rafe's encounter with the barber and his 'prisoners' is appropriately labelled 'The Encounter' (sigs. H7-I1), but erroneously said, in the catalogue of contents, to be taken from *The Humourous Lieutenant*. It is from Q₃ that the folio text of 1679 derives.

As with the four seventeenth-century editions, the present one is divided into acts, but not into scenes, scene divisions being a more than usual irrelevance in this of all Elizabethan plays, where the scene—so far as shift of locale is concerned—manifestly does not change (see I.367-370). So far as the scene as a structural unit is concerned, no division can adequately accommodate the Grocer and his Wife, whose unique position consists, precisely, in the fact that they are at all times half in and half out of the play. The structural units of the play are, in fact, clearly indicated; they consist of an induction, five acts separated by four interludes, and an epilogue. Each act begins with an incident from the Jasper-Luce-Merchant plot, and ends with a scene of Old Merri-thought's songs. This division is somewhat obscured in all seventeenth-century texts by the misplaced 'Finis' for Act III and heading for Act IV, and by the misplaced 'Finis' for Act IV. In the present edition, these have been moved to their proper places. For purposes of reference, the scene divisions of Weber and Dyce are recorded in the footnotes.

The present edition is based on a collation of the nine extant

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

copies of Q1: British Museum copy one (C.34.f.30), copy two (Ashley 73; a made-up copy, wanting leaves C2, C3, D2, D3, G2, G3, G4, which have been supplied from a copy of Q2); Bodleian copy one (4° T.35[3]. Art.), copy two (Mal. 242[4]); the copy in the Dyce collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum; the copy in the Henry E. Huntington Library; the copy in the Folger Shakespeare Library (wants leaf A2); the copy in the Boston Public Library; and a copy privately owned by Mr Robert H. Taylor of Princeton, New Jersey. Alterations were made in the text while the sheets were passing through the press. Corrections, in substantives and accidentals, have been found in the preliminary matter in the outer forme of sheet A (in the Horatian epigraph on the title-page and in the dedicatory epistle), and, in the text proper, in the inner forme of sheet B, the outer and inner formes of sheet C, the outer and inner formes of sheet D, the outer forme of sheet E, the outer and inner formes of sheet F, the outer forme of sheet K.

The Knight of the Burning Pestle has been edited more often than any other play in the Beaumont and Fletcher corpus. Readings from the following editions, with their symbols in parentheses, are recorded in the Historical Collation: Quarto 1613 (Q1); Quarto 1635 (Q2); Quarto 1635a (Q3); Folio 1679 (F); Langbaine, 1711 (L); Sympson, 1750 (S); Colman, 1778 (C); Weber, 1812 (W); Dyce, 1843 (D); J. St Loe Strachey, *The Mermaid Series*, 1887 (M); Herbert S. Murch, *Yale Studies in English*, xxxiii, 1908 (Y); Raymond M. Alden, *The Belles-Lettres Series*, 1910 (A); G. B. Harrison, *The Fortune Play Books*, 1926 (H); C. F. Tucker Brooke and N. B. Paradise, *English Drama*, 1933 (BP); Hazelton Spencer, *Elizabethan Plays*, 1933 (Sp).

Grateful acknowledgement is made to the Humanities Research Committee of Vanderbilt University, and to the Folger Shakespeare Library, for research grants making possible the preparation of this edition.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher
Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

TO HIS MANY
WAIES ENDEERED
friend Maister Robert Keysar.

SIR, this unfortunate child, who in eight daies (as lately I have learned) was begot and borne, soone after, was by his parents (perhaps because hee was so unlike his brethren) exposed to the wide world, who for want of judgement, or not understanding the privy marke of *Ironie* about it (which shewed it was no of-spring of any vulgar braine) utterly rejected it: so that for want of acceptance it was even ready to give up the Ghost, and was in danger to have bene smothered in perpetuall oblivion, if you (out of your direct *antipathy* to ingratitude) had not bene moved both to relieve and cherish it: wherein I must needs commend both your judgement, ¹⁰ understanding, and singular love to good wits; you afterwards sent it to mee, yet being an infant and somewhat ragged, I have fostred it privately in my bosome these two yeares, and now to shew my love returne it to you, clad in good lasting cloaths, which scarce memory will weare out, and able to speake for it selfe; and withall, as it telleth mee, desirous to try his fortune in the world, where if yet it be welcome, father, foster-father, nurse and child, all have their desired end. If it bee slighted or traduced, it hopes his father will beget him a yonger brother, who shall revenge his quarrell, and challenge the world either of fond and meerey littrell interpretation, ²⁰ or illiterate misprision. Perhaps it will be thought to bee of the race of *Don Quixote*: we both may confidently sweare, it is his elder above a yeare; and therefore may (by vertue of his birth-right) challenge the wall of him. I doubt not but they will meet in their adventures, and I hope the breaking of one staffe will make them friends; and perhaps they will combine themselves, and travell through the world to seeke their adventures. So I commit him to his good fortune, and my selfe to your love.

Your assured friend W.B.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

To the Readers of this

COMEDIE.

Gentlemen, the World is so nice in these our times, that for Apparrell there is no fashion; for Musicke which is a rare Art, (though now slighted) no Instrument; for Diet, none but the *French* Kickshoes that are delicate; and for Playes, no invention but that which now runneth an invective way, touching some particular person, or else it is contemned before it is throughly understood: This is all that I have to say, that the Author had no intent to wrong any one in this *Comedy*, but as a merry passage, here and there interlaced it with delight, which hee hopes will please all, and be hurtfull to none.

10

To the Readers . . . Comedie] from Q 2; om. Q 1

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher
Canon, Volume I

Edited by Fredson Bowers

Excerpt

[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

THE PROLOGUE

Where the Bee can sucke no Honey, shee leaves her sting behind;
 and where the Beare cannot finde *Origanum* to heale his grieffe, hee
 blasteth all other leaves with his breath: We feare it is like to fare so
 with us; that seeing you cannot draw from our labours sweete
 content, you leave behinde you a sower mislike, and with open
 reproach blame our good meanings, because you cannot reape the
 wonted mirth. Our intent was at this time to moove inward delight,
 not outward lightnesse; and to breed (if it might be) soft smiling,
 not loud laughing: knowing it to the wise to be as great pleasure, to
 heare counsell mixed with Wit, as to the foolish to have sport ¹⁰
 mingled with rudenesse. They were banished the Theater of *Athens*,
 and from *Rome* hissed, that brought Parasites on the Stage with
 apish actions, or fooles with uncivill habits, or Courtezans with
 immodest words. We have endeavoured to be as farre from un-
 seemely speeches, to make your eares glow, as we hope you will be
 free from unkinde reports, or mistaking the Authors intention, (who
 never aymed at any one particular in this Play,) to make our cheekes
 blush. And thus I leave it, and thee to thine owne censure, to like,
 or dislike, *Vale*.

Prologue] from Q 2, where it is reprinted from *Lyly's Sapho and Phao*, Q 1584 and
 O 1632; om. Q 1

9 as] *Sapho and Phao*, Q 1584; a Q 2

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher
 Canon, Volume I
 Edited by Fredson Bowers
 Excerpt
[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

The Speakers Names.

The Prologue.	[Tim] A Squire.	} [Apprentices]
Then a Citizen.	[George] A Dwarf.	
The Cittizens wife, and	A Tapster.	
<i>Rafe</i> her man, sitting below	A Boy that danceth and singeth.	
amidst the Spectators.	An Host.	
[<i>Venturewell</i> ,] A rich Marchant.	A Barber.	
<i>Jasper</i> , his Apprentise.	[Three Captive] Knights.	
Master <i>Humphrey</i> , a friend to the	[Captive Woman.]	
Marchant.	A Sergeant.	
<i>Luce</i> , the Marchants daughter.	Souldiers.	10
Mistresse <i>Merry-thought</i> , <i>Jaspers</i>	[Boys.	
mother.	<i>William Hammerton</i> , pewterer.	
<i>Michael</i> , a second sonne of	<i>George Green-goose</i> , poulterer.	
Mistresse <i>Merri-thought</i> .	<i>Pompiona</i> , daughter to the King	
Old Master <i>Merry-thought</i> .	of Moldavia.]	

The Speakers Names.] from Q 2; om. Q 1

7 Three Captive Knights] Two Knights Q 2

7-9 *Between Knights and A Sergeant* Q 2-3, F list A Captaine. *But the only references to 'A Captain' in the play occur during the muster of the London trainbands in Act V (lines 92ff.), and there the term very clearly applies to Rafe.*

10 the] F; om. Q 2-3

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-06052-3 - The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher
 Canon, Volume I
 Edited by Fredson Bowers
 Excerpt
[More information](#)

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

The famous Historie
 Of the Knight of the burning
PESTLE

Enter Prologue. [Gentlemen seated on stage.] [Induction]

From all that's neere the Court, from all that's great
 Within the compasse of the Citty-wals,
 We now have brought our Sceane.

Enter Citizen [from audience below].

Citizen. Hold your peace good-man boy.

Prologue. What do you meane sir?

Citizen. That you have no good meaning: This seven yeares there
 hath beene playes at this house, I have observed it, you have still
 girds at Citizens; and now you call your play, *The London*
Marchant. Downe with your Title boy, downe with your Title.

Prologue. Are you a member of the noble Citty? 10

Citizen. I am.

Prologue. And a Free-man?

Citizen. Yea, and a Grocer.

Prologue. So Grocer, then by your sweet favour, we intend no
 abuse to the Citty.

Citizen. No sir, yes sir, if you were not resolv'd to play the Jacks,
 what need you study for new subjects, purposely to abuse your
 betters? why could not you be contented, as well as others, with
 the legend of *Whittington*, or the life and death of sir *Thomas*
Gresham? with the building of the Royall Exchange? or the story 20
 of *Queene Elenor*, with the rearing of London bridge upon wool-
 sakes?

Prologue. You seeme to bee an understanding man: what would
 you have us do sir?

Citizen. Why present something notably in honour of the Com-
 mons of the Citty.