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**ARTHUR HOBSON QUINN**

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Publications

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THE FAIRE MAIDE OF BRISTOW

A COMEDY

8764

NOW FIRST REPRINTED FROM THE QUARTO OF 1605

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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Published for the University

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## PREFACE.

The editing of this play was undertaken at the suggestion of Professor Josef Schick, of the University of Munich. The translation into German by Ludwig Tieck had appeared in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* and it seemed only fitting that the English original should also be published. Circumstances forbade the completion of the work at that time and it was resumed, after my return to this country, under the direction of Professor Schelling, in partial fulfillment of the required work in the Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania.

It is with particular pleasure that I am able to thank, at the same time, my two teachers, Professor Schelling and Professor Schick, for their invaluable counsel and friendly interest. My thanks are also due for helpful suggestions to my colleagues, Professor Clarence G. Child and Professor Hugo A. Rennert, and to my fellow-student in Munich, Professor O. F. Lewis, of the University of Maine. Professor Child very kindly made the index. For my conclusions as to the source and authorship of the play, I am alone responsible.

*University of Pennsylvania, May, 1902.*

## **INTRODUCTION.**

## I.

*The Faire Maide of Bristow* was published anonymously by Thomas Pavyer in 1605. No attempt has since been made either to edit the play or to fix the responsibility for its authorship, if we except Collier's surmises with regard to John Day. It has been mentioned in the usual places,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bullen, Mr. Fleay and Mr. Ward denying Day's claim to authorship, and in Herr Bolte's edition<sup>2</sup> of Tieck's translation of the play, there is a description of the English original and some speculations in regard to the sources.

The *Stationers' Register*,<sup>3</sup> under the date of February eighth, 1605, contains the following entry:

"Thomas Pavyer. Entred for his copy under th[e h]andes  
"of the Wardens. A commedy called '*the fayre Mayd of Bristoe*'  
"played at Hampton Court by his Maiesties players."

<sup>1</sup> *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets, etc.* Gerard Langbaine. Oxford, 1691. Page 531.

*Biographia Dramatica.* Baker-Reed-Jones. 1812. Vol. II, p. 211.

*History of English Dramatic Poetry.* J. P. Collier. 1831. Vol. III, p. 50; also *The Diary of Philip Henslowe*, 1845, p. 220, in the Shakespeare Society's Publications.

*A Manual for the Collector and Amateur of Old English Plays.* W. Carew Hazlitt. 1892. Page 79.

*The Works of John Day.* Edited by A. H. Bullen. 1881. Page 10.

*A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama.* F. G. Fleay. 1891. Vol. II, p. 329.

*A History of English Dramatic Literature.* A. W. Ward. Ed. 1899. Vol. II, pp. 219 and 591.

*The English Chronicle Play.* F. E. Schelling. 1902. Page 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Shakespeare Jahrbuch.* Jahrgang XXXI. 1895. Page 126.

<sup>3</sup> *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London.* Edited by Edward Arber. 1876. Vol. III, p. 120.



As Mr. Fleay points out, the King was at Hampton Court early in October, 1604, so that we may reasonably conclude that the first performance took place at this time, and as the winter home of the King's company during this period was the Blackfriars' Theater, it seems probable that this was the place where the comedy, if it proved popular, was afterward acted.

There are at present three copies of the play extant. The present edition is based on one of the original quartos of 1605, which is now in the British Museum. It consists of forty-two unnumbered pages and is printed in black letter, the names of the characters being printed in Roman type. There is no list of persons in the play, the scenes are not divided, and there are no stage directions, except the entrances and exits.

Another quarto is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and there is also, in the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin, a manuscript copy which Tieck had made for his own use in translation. This has been well and carefully copied, and to all intents and purposes is an exact reproduction of the original, except that the play has been divided into scenes and the capitalization has been somewhat altered.

## II.

The first mention of a source for *The Faire Maide of Bristow* was made by Collier in 1847 in his edition of the *Roxburghe Ballads*,<sup>1</sup> where in a note to *Maudlin, the Merchant's Daughter of Bristol*, he says :

"We might suppose from the title that Day's play 'The Fair Maid of Bristow' 1605, was founded on this ballad; but such is not the case, although it is probable that the striking incidents of it were dramatized at the time."

Notwithstanding this explicit denial of any connection between the ballad and the drama, Herr Bolte has devoted

<sup>1</sup> *A Book of Roxburghe Ballads.* J. Payne Collier. 1847. Page 335.

considerable space to the former in his article, and since he has done so, it may be well briefly to treat it here.

The ballad was entered at Stationers' Hall on February 24, 1594-5 and is accessible in several places.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore unnecessary to reprint it here. The complete edition is that given by Chappell, which contains three stanzas omitted after lines 148, 192 and 232 in the other copies noted. The story of this ballad is briefly as follows:

Maudlin, the daughter of a Bristol merchant, is opposed in her choice of a husband by her parents. Her lover therefore departs for Padua, after serenading his mistress, who prudently keeps out of sight for fear of her friends. When he is once gone, however, she determines to follow him, and persuades a ship's captain to take her on board, disguised as a boy. She finds her lover in Padua, but he is condemned to die unless he will recant his faith. This he refuses to do and so Maudlin and the captain<sup>2</sup> decide to die with him. This so moves the judge that he allows them all to return to England, where, her father having died, they are married.

It can easily be seen that this ballad has little in common with our play. Outside of the faithfulness of the maiden in each case, the circumstances are entirely different. Italy becomes England; the twelfth century, the sixteenth; the causes of the condemnation, instead of religious perseverance, are infidelity and suspected murder; and finally, the characters which make the drama, Florence, Sir Godfrey, Harbart and the rest, are not even hinted at in the ballad.

The title of the play may have been suggested by the ballad, for the latter was certainly popular, there being three

<sup>1</sup> *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*. Edited by Hales and Furnivall. 1868. Vol. III, p. 374.

*The Roxburghe Ballads*. Edited by W. Chappell. Vol. II, p. 86.

*Roxburghe Ballads*. Edited by C. Hindley. Vol. II, p. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Not "die ganze Schiffsmannschaft" as Herr Bolte mistranslates.

editions of the broadside in the Roxburghe collection and two in the Bagford Ballads, in the British Museum.<sup>1</sup> The number of these later editions points to a frequency of publication about the time of its production and it may well be that the author of our drama chose for his play a title which would recall this famous old ballad.

Herr Bolte, in his article in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, says:<sup>2</sup>

“Ob der unbekante Dichter für seine so weit gehende Umgestaltung der Fabel noch bestimmte Vorbilder ausnutzte, vermag ich leider nicht zu sagen. Allgemeine Anregung dürften ihm wohl zwei nicht lange zuvor erschienene Volksstücke gegeben haben, die Episoden aus der älteren englischen Geschichte roh, aber lebendig behandeln: *Life and Death of Jack Strawe* (1593) und *Look About You* (1600). In jenem kehrt Richard II unvermuthet heim und hält im 3. Akte Gericht; dieses stellt die Kämpfe der Söhne Heinrich's II wider ihren Vater dar und zeichnet sich gleich dem Mädchen von Bristol durch zahlreiche Verkleidungen aus.”

“Allgemeine Anregung” is, of course, a difficult point to discuss, but even this slight connection between these dramas and the *Fair Maid* must be denied. *Jack Strawe* has nothing whatever in common with our play. Richard II does not return “unvermuthet heim”; he is in the play from the first act, and behaves in a manner entirely different from Richard I, in the *Fair Maid*. *Look About You*, whose possible connection with our play was probably suggested to Herr Bolte by a marginal note in the Berlin copy,<sup>3</sup> cannot claim even the similarity of a character. The “numerous disguises” of this play are carried out in a totally different manner, and in any

<sup>1</sup> *Roxburghe Ballads*. Vol. I, p. 232. 1640. This is the edition referred to by Collier. Also, Vol. I, p. 278, 1650 (?), and Vol. III, p. 376, 1710 (?).

*Bagford Ballads*. Vol. I, p. 643, 1670 (?), and Vol. II, p. 643, 1675 (?).

<sup>2</sup> XXXI Jahrgang, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 30.