

**BEN JONSON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649093724

Ben Jonson by John Addington Symonds

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS**

**BEN JONSON**



# English Worthies

EDITED BY ANDREW LANG

---

BEN. JONSON

BY

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1886

*All rights reserved*

## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. BIRTH AND APPRENTICESHIP . . . . .	1
II. FIRST PERIOD OF MANHOOD . . . . .	22
III. JONSON'S DRAMATIC STYLE . . . . .	50
IV. THE MASTERPIECES . . . . .	70
V. MASQUES AT COURT AND LYRICS . . . . .	122
VI. SECOND PERIOD OF MANHOOD . . . . .	143
VII. OLD AGE . . . . .	172



# BEN JONSON.

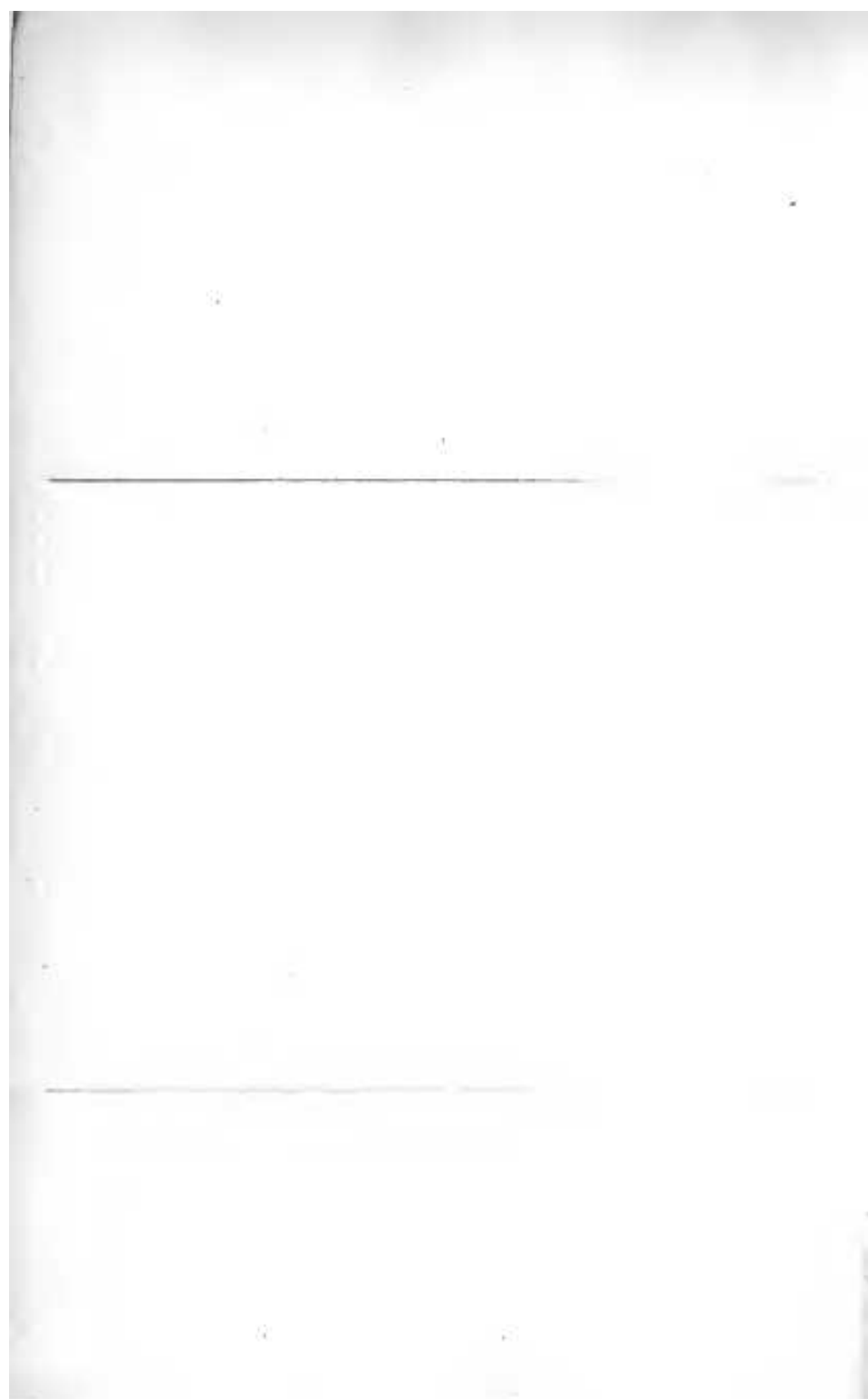
---

## *Errata.*

- Page 13, line 3 from end, *for* master *read* predecessor  
" 33, " 13 " bottom, *after* Jonson's *insert* next renowned  
" 47, " 2 " " *for* have *read* has  
" 86, " 13 " " *for* Policy *read* Politick  
" 109, lines 9 and 10, *for* how easy it is to find a match *for* Dickens's Chadband or Stiggins, *read* that it is not altogether difficult to find a match *for* these personages  
" 152, line 10 of the quotation *from* Herrick, *after* outdid, *insert* the meat, outdid  
" 156, line 6 from bottom, *for* Alexander *read* James  
" 156, lines 6 and 7 from bottom, *delete* the younger  
" 197, last line, *for* Broome *read* Brome

did not write himself *Johnston*. When he called his grandfather 'a gentleman,' this meant, in the customary parlance of the time, that he had the right to bear coat-armour. From Drummond we learn that the poet's coat was of 'three spindles or *rhombi*.' This indication has led me upon a somewhat circuitous route to the





# BEN JONSON.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTH AND APPRENTICESHIP.

BENJAMIN JONSON was born in 1573. In the course of conversation with Drummond, at Hawthornden, he gave some particulars of his parentage. 'His grandfather came from Carlisle, and, he thought, from Annandale to it; he served King Henry VIII., and was a gentleman. His father lost all his estate under Queen Mary, having been cast in prison and forfeited; at last turned minister: so he was a minister's son. He himself was posthumous born, a month after his father's decease.'

The spelling of family names varied almost indefinitely in the sixteenth century. It is therefore no argument against Jonson's Annandale descent that he did not write himself Johnston. When he called his grandfather 'a gentleman,' this meant, in the customary parlance of the time, that he had the right to bear coat-armour. From Drummond we learn that the poet's coat was of 'three spindles or *rhombi*.' This indication has led me upon a somewhat circuitous route to the

conclusion that he was really of Border blood. The main features of the Annandale Johnstones' shield are a saltire and a chief, the latter charged with three cushions. With this shield Jonson's 'three spindles' have no apparent connection. But I found that Burke, in his 'General Armoury,' blazoned one coat of Johnson as follows: 'Or, three fusils in fesse, sable.' Now the heraldic fusil is equivalent, etymologically, to a spindle, and in form resembles the geometrical figure called *rhombus*. On applying to our Heralds' College I was informed that no official authority existed for the coat of Johnson as above blazoned by Burke.<sup>1</sup> Next I made application to the Lyon Office, in Edinburgh, and from R. R. Stodart, Esq., to whom my cordial thanks are due, obtained the following solution of the problem. A saltire and a chief formed the original bearings of the Lords of Annandale, and these were adopted by the Annands, Griersons, Johnstones, Moffats, and others, with changes of tincture and additional charges. Among such additions, that of a cushion was distinctive of the Johnstones. In old Scotch heraldry the cushion was presented in the form of a lozenge, not, as now, in that of a rectangle. It seems, therefore, tolerably certain that Jonson had retained the specific bearing of his Annandale forbears, namely, three cushions, depicted lozenge-wise, in which shape they assume the semblance of the heraldic fusil, spindle, or rhombus. His grandfather's Christian name being wanting, it is hopeless to prove his descent from any of the numerous Border Johnstones. Yet I think the

<sup>1</sup> For this information, courteously and liberally given, I have to thank E. Bellasis, Esq., Blue Mantle.