

**JYL OF
BREYNTFORDS
TESTAMENT**

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Jyl of Breyntfords Testament by Geoffrey Chaucer & Robert Copland

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GEOFFREY CHAUCER & ROBERT COPLAND

**JYL OF
BREYNTFORDS
TESTAMENT**

Iyl of Breyntfords Testament,

BY

ROBERT COPLAND, BOKE-PRYNTER,

5-2195-

The Wyll of the Deuyll

and his

Last Testament,

A Talk of Ten Wives on their

Husbands' Ware,

A Balade or two by Chaucer,

And Other Short Pieces.

EDITED BY FREDERICK J. FURNIVALL.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

LONDON, 1871.

820.8
F99

PRINTED BY TAYLOR AND CO.,
LITTLE QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

FOREWORDS.

IN hunting up Captain Cox's books lately, to give an account of each of them in my edition of *Lancham's Letter*, 1575, for the Ballad Society, and thus get a notion of the literature on which a reading middle-class man of Elizabeth's time was brought up, I came across "Julian of Brainford's testament" for the first time. Hearing that there was only one copy extant of the eight-leaves of each of the only two editions known, I asked Mr. G. Parker of the Bodleian to transcribe the copy there for me¹; and as it proved to be worthy of preservation, I resolved to reprint it privately with another tract of like subject, *The Wyll of the Dewyll*, which I had seen in Lambeth Library two years ago when looking for MSS and books about the condition of England in Henry VIII's reign, and had then put down for reprinting in the Early English Text Society's list, but had since thought of withdrawing in order to avoid possible annoyance to the Society from any cantankerous puritan like the one who bothered me about the Percy-Folio Loose and Humorous Songs. Both tracts are of value as illustrating the manners and tone of the classes they treat of in Tudor days; and I have no notion of leaving them to be seen only by those who can spare time and money for visits to Lambeth and Oxford for that purpose. None of us students of English

¹ Mr. Collier does not say where the other copy, "Jyl of Braintford's Testament," is. [In his own possession.—T. Corser.] He holds it to be of the earlier edition. I hold it to be of the later, because it is less correct. Mr. Collier's reported variations of it are marked A in the notes following.

antiquity are beasts or fools enough to want to possess such tracts because they contain a few coarse words; we want the whole of the getatable evidence, whatever it may be, on the social condition of Tudor England, on our shelves, so that we may judge of it for ourselves.

Moreover, *Jyl of Breyntford* is by Robert Copland, the one of the poet-printers of Henry VIII's time to whom we are most indebted, and who has left us the most valuable picture I know, of the beggars and thriftless class of his day, in his *Hye Way to the Spyttel House*, which I recommend every one to read in the reprint in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's *Remains of the Early Popular Poetry of England*, 1866, vol. iv, p. 17. This *Hye Way* was another of Captain Cox's books, and I have given an account of it in my Forewords to *Laneham's Letter*. We owe besides to Robert Copland¹ the amusing "Complaynte of them that ben to late maryed" printed by Wynkyn de Worde; an 'Innocation,' and perhaps all the metrical translations in 'The passyon of our lorde,' Wynkyn de Worde, 1532; "The History of Helyas Knight of the Swan translated out of french into English [by Robert Coplande] at the Instigation of y^e pusant and Illustrus prince y^e lord Edward Duke of Buckingham, Earle of Hereford Stafford & of Northhampton" (W. de Worde, 6 Febr. 1512-13); "The Life of Ipomydon," said to be printed by Wynkyn de Worde; "Kynge Appolyne of Thyre," a translation from the French, with an original prologue (W. de Worde, 1510); "The Rutter of the See, with the Hauens, Rodes, Soundynges, Kennynges, Wyndes, Flodes, and Ebbes, Daungers, and Coastes, of Dyuers Regyons, &c," London, 1528, a translation; an Address before, and an Envoy in verse after, a prose tract, "The

¹ His two names form an acrostic just preceding the last stanza . . . a fact . . . only recently pointed out to us. *Collier's Bibl. Cat.* i. 153. "He was probably the author, or rather, translator, of a second tract of similar character: "A complaynt of them that be to soone maryed," W. de Worde, 1535, 4to, 13 leaves, black letter; and of the "Payne and Sorowe of Euyll Maryage," W. de Worde, no date, 4to, 4 leaves, black letter." Hazlitt's *Early Pop. Poetry*, iv. 21, (at p. 73 of which volume the last named tract is reprinted).

spectacle of lovers. here after foloweth a lytell contrauers dyalogue bytwene loue and counsell, with many goodly argumentes of good women and bad, very compendyous to all estates, newly compyled by Wyllyam Walter, seruaunt vnto Syr Henry Marnaye, Knight, Chauncelour of the Dutche of Lancastre," (W. de Worde: a copy in Mr. S. Christie-Miller's Library at Britwell¹); an address in verse by 'Roberte Coplande, boke-prynter, to new-fanglers,' in four 8-line stanzas, prefixed to Chaucer's *Assemblé of Foules* 1530, and at the end, an Envoy of 3 more stanzas; also another Envoy to Wynkyn de Worde's edition of 'The Castell of Pleasure,' a poem by William Nevyl, son of Lord Latimer². 'He also contributed the *Petycyon* and *Envoye* to the Myrroure of the Chyrche, 1521; and he has verses before the *Secrets of Aristotyle*, 1528³.' Also, says Mr. Hazlitt, *E. Pop.* p. iv. 371, on the last leaf of 'The Introductory to wryte and pronounce Frenche' by Alexander Barclay, 'Imprynted at London in the Fletestrete at the sygne of the Rose Garlande by Robert coplande, the yere of our lorde M. CCCCC. xxi. y^e xxii day of Marche,' is "Here foloweth the maner of dauncynge of base dances, after the vse of fraunce and other places, translated out of frenche into Englysshe by Robert coplande": this is reprinted in a note to my edition of *Captain Cox or Lancham's Letter*, Bal. Soc. 1871. "'The Secret of Secrets of Aristotyle,' translated out of French, and emprented by R. C. 1528, 4to, with the translator [R. Copland]'s Envoy in verse. 'The Maner to liue well &c,' printed by R. C. 1540, 4to, and translated, probably by himself, out of French. (See *Dibdin*, iii. 120-4.) 'The Art of Memorye,' translated out of French into English by Rob. Coplande. London, by W. Myddylton. 12mo.³'

Of the *Wyll of the Dewyll* I can find no notice, bibliogra-

¹ All from Hazlitt's *Handbook*.

² Hazlitt's *Early Pop. Poetry*, iv. 19, 20.

³ For farther notices of Copland, consult Wood's *Atk. Oxon.* vol. i, p. 252; Warton's *Hist. Engl. Poet.* vol. i, p. cccxxvi, and vol. iv, p. 138; Dibdin's *Typog. Antiq.* vol. iii, p. 122; Ritson's *Bibliogr. Poet.* p. 173.—Corser's *Collect. Anglo-Poet.* Pt. iv, p. 455.

phical or other, but am told that Mr. J. P. Collier has reprinted a later edition of it in one of his Series, and, as usual, without saying where his original is. It is a sharp and coarse satire against certain classes of the society of its time, and is reprinted from the copy in the Lambeth Library. For Testaments more or less like the present one, see *Colyn Blowbold's Testament*, printed in Mr. Halliwell's *Nugæ Poeticæ*, 1844, and Hazlitt's *Early Pop. Poetry*, i. 91; Dunbar's *Testament of Andro Kennedy*, 1508, (and in *Works*, ed. Laing;) 'Wyl Bucke, His Testament, by John Lacy, printed by W. Copland, no date, 4to (reprinted by Haslewood, and in *Literature of the 16th and 17th Centuries Illustrated*, 1851); *The Will and Testament of the Hare*, printed (I think) in the *English Gesta Romanorum*; *The Last Wyll and Testament of Dan Bartholomew of Bath*, printed in Gascoigne's *Poesies*, 1575, 4to, Roxburghe Library, 1870. (*E. Pop. P.* i. 91.)

The Talk of Ten Wives on their Husbands' Ware was first brought into public notice by Sir F. Madden, in his account of the contents of the Porkington MS No. 10, in his *Syr Gawayne* for the Bannatyne Club. He called it an amusing but indelicate story. Mr. Halliwell also quoted several passages from it in his *Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words*. It illustrates those old-time women of Britain, of whom Chaucer's Wife-of-Bath and Dunbar's Widow are the types, and justifies those poets' sketches. The Ten Wives' Talk is, we may be sure, no libel on what went on at those frequent sittings 'at the ale' in which women formerly indulged. A near relative of mine, a few years since, was greatly astonished to see a like question to that discuss by the Wives, experimentally settled on some clean plates, for a bet, by a party of Welsh farmers after a market dinner at an inn on the borders.

A few other pieces of like character that have come across me in my manuscript work, are added.

In the *Jyl* tract the black-letter *I* is printed *I* or *J* according to modern usage.

EGHAM, September 2, 1870.

[4to, C. 39. Art. Seld. (Bodl. Libr.)]

Jyl of breyntfords testament.

Actuq̄ compiled;

[Woodcut of a man and a woman, with a house in the background.]

[p. 2] “¶ Proface, maystres Jyllyan, with your company:
I pray you fyll you not to moche of that mutton,
I promyse you that it is very queysy,
And, or ye be ware, wyll make your bely button.”

[Woodcuts of a man and 2 women. *Fantasy* over the man on the left;
M. Jyllyan in the centre; an unnamed one on the right.]

“Take no thought, good syr, how I shal be fyld,
But come you nere, & take parte of our swylllyng.
Leaue your courteysy, I pray you, be pyld,
And couer your head; I be-shrew the fylllyng!” 8

[p. 3] ¶ Prologus of Robert copland, the auctor.

At Brentford¹, on the west of London,
Nygh to a place *that* called is Syon²,
There dwelt a widow of a homly³ sort,
Honest in substaunce, & full of sport; 12
Dally she cowd, *with* pastim & Jestes,
Among her neyghbours and her gestes;

¹ Seven miles down the South Western Road. Many a walk did I have there from school at Hanwell, to buy books, papers, and packets of sweetstuff and cakes.

² Sion House is the Duke of Northumberland's big place between Brentford and Isleworth, seen well from the Thames and Kew Gardens, and is said to have as many windows as there are days in the year.

³ holy, A.—Collier.