

**THE TAMING OF A SHREW,
BEING THE ORIGINAL OF
SHAKESPEARE'S TAMING
OF THE SHREW**

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The taming of a shrew, being the original of Shakespeare's Taming of the shrew by F. S. Boas

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F. S. BOAS

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THE TAMING OF A SHREW



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READ THE BOOK OF TAMING A SHREW, WHICH HATH MADE
A NUMBER OF US SO PERFECT, THAT NOW EVERY ONE CAN
RULE A SHREW IN OUR COUNTRY, SAVE HE THAT HATH HER.

SIR JOHN HARRINGTON (1596).

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1908

INTRODUCTION

EDITIONS OF THE PLAY

Early Editions.—There are three early editions of *The Taming of a Shrew*. The first was entered in the Stationers' Registers on 2nd May, 1594, to Peter Short, as "A plesant Conceyted historie called the Tamyinge of a Shrowe." It appeared in the same year in a quarto edition, with the following title: *A Pleasant Conceited Historie, called The taming of a Shrew. As it was sundry times acted by the Right honorable the Earle of Pembrook his servants. Printed at London by Peter Short and are to be sold by Cutbert Burbie, at his shop at the Royall Exchange, 1594.* The only surviving copy of this edition, as far as is known, is that in the Duke of Devonshire's library at Chatsworth. Except that it frequently confuses verse and prose, the text appears to be in the main accurate. The second edition, which was not entered on the Register, appeared in 1596. It was, like the first, printed by Short and sold by Burbie. Copies are preserved in the British Museum and in the Earl of Ellesmere's collection at Bridgewater House. This edition differs from its predecessor in comparatively few points, and these not of much significance. The title-page is reproduced as frontispiece to the present volume.

The third edition was published in 1607, but the copyright had now changed hands. *The taming of a Shrew*, with *Romeo and Juliett* and *Loves Labour Loste* are entered in the Stationers' Registers on 22nd January, 1606/7 to "Master Linge by direcon of A Court and with consent of Master Burby under his handwrytinge." The quarto accordingly appeared with the imprint, "Printed at London by V. S. for Nicholas Ling, and are to be sold at his shop in Saint Dunstons Church-yard in Fleet street. 1607."¹ Copies of it are preserved at Chatsworth, and in the Malone Collection in the Bodleian Library. This edition, following its predecessor after an interval of eleven years, differs from it and the first quarto in a number of readings. In some points, especially the use of the plural verb instead of a singular before two nominatives, it shows a more modern tendency than the editions of 1594 or 1596. But the variants rarely extend to more than a few words, and they are superficial in character. The play in all essentials preserves the same text in the three original editions.

Later Reprints.—The publication of *The Taming of the Shrew* in the Shakespearean First Folio of 1623, in the quarto edition of 1631, and in the later Folios, doubtless checked any demand for the older play. Thus it had to wait for more than one hundred and seventy years after the publication of the quarto of 1607 before it was reprinted.

¹ In the same year Ling transferred his rights in the play to John Smethwick, who never published it, but brought out a quarto of *The Taming of the Shrew* in 1631.