

A rare early quarto of Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 2*

William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2*. London: Andrew Wise, 1600. 7 1/16 inches x 4 15/16 inches (179 mm x 125 mm), [88] pages, A–D4 E4 (-E3, 4 +E3, 4, 5, 6) F–K4 L2 (last leaf blank).

The | Second part of Henrie | the fourth, continuing to his death, | *and coronation of Henrie* | the fift. | With the humours of sir Iohn Fal- | *staffe, and swaggering* | Pistoll. | *As it hath been sundrie times publikely* | acted by the right honourable, the Lord | Chamberlaine his seruants. | *Written by William Shakespeare.* | [ornament] | London | Printed by V. S. for Andrew Wise, and | William Aspley. | 1600.

Shakespeare's quartos, so named because of their format (a single sheet folded twice, creating four leaves or eight pages), are the first printed representations of his plays and, as none of the plays survives in manuscript, of great importance to Shakespeare scholarship. Only twenty-one of Shakespeare's plays were published in quarto before the closure of the theaters and outbreak of civil war in 1642. These quartos were printed from either Shakespeare's "foul papers" (a draft with notations and changes that was given in sections to actors for their respective roles); from "fair copies" created from foul papers that presented the entire action of the play; from promptbooks, essentially fair copies annotated and expanded by the author and acting company to clarify stage directions, sound effects, etc.; or from a previously published quarto edition. The quartos were inexpensive to produce and were published for various reasons, including to secure the acting company's rights to the material and to bring in money during the

plague years in London when the theaters were closed.

Henry IV, Part 2 opens in the wake of the Battle of Shrewsbury. The play chronicles the ongoing conspiracy against Henry IV by the Archbishop of York and other nobles and the responses of the Lancastrian loyalists. The end of the play brings the death of Henry (1413) by natural causes and the coronation of his son, known as Prince Hal, as Henry V. Despite the challenges to his father's legitimacy, Henry V was to reign unchallenged until illness claimed his life in 1422. Both parts of *Henry IV* feature the memorable character Sir John Falstaff, an overweight reveler and shirker of duty.

Now at the British Library, this copy of the 1600 *Henry IV, Part 2* contains two corrected leaves, E3 and E4, and two additional leaves, E5 and E6, to remedy an omission (Act III, Scene 1) discovered during printing. This volume was bound by the British Museum Bindery in nineteenth-century red sheep with gilt tooling, which includes the crest of David Garrick on both boards. "SHAKESPEARE. Henry IV. 2ND. PART. LOND. 1600." is lettered in gold up the spine. The turn-ins are gold tooled and the top turn-in of the front board is signed "TUCKETT. BINDER. BRITISH MUSEUM." The leaves' edges are gilt.

This quarto was previously owned by David Garrick (1717–1779), an English actor whose unaffected performance in the title role of *Richard III* in 1741 brought him renown. Garrick, both as an actor and theatrical manager, exerted a tremendous influence on stage practices throughout the 18th century; as a friend and classics pupil of Samuel Johnson, he brought

reputability to his trade. He began to collect early printed plays during the 1740s, at which time most collectors regarded stage scripts as popular works unfit for inclusion in serious libraries. Garrick, however, recognized their worth and, assisted by friends and knowledgeable advisors, built his collection in the interest of scholarship and the enrichment of subsequent generations. He bequeathed the collection to the British Museum upon his death in 1779.

Octavo code: **shaheb**