

[ME. *boille-n, boile-n*, a. OF. *boill-ir (boill-ant)*, mod.F. *bouillir*:—L. *bullĕ-re* to form bubbles, to boil.]

1. intr. a. Of a liquid: To bubble up in agitation through the action of heat causing the lowest portions of the liquid to pass into the gaseous form and escape; to roll about under the influence of heat; also said of the vessel containing the liquid. Also with *up* and *fig.*

1612 W. STRACHEY *Travaile into Virginia* (1849) II. 184/2 To boyle up, potopotawh tawh. **1747** H. GLASSE *Art of Cookery* ix. 94 Let it boil up till it is thorough hot. **1818** W. TUCKER *Fam. Dyer & Scourer* (ed. 2) 61 When this has boiled up, cool down your copper. **1871** L. W. M. LOCKHART *Fair to See* (1872) II. xiii. 62 Just as things were boiling up very satisfactorily to a climax, in came Mrs M'Killop..and cleared them off. *Ibid.* III. xxxv. 150 All this time Mrs M'Killop..had been bridling and boiling up on her sofa, waiting for recognition.

b. To reach the boiling point, to turn from the liquid into the gaseous state. *to boil over*: to bubble up so as to run over the side of the vessel; also said of the vessel. Cf. *run over, overflow*, etc.

a1225 *Juliana* 172 þis maide isei þis led boili. **a1225** *St. Marg.* 247 He let hete water o^o seoþinge' & þo hit boillede faste. **a1300** *Cursor M.* 11886 þai fild a lede o pik and oyle, And fast þai did it for to boile. **1393** GOWER *Conf.* III. 32 Which hath ever his pottes hote Of love boilend on the fire. **c1440** *Prompt. Parv.* 43 Boylyn ouyr, as pottys on þe fyre, *ebullio*. **1611** *BIBLE Isa.* lxiv. 2 The fire causeth the waters to boyle. **1813** *Domestic Cookery* 249 Room (for the liquor) to boil as quick as possible, without boiling over. **1860** TYNDALL *Glac.* II. §24. 356 Water deprived of its air will not boil at 212° Fahr. **1875** JOWETT *Plato* (ed. 2) I. 53 Putting in anything that we like while the pot is boiling.

2. transf. a. To move with an agitation like that of boiling water; to bubble, to seethe. Also said of that from which something gushes tumultuously: To overflow *with*.

c1300 *K. Alis.* 2464 Me myghte y-seo..Heorten blede, braynes boyle. **1382** WYCLIF *Job* xli. 22 He shal make the depthe of the se to boilen as a pot. —2 *Macc.* ix. 9 Wormes buyliden out of the body of the vnpyteous man. **1388** —*Ex.* xvi. 20 It bigan to buyle with wormes, and it was rotun. **1526** *Pilgr. Perf.* (W. de W. 1531) 291b, Myghty newe wyne..boyleth upward, as though it wolde brast the vessell. **1616** R. C. *Times' Whis.* v. 2061 When the poyson boylde In every veine. **1670** COTTON *Espemon* II. VI. 253 His blood boiling in great quantities out of his mouth. **1725** POPE *Odyss.* III. 357 The storm thickens, and the billows boil. **1820** SOUTHEY *Lodore* 93 Recoiling, turmoiling and

toiling and boiling.

b. To undulate like a boiling fluid.

1882 *Observatory* V. 355 The Sun's limb was boiling all about it.

3. fig. **a.** Said of passions, persons under the influence of passion, their words, etc. Also *to boil over*. Cf. *the blood boils* in 10b.

c1386 CHAUCER *Pars. T.* ¶272 The brennyng of lecchery boylid in al his body. **1393** GOWER *Conf.* I. 294 So boilen up the foule sawes. **1548** UDALL, etc. *Erasm. Par. Luke* xii. 58 Whan his herte thus boiled. **1577** HANMER *Anc. Eccl. Hist.* (1619) 499 The people..boiled with anger. **1625** N. R. tr. *Camden's Hist. Eliz.* I. (1635) 88 O'Neal..boyled in hatred against the English. **1667** MILTON *P.L.* IV. 16 His dire attempt, which nigh the birth Now rowling, boiles in his tumultuous brest. **1761-2** HUME *Hist. Eng.* (1806) IV. li. 60 Resentment was boiling in his sullen, unsociable mind. **1875** JOWETT *Plato* (ed. 2) III. 55 He cannot chafe or boil or get into a state of righteous indignation. **1879** FROUDE *Cæsar* xvii. 288 The political frenzy was now boiling over.

b. trans. to boil forth: to give forth in a boiling or agitated manner.

1609 BIBLE (Douay) *Prov.* xv. 2 The mouth of fooles boyleth forth follie.

4. a. trans. To cause (a liquid) to bubble with heat (see sense 1); to bring to the boiling point: *esp.* said of food, wholly or partly liquid, in the process of cooking; also of the containing vessel.

c1420 *Liber Cocorum* 11 Boyle hit and sture lest hit brenne. **a1500** *E.E. Misc.* (1855) 34 Sume byllyd mettayl. **1692** *Lond. Gaz.* No. 2800/4 The Copper boyls betwixt 15 and 16 Hogsheads at a time. **1831** CARLYLE *Sart. Res.* II. ix, As kind housewives..were boiling their husbands' kettles.

b. intr. (for *refl.*) Cf. *to eat, cut*, etc.

1845 E. ACTON *Cookery* xxi. (1852) 493 The fruit should be finely flavoured, and..should boil easily.

c. to boil up: *absol.* to boil or wash clothes. *U.S. and N.Z. colloq.* Also (*Canad. and N.Z.*), to make tea. Also **to boil the billy**, to make tea (*Austral. and N.Z. colloq.*).

1839, 1881 [see [BILLY](#)³ 1]. **1891** [see [DAMPER](#) 6]. **1902** B. BAYNTON in Murdoch & Drake-Brockman *Austral. Short Stories* (1951) 42 Blest if I evven fergot t' bile th' billy. **1911** [W. H. KOEBEL](#) *In Maoriland Bush* x. 150 When you boil the 'billy', you make tea, *voila tout*. **1929** *Amer. Speech* IV. 338 *Boil up*, to wash your clothes. **1933** E. MERRICK *True North* 30 At three we boiled up again. **1947** [P. NEWTON](#) *Wayleggo* (1949) iii. 34 Musterers..carry billies..and 'boil-up'..when circumstances permit.

†5. fig. To agitate and inflame, to make fervent (persons or their feelings).
Obs.

1648 *Eikon Basilike* 115 Let no fire of affliction boil over my passion to any impatience. **a1661** [B. HOLYDAY](#) *Juvenal* 237 Wrath boils thy breast! **a1704** [T. BROWN](#) *Dk. Ormond's Recov.* Wks. I. 49 What lust of power, or what nefarious charms, Ferment your blood, or boil you into arms?

6. To act upon (anything) by continued immersion in boiling liquid; to subject to heat in boiling water. **a.** To cook (solid articles) in this way; **b.** To cleanse (clothes, etc.) by immersion in boiling water; **c.** To prepare, make, or produce by boiling. **d.** To put to death by boiling.

c1325 *Coer de L.* 2831 In watyr we baylyd the blood. **c1386** [CHAUCER](#) *Prolog.* 383 A Cook they hadde..To boille the chiknes with the Marybones..He koude rooste and sethe and boille and frye. **1556** *Chron. Gr. Friars* (1852) 45 The x. day of March was a mayde boyllyd in Smythfelde for poyssynng of dyvers persons. **1611** *BIBLE Ezek.* xlvi. 20 The place where the Priests shall boyle the trespasse offering. **1641** [J. JACKSON](#) *True Evang.* T. II. 107 He is..a Kid..boyled in his Mothers milk. **1696** *Lond. Gaz.* No. 3145/4 A silver-hilted Sword..was lately Boiled, and the Handle gilt. **1697** [DRYDEN](#) *Virg. Georg.* I. 380 Some steep their Seed, and some in Cauldrons boil. **1842** *Penny Cycl.* XXIII. 232 The important improvement of boiling sugar in vacuo. **1842** [TENNYSON](#) *St. Sim. Styl.* 51 Martyrs..were stoned, or crucified, Or burn'd in fire, or boiled in oil. **1865** [TYLOR](#) *Early Hist. Man.* i, Modes of making fire and boiling food.

7. intr. To undergo the action produced by immersion in boiling liquid.

1633 [P. FLETCHER](#) *Purple Isl.* I. lvii, Boyling in sulphur, and hot-bubbling pitch. **1813** *Dom. Cookery* VIII. 185 Set it [rice] to boil in milk.

8. to boil away (intr.): to evaporate in boiling. **to boil down**: to lessen the bulk of (anything) by boiling; *fig.* to condense, epitomize.

1845 E. ACTON *Mod. Cookery* xxi. (1852) 464 For jams and jellies it [fruit] cannot be too soon boiled down. **1880** *Sat. Rev.* No. 1288. 28 It is surprising to see how much research Mr. S. has sometimes contrived to boil down into a single line.

†**9. slang.** To betray. *Obs.*

1602 ROWLANDS *Greene's Cony-catchers* 16 His cloyer or follower forthwith boyles him, that is, bewrayes him. **1611** MIDDLETON & DEKKER *Roar. Girle* Wks. 1873 III. 220 Wee are smoakt..Wee are boyl'd, pox on her!

10. Phrases. **a. to boil the pot**: to supply one's livelihood. So **to keep the pot boiling**: also = to keep anything going. Cf. POT.

1808 WOLCOTT (P. Pindar) *Peep at R. Acad.* Wks. 1812 V. 352, I think this Piece will help to boil the pot. **1837** MARRYAT *Dog-Fiend* ix, Huzza, my lads! we'll keep the pot boiling.

b. the blood boils: phrase expressing strong emotion, esp. of anger or indignation.

1675 OTWAY *Alcibiades* 38, I am impatient, and my blood boyls high. **1848** MACAULAY *Hist. Eng.* I. 230 The thought of such intervention made the blood, even of the Cavaliers, boil in their veins. **1859** JEPHSON *Brittany* xv. 248 A sight which made his blood boil.

11. Angling. Of a fish: to rise boldly at a fly.

1898 J. A. GIBBS *Cotswold Village* viii. 164, I see one [*sc.* a trout] boil up just above that mess of weed.