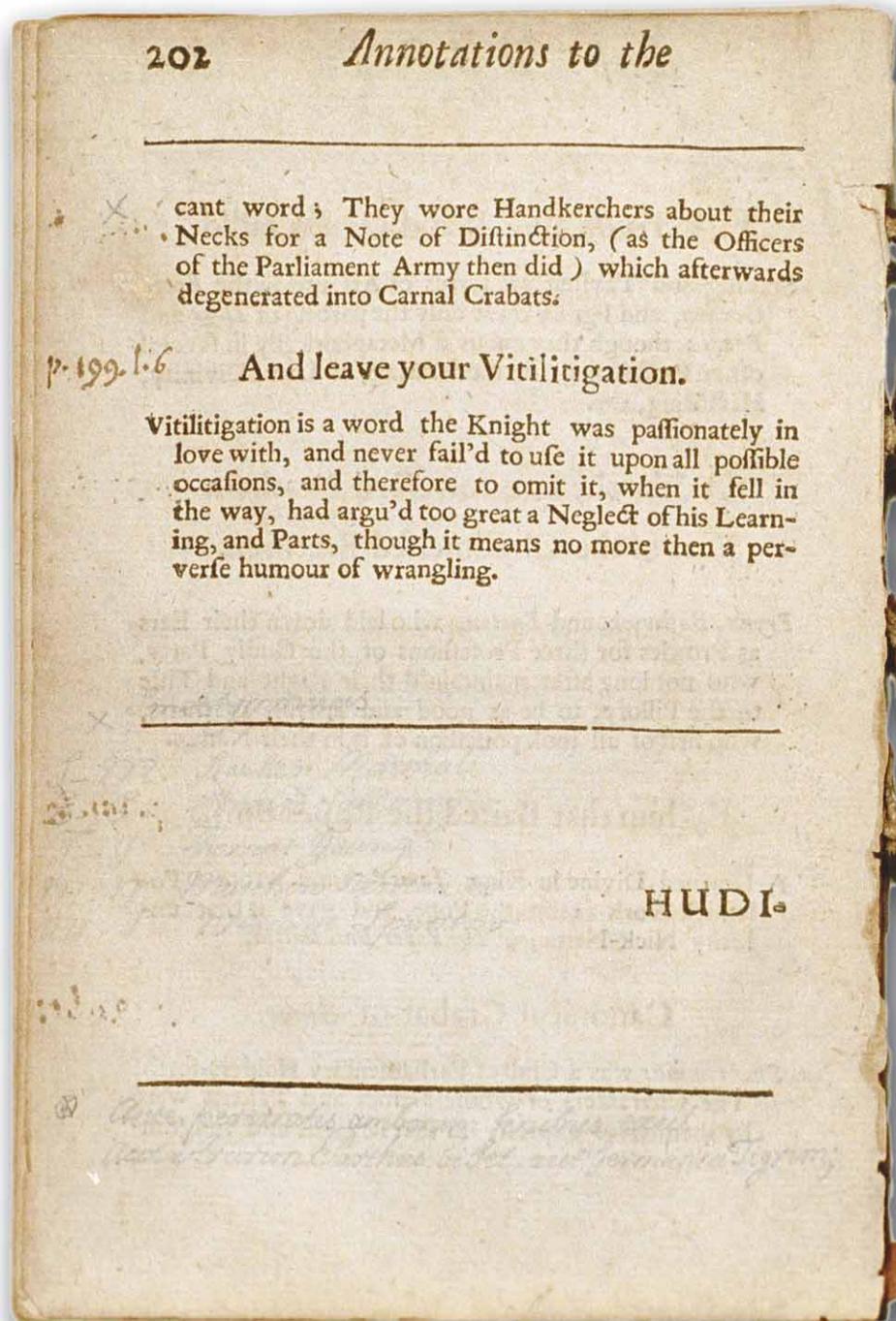


# Bookish Plots

by Charlotte E. Erwin

“A known Patriot, and yet walk ever Incognito.” So the anonymous author of a Jacobite pamphlet describes himself. These English partisans had special reason to walk incognito, as their undertakings, written and otherwise, were usually seditious and frequently treasonable. They remained loyal to the deposed Catholic monarch, James II—in Latin, *Jacobus*—after he was ousted in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. At that time, Parliament, not God, chose to hand off the crown, and the first English Bill of Rights was written. The succession had gone to the Protestants William and Mary, but their legitimacy was hotly debated. England was awash then in anonymous pamphlets and tracts on the rights and obligations of subjects and the limitations of the monarchy. Our anonymous pamphleteer titled his treatise “The Englishman’s Allegiance, Or, Our Indispensable Duty by Nature, by Oaths, and by Law to our Lawful King.” It was composed in the aftermath of the 1688 crisis and published around 1690. So well was its authorship suppressed that it was missed even by the indefatigable creators of the 20th-century *English Short Title Catalogue*, the bibliographic authority on early English books.

“The Englishman’s Allegiance” is known today through just 13 copies, of which only two are in the United States. One resides at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, the other at the Folger Library in Washington, D.C. Now, with the discovery and identification of a new, manuscript source in the Caltech Archives by cataloger Barbara Rapoport, the elusive author has been unmasked. In December 2001, the Archives received a magnanimous gift of close to 300 rare and valuable books from George W. Housner, the Braun Professor of Engineering, Emeritus (and widely known as the father of earthquake engineering). The Housner collection comprises a mix of early scientific (including early earthquake literature), historical, and literary works dating back to 1531, as well as more contemporary



landmark and collector’s editions. Among them is a real mystery piece, a 1674 edition of Samuel Butler’s *Hudibras*, which Housner thinks he must have purchased in England sometime after World War II. Lodged inside is a handwritten copy of “The Englishman’s Allegiance.” A second hand has written on the manuscript: “By Roger Earle of Castlemain 1690.”

The unveiled “Allegiance” manuscript poses a challenging literary puzzle: as one piece drops into place, all others assume new and compelling forms. Who was Roger “Earle of Castlemain,” and did he *really* write this pamphlet and under what circumstances? How does the published pamphlet compare to the manuscript version? Is the



George Housner, rare-book donor and father of earthquake engineering, in 1972.

The Englishman's Allegiance

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Our Indispensable<sup>OR</sup> Duty by Nature, by Oaths, and  
by Law, to our lawfull King.

Ante lucis ergo poscitur in caeteri Ervi;  
et fricta distatunt nudos in Littore pisces;  
quam nostro IIIUS labatur pectore vultus. Virg.

By Roger Earle of Castlemaine 1690.

Being as fully sensible, as any man breathing, how  
much we owe to the late pious, and distinguished  
Undertaking of the maternalis prince of Orange,  
now our dettard True and lawfull Sovereign; and  
being also as intirely convinced, as the best of my  
fellow-subjects of his wonderful prudence: or firm  
wisdoms King (yet must confess) worthy of the  
Crown, w<sup>ch</sup> his Title questionable, as having put y<sup>e</sup>  
whole Nation in y<sup>e</sup> present happy state; nay first  
(besides our Liberties & Religion) y<sup>e</sup> Monarchy it self,  
on a most firm & durable foundation. I say, being  
fully sensible & intirely convinced of all this; & finding  
besides by the sober, cool, & w<sup>th</sup> temperd votes of a Loyall  
& most legal parliament; (I mean those of y<sup>e</sup> house of  
Commons) that all persons (whether men or women) above  
the age of sixteen, are to take y<sup>e</sup> Oaths of Allegiance,  
or be imprisond without Bail or Mainprize, I thought  
it an innumbert duty (being a true patriot, & yet  
w<sup>th</sup> ever incognito) to cast in my mite; that is, in  
Oaths

Bound in between Parts I  
and II of Samuel Butler's  
*Hudibras* (actual size), this  
seditious 17th-century  
manuscript was spotted by  
an alert cataloger in the  
Caltech Archives, setting off  
a search for the author's  
identity. Was he indeed  
"Roger Earle of Castle-  
main," as this mysterious  
document claims?

*Biography* (London, 1900). He was born in 1634, educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge. Though admitted to the study of law at the Inner Temple, he was not called to the bar. In 1659, against his family's wishes, Roger married Barbara Villiers, at which point he secured for himself a humiliating notoriety and fulfilled his father's prediction that if he married her, he would be one of the most miserable men in the world. Within a year, Barbara became the favorite mistress of King Charles II, coincident with his restoration to the throne in May 1660. She bore the king five children and had several more besides, none fathered (it is thought) by her husband, from whom she parted for good in 1662. In a gesture calculated largely for her own advantage, she obtained for her husband the title of Earl of Castlemaine and Baron of Limerick, an Irish honor for which he showed little enthusiasm. Notably unrestrained in her personal conduct, Barbara was rudely dubbed "the royal whore" by the poet Andrew Marvell. As Lady Castlemaine and later Duchess of Cleveland, she was the talk of the court and often of the town; the diarist Samuel Pepys mentions her frequently.

The unfortunate husband, meanwhile, was ostensibly marginalized. Or was he? In the course Roger Palmer charted from this point, two factors remain constant: his unwavering and public devotion to Roman Catholicism, in spite of heavy legal and social penalties; and his staunch support of the Stuart monarchy. There was no way out of his marital dilemma: his religion forbade divorce, and he would therefore have no legitimate children of his own. His loyalty to the throne forced his acquiescence to his wife's position.

Nonetheless, in spite of scandal and aggressive anti-papist intrigue, Roger Palmer did not fade quietly from view. On the contrary, in the course of a turbulent career, during which he was imprisoned in the Tower of London at least five times, he tenaciously continued to speak out on

manuscript in the author's own hand? How and why did it get bound into a seemingly unrelated book, and who wrote the attribution of authorship and date on it? The story of the "Allegiance" text, as it has begun to unravel in the Caltech Archives, answers some of these questions and in the process yields some satisfying conclusions about the durability of both books and authors.

Our authorial masked man turns out to be Roger Palmer, the first Earl of Castlemaine (1634–1705). He was a contemporary of Isaac Newton and earned the admiration of both the poet laureate John Dryden and the Quaker William Penn. Most of what is known about him is summarized in the venerable *Dictionary of National*

The Palmers didn't have much in common, maritally or politically. The flamboyant Barbara was the mistress of Charles II, while the more sober Roger devoted himself to the cause of religious freedom. Roger's portrait, printed in *The Earl of Castlemain's Manifesto* (1681), comes from the Huntington Library. The oil painting of Barbara (née Villiers), Duchess of Cleveland (after Sir Peter Lely, ca. 1666) is reproduced by courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London.



behalf of English Catholics and to argue for religious toleration. When not engaged in polemics, he had time to invent a new type of globe, whose description, amply illustrated, was published in 1679 by Joseph Moxon, the royal hydrographer. His contemporary, Bishop Burnet, called him an unlucky man, but all things considered, his case might be the opposite. During the fevered days of the Popish Plot in 1678, when upwards of 25 Roman Catholics were executed for conspiring to kill King Charles II and to restore Roman Catholicism as the state religion of England, Lord Castlemaine was not one of them. He was tried at the King's Bench Bar in Westminster on June 23, 1680, for "high treason in the highest nature," which included alleged "approbation" of the king's death. Before a jury of 12 men, he conducted his own defense and was acquitted. Two accounts of his trial were published, one written by himself. The Popish Plot was later determined to be a fabrication. Some years afterwards, upon James II's accession to the throne in 1685, Lord Castlemaine and other Catholics saw their stars rise dramatically. Castlemaine was appointed the king's ambassador to the Vatican. According to contemporary accounts, he made a dreadful mess of his embassy by flouting decorum and by bringing an unseemly pressure to bear on Pope Innocent XI in a matter of ecclesiastical appointments. Recalled to England, he was consoled with a place on the Privy Council. But his fortune was short-lived. On the heels of James's fall he was arrested and charged with high treason, for endeavoring to reconcile England to the See of Rome and for other high crimes and misdemeanors. After enduring almost 16 months in the Tower, he was freed on bail. He died quietly in the country some years later at the age of 70.

Castlemaine's authorial career began in 1666 with a short treatise which later became known as "The Catholique Apology." In its original form,

it appeared anonymously under the long title "To all the Royalists that suffered for his Majesty, and to the rest of the good people of England. The humble apology of the English Catholics." This was an appeal for recognition of Catholic loyalty during the Civil War. It finishes with a "Bloody Catalogue," flamboyantly printed in red ink, of those Catholics who died in the war. Somewhat intemperate and theatrical, the pamphlet earned for Castlemaine the epithet "the Apologist." It was answered, rebutted, and refuted several times, until in its last edition of 1674 the whole set of interchanges had swollen enormously in size from a mere 14 to 608 pages. Lord Castlemaine continued his pro-Catholic writings with *The Compendium* (of the Popish Plot trials, 1679) and *The Earl of Castlemaine's Manifesto* (1681).

Although it was dangerous to be known as the writer of politically subversive tracts, the author of the "Allegiance" pamphlet wanted *some* people to know who he was. Otherwise why write at all? To this end, he provided some "Who-am-I" riddles in his opening pages. First, he says who he is not: "I am not a Quaker, for I can swear, and have both sworn Allegiance, and am also very fully resolv'd to keep it." Quakers were forbidden to swear oaths on religious grounds. They and the English Catholics had been sorely pressed in the matter of oaths, principally the oath of allegiance to the monarch and the oaths imposed under the Test Acts (1672, 1678), which essentially nullified the pope's authority. Like many Catholics, Castlemaine had sworn the oath of allegiance to the Stuarts, and he did not fancy being required to swear it again to the newly installed William and Mary, whom he regarded as usurpers.

The author avers he is no "commonwealthsman." Around the time of William and Mary's Glorious Revolution, this term was applied to Dissenters, that is, those Protestants who were not Anglicans, and those who favored a limited monarchy. Castlemaine was certainly neither of

those. The Palmer family were royalists and, almost as surely, Anglicans. Roger's father, Sir James Palmer, served as a gentleman of the bed-chamber under King Charles I and advised him in the matter of a shared passion—art collecting. Roger was the son of James Palmer's second marriage, to Catherine Herbert, daughter of Sir William Herbert, first Lord Powis. It is from his mother's side that Roger apparently gained his religious persuasions, for the Herberts were among the most powerful of the Catholic aristocrats. Although previous biographers fail us on this point, Roger was probably a convert to Catholicism. The "Allegiance" author claims to have been born and bred in the Church of England, but then roundly castigates that church for its worldliness and hypocrisy. It was of course the Anglican establishment, not the Dissenters, that made life miserable for Catholics.

The author tells us further that he is "of the long Robe," meaning that he is a lawyer. This accords with Castlemaine's biography. He also professes admiration for the Dutch and respect for a Duke of Venice in "the Morea or some other part of Turkey." Castlemaine had published under his own name two detailed histories, first, on the wars between the Venetians and the Ottoman Turks in the Mediterranean (where he had traveled widely); and second, on his own participation in the second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–67). From these pointed clues, those who knew him, his family, and his occupations had an excellent chance of identifying his authorial voice and heeding his message. That message, like the identity riddles, squares with Lord Castlemaine's character and conservative views. It passionately defends divine-

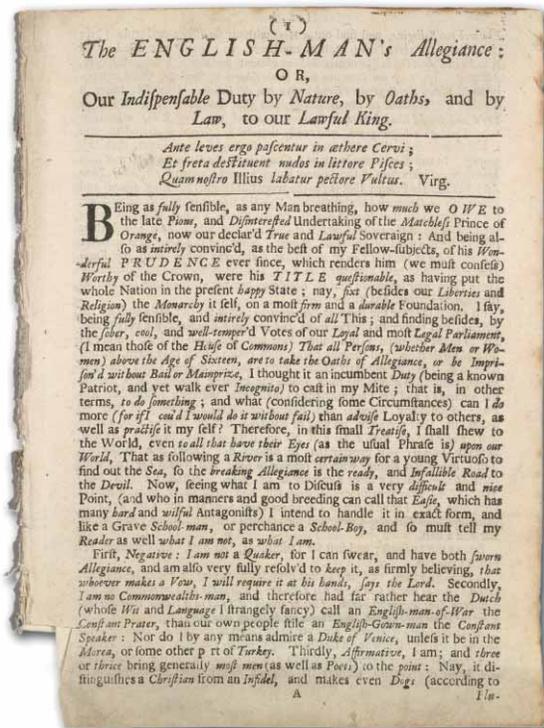
right monarchy and direct hereditary succession. "Our Lawful King," he writes, "sits always on a Hill, and is as conspicuous as the Pyramids of Modin, the Tombs of the Maccabees, which might be seen by all that sail'd on the Sea. The Inscription on his Throne is in such legible Characters, that he that runs may read it: Nor can any Native of England, or Scotland, possibly mistake his Royal and Sacred Person." An Englishman's allegiance, it follows, can only be to the legitimate sovereign, and that is James II.

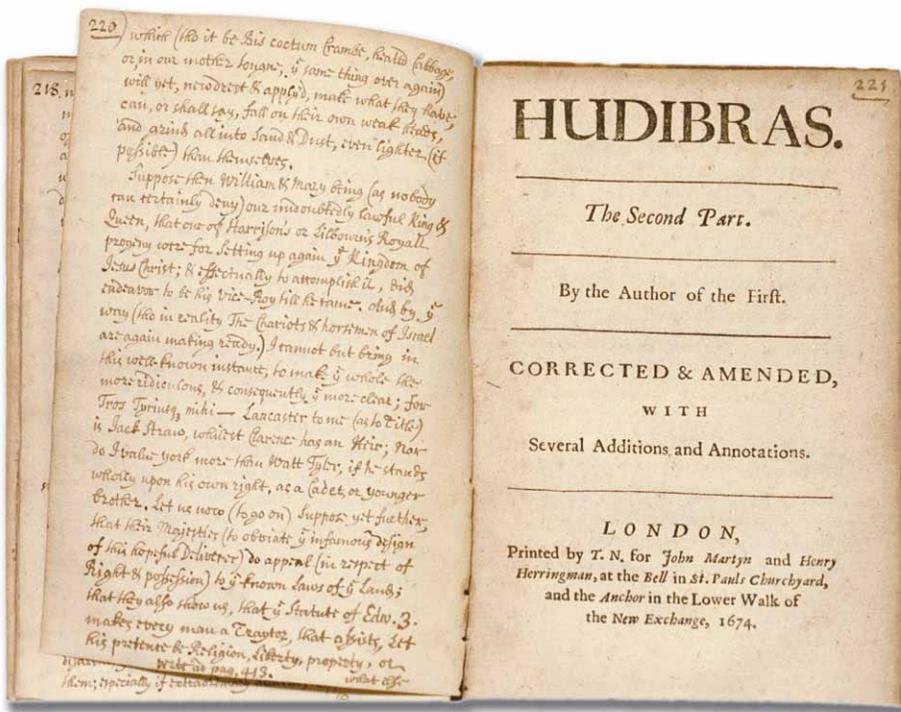
These were politically charged times. Castlemaine was in prison for all but a few weeks of 1689 and for four or five more months in 1690. Did he compose his "Allegiance" essay while incarcerated? He gives a broad hint on that matter by noting a certain limitation on his sphere of action: "I thought it an incumbent Duty (being a known Patriot, and yet walk ever Incognito) to cast in my Mite; that is, in other terms, to do something; and what (considering some Circumstances) can I do more (for if I cou'd I would do it without fail) than advise Loyalty to others, as well as practise it my self?" Whether "The Englishman's Allegiance" was composed in the Tower or in the months in 1690 when the Earl was at large, its preservation and circulation had to be effected. This was a clandestine effort, and parts of the story will remain untold. But we know some essential facts: the text was printed in pamphlet form without title page or author in the latter half of 1689 or in 1690 (events mentioned in the text lead to this conclusion); and a handwritten copy was made and intentionally stowed in a printed book—the book that George Housner purchased some three centuries later.

The Earl of Castlemaine's handwriting can be established from his autograph letters (one can be viewed at the Huntington Library), and it is certain that *he* did not pen the manuscript copy. It is a handsome fair copy in a neat contemporary hand, in ink on paper that, by its type and watermark, would be typical of the late 17th century. The text corresponds almost exactly with the pamphlet version. Variants between the two are slight, and there is no clear evidence of the priority of either one. It would be tempting to suppose that the manuscript served as the "copy" from which the compositor set type, but this could not be the case unless the whole book served as the cloak beneath which the subversive text was transmitted to the printer—an intriguing possibility. The manuscript was certainly written *after* its pages were inserted into the binding where it resides today.

How do we know this? First we need to tackle some book history. Old books frequently have interesting provenance, but the details of these histories can be elusive. The record is often patched together from physical evidence, such as book plates, dedications, and inscriptions of various sorts. The book that holds the "Allegiance" manuscript is an intriguing case. Samuel

Only 13 copies of the anonymously published pamphlet "The Englishman's Allegiance" still exist. This one is in the collection of Caltech's neighbor institution the Huntington Library and is reprinted with permission.





When the copyist came to the end of the 16 pages bound between Parts I and II of the book, he jumped to the pages bound at the end and finished there. Note the continuous pagination as “The Englishman’s Allegiance” segues into *Hudibras*.

Butler’s *Hudibras* is a verse satire on the English Civil War and the Cromwell era. Parts I and II were published in 1663 and 1664, respectively; Part III did not appear until 1678. *Hudibras* is part mock heroic epic, part political allegory. It became a true bestseller, “in greatest fashion for drollery,” reported Pepys in his diary for December 10, 1663, although he personally thought it “silly.” Even King Charles II read it, reportedly “with great delight.” The title character is a Presbyterian knight who, somewhat in the manner of Don Quixote, goes forth adventuring. From the well-known opening lines—“When civil Fury first grew high, / And men fell out they knew not why”—the poem broadly satirizes everything from religion to government to the Royal Society. In 1674 Butler made a new edition of Parts I and II together, and this is the edition that comes into our story. In this revised version, the text was altered through excisions and additions. The author also wrote explanatory notes called Annotations to clarify some of his obscure topical allusions which by 1674 referred to events that were rapidly receding into the past. The bigger format of the new edition, along with a series of actions by an expanding cast of characters—printer, owner, copyist, and bookbinder—made *Hudibras* physically adapted to the concealment of a small manuscript.

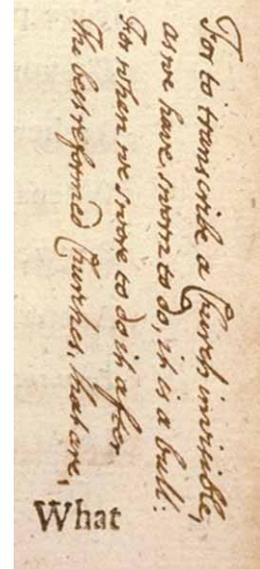
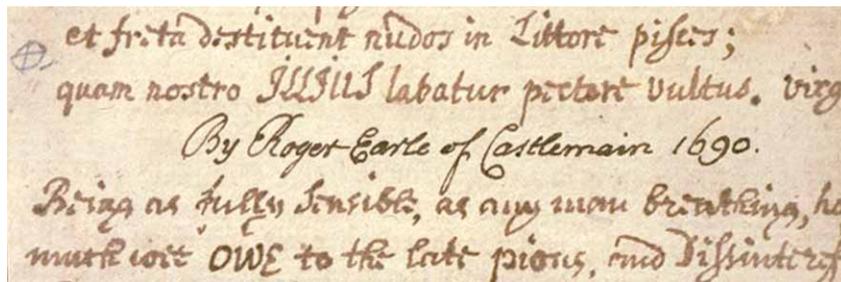
Most deserving of our attention after Lord Castlemaine is the person who owned Caltech’s *Hudibras* around 1690 or sometime after, and who made the attribution of the manuscript text to the Earl. This was a person with a zeal for truth and an appetite for detail. Unfortunately, he remains unidentified, having covered his tracks even better than the Earl. The attribution bespeaks a direct or at least close knowledge of the “Allegiance” text

and a desire both to protect it and to make it known, if only to the chosen few or posterity. Based on his preservation efforts, we may suppose him to be, at the very least, a sympathizer to the Jacobite cause and willing to take a risk on its behalf. He could have been a friend of Castle-maine and might be sought within the relatively small circle of the Catholic peerage, among the aristocratic companions who had recently shared the Earl’s ill-fated embassy to Rome, or among those to whom he considered applying for bail in 1690 who are named in the Huntington Library letter. The owner was probably not young, as he recognizes events several decades past. He was most certainly a gentleman with scholarly inclinations and fond of books, in addition to being neat in his writing and meticulous in his habits.

Here is what seems to have happened: the *Hudibras* owner had access to a copy of the “Allegiance” text—a dangerous item, but something he wanted to keep. He noted that his copy of *Hudibras* happened to have a blank page between Parts I and II—a result of the printing practices of the day. One blank page suggested a likely spot for the interpolation of additional pages. Paper was selected, of a quality and thickness to take ink without bleed-through. One sheet was folded into an octavo format to match the size of *Hudibras*—three folds would yield 8 leaves, 16 pages. This gathering—to use the proper book-making term—was trimmed and inserted to follow the blank page in *Hudibras*. The book would have had to be in an unbound state, but that was common. Owners rather than booksellers frequently saw to the binding of a book sold in wrappers or pasteboard covers. But this insertion would not produce enough pages for the “Allegiance” text. So a second gathering of blank pages of the same type of paper was added at the end of the book. And then, for good measure, more blank pages were added at the beginning. All of the added pages are of the same paper, distinguishable by its texture, weight, and characteristic watermark. Partitioning the blank pages into three segments made them less noticeable. Also, blank pages at the front and back of bound texts were used quite innocently for strengthening a binding. At this point, the owner had altogether 18 blank leaves (36 pages) inserted at three points—front, middle, and back—into his copy of *Hudibras*. Now he could have the book properly bound in leather and made ready for his shelf.

Enter the sympathetic copyist. He was ready to write out the seditious text. But he made a mistake—fortunately for later book historians. Instead of beginning to write on the paper insert, he started copying the text on the one blank leaf of the *Hudibras* text. Then a problem appeared, as the paper was thin and his ink bled through, forcing him to leave the overleaf blank, even though he had already paginated it. He then

The hand that entered the attribution “By Roger Earle of Castlemain 1690” is clearly not that of whoever copied the rest of the tract. But it is very similar to the hand that neatly scribbled remarks in the book’s margins, presumably that of the book’s owner, who was well up on current affairs, as his marginalia reveal. Note the resemblance of the “C”s in “Castlemain” and “Church.”



skipped to the first inserted leaf and continued to write without difficulty. When he came to the end of the blank pages, he jumped to the back of the book and finished the job. He had two and a half blank leaves left over.

By his blundering beginning, the copyist left evidence that he was writing on pages already bound into *Hudibras*. This establishes a crucial physical and temporal link between book and manuscript. The *Hudibras* owner also reinforces this link by writing on both manuscript (the attribution to Castlemaine is in his hand) and book pages. He glosses the Butler text in a thorough and lively manner, constructing his own scholarly edition by restoring in the margins all of the bits of text that were dropped by the author in his second edition. He has keyed Butler’s Annotations to their relevant pages, accurately anticipating by almost 300 years Oxford’s critical edition of 1967. The owner was in the know, too, on some of Butler’s obscure allusions, dating back before at least 1663. In his inked note “Lord Munson,” he recognizes and identifies the unlucky gentleman so violently subdued by his wife, here described in Butler’s gawky, comic lines (Part II, Canto I, 885-90):

Did not a certain Lady whip  
Of late, her husband’s own Lordship?  
And though a Grandee of the House,  
Claw’d him with Fundamental blows,  
Ty’d him stark-naked to a Bed-post;  
And firk’d his Hide, as if sh’had rid post.

Did poor Lord Munson dare to show his face in Parliament after this escapade? That is certainly another story.

The satirical *Hudibras* and the seditious “Englishman’s Allegiance” have traveled together for many years. Both authors, though far apart in point of view and method, join in the common purpose of ridicule. Theirs was an age of violent

unrest, and each strove to come to terms with it in his own way. One is detached and skeptical, the other a fervent partisan. The latter sought redress, the former was content to look and laugh. By strange and chancy events, their writings were bound together, one sheltering the other, but each in some way promoting the other’s survival. Now having been delivered by a conscientious collector, George Housner, into Caltech’s institutional hands, the companions are assured of a secure future together. □

Several people contributed to this article. To Barbara Rapoport goes the credit for the identification of the Castlemaine manuscript and for research on the Earl’s handwriting. Kevin Knox in the Caltech Archives contributed much helpful advice on the 17th-century historical context. Mary Robertson and Stephen Tabor of the Huntington Library and Bruce Whiteman of UCLA’s Williams Andrews Clark Memorial Library examined and commented on the physical characteristics of book and manuscript. Robertson also drew attention to the letter of the Earl of Castlemaine in the Huntington Library.

Charlotte (Shelley) Erwin has worked at Caltech for 15 years, as associate archivist since 1990, and became a member of the Academy of Certified Archivists in 1997. She holds a bachelor’s degree in English from Vassar and a PhD in music history from Yale. Her current interests are in history of science, in modern European cultural and intellectual history, and in rare books.

Barbara Rapoport holds a bachelor’s degree in English from the University of London and a master of library science degree from UCLA, where she spent most of her professional life. Since 1994 she has worked quarter-time at Caltech, cataloging maps for the geology map library, and recently took on cataloging the Housner collection as a special assignment.

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