

Hans Sloane, Samuel Pepys, and the Evidence of a Lost Pepys Library Catalogue

Kate Loveman

A few hours after Samuel Pepys's death, on 26 May 1703, his good friend Dr Hans Sloane helped perform his autopsy, examining for the 'public good' the kidney stones that had killed him. This was a fitting, if macabre, last scene in a friendship that had been devoted to advancing knowledge. Sloane and Pepys's mutual love of books and science was such that when, a few weeks later, Dr Arthur Charlett, the Master of University College, wanted to know the fate of Pepys's celebrated library, he directed his query to Sloane.¹ Pepys had, in fact, taken great care to secure his collection's future. He left his library to his nephew John Jackson, instructing Jackson to complete the collection and to pass it – books, furniture, catalogues, and all – to an Oxford or Cambridge college.² After Jackson's death, the library was duly donated to Magdalene College in Cambridge. There its order and appearance are still preserved according to the terms of Pepys's will. Sloane's own book collection, already admired by the time of Pepys's death, would go on to prompt the foundation of the British Museum, before becoming part of the British Library.

Among Sloane's papers now in the British Library is a mysterious item that shows Sloane's interest in Pepys's books went well beyond individual items. It is a previously unidentified fragment of one of Pepys's catalogues. This is intriguing, not least because the only catalogue of Pepys's library known to have survived is his final catalogue, begun in 1700, that now resides in the Pepys Library at Magdalene. The item in the Sloane papers has been taken for one of Sloane's early catalogues, and thus as evidence of his collection's formation. Instead, I will argue, it can be understood in the context of the development of Pepys's library and is valuable for what it can tell us – or prompt us to uncover – about the connections between these two famous collectors.

The 'enigmatic sheet' (as it has justly been called) is Sloane MS. 4019, f. 178.³ It is part of a miscellaneous volume whose contents include lists of books, plants, and other 'curiosities', mostly dating from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. There are lists sent to Sloane in the hope that he might purchase items, along with catalogues from personal libraries, and Sloane's own notes. Folio 178 is a single sheet, laid out as a title page (fig. 1):

¹ John Jackson to John Evelyn, 28 May 1703, in *Letters and Second Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. R. G. Howarth (London and Toronto, 1932), p. 374; *Private Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Samuel Pepys, 1679–1703*, ed. J. R. Tanner, 2 vols (New York, [1926]), vol. ii, pp. 311–12; British Library, Sloane MS. 4039, ff. 143–44, Charlett to Sloane, 13 June 1703.

² London, The National Archives (NA), PROB 1/9, Will of Samuel Pepys (1703), 'The Scheme referred to in my foregoing Codicil'.

³ Amy Blakeway, 'The Library Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane: Their Authors, Organization, and Functions', *Electronic British Library Journal* (2011), art. 16, pp. 1–49 (p. 5) <<https://www.bl.uk/eblj/2011/articles/pdf/ebljarticle162011.pdf>> [accessed 21 May 2020].

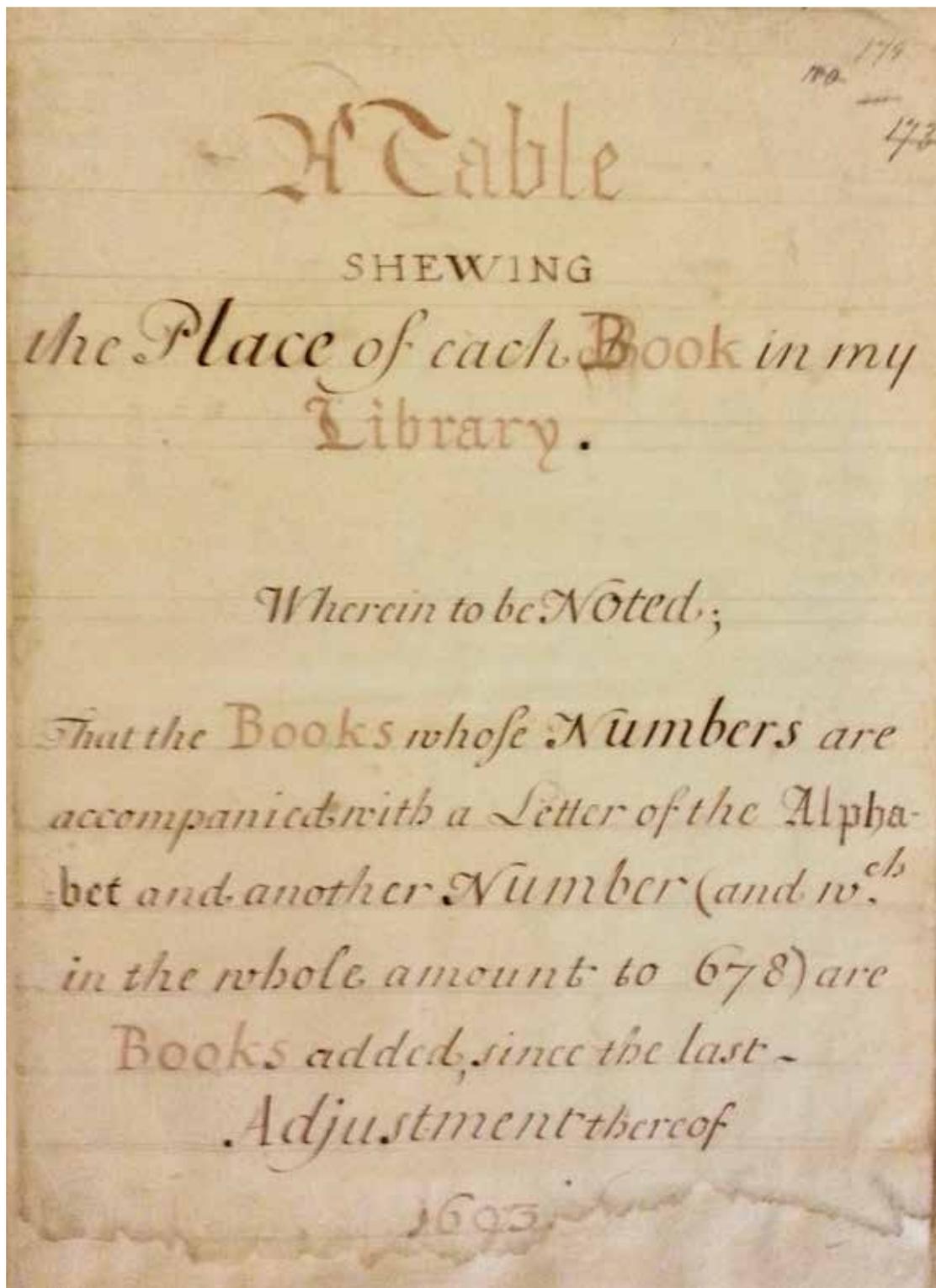


Fig. 1. BL, Sloane MS. 4019, f. 178r.

A Table
SHEWING
the **Place** of each **Book** in my
Library.

Wherein to be **Noted**;

That the **Books** whose **Numbers** are
accompanied with a Letter of the **Alph-**
bet and another Number (and w.^{ch}
in the whole amount to 678) are
Books added, since the last
Adjustment thereof
1693.

The elaborate arrangement here includes use of gothic script, majuscule, bold for emphasis, and rubrication. The title page is not perfectly executed: most notably, the scribe had to overwrite the ‘B’ of the first ‘Book’ and the guiding pencil lines have not been erased. It is evidently the title of a shelf-list but the format it describes is unclear. Building on a suggestion by Margaret Nickson, Amy Blakeway has proposed that this is part of a lost finding-aid for Sloane’s library which, alongside other evidence, reveals an early burst of cataloguing activity by Sloane in late 1692 and 1693. (The conclusion about Sloane’s cataloguing activity, I should stress, is not dependent on the attribution of this title page.) With Sloane’s systems in mind, Blakeway has suggested the phrase ‘a Letter of the Alphabet and another Number’ described Sloane’s accession system of marking a book with a number and a letter signifying its format (e.g. R 200), and that the reference to ‘another Number’ might mean Sloane’s previous method of labelling books by date and price.⁴ Although this is a plausible explanation, multiple features of this page, including its cryptic description of the list’s format, all point to Samuel Pepys as the originator of this catalogue.

Pepys’s cataloguing

Pepys’s delight in purchasing, organizing, and cataloguing his books is a thread that runs through his diary of the 1660s and his later correspondence. By 1668 he was trying to label and catalogue his books on a yearly basis – an ambition which, because of the labour involved, does not seem to have lasted long.⁵ Pepys’s books in their specially commissioned cases were organized by size rather than by topic. His basic cataloguing method was to number books according to their shelving sequence, beginning with the smallest books and writing the number on the first endpaper. Items introduced into the collection between cataloguing sessions (or which had changed their places) were given a number and a letter, with the sequence normally starting at ‘B’, rather than ‘A’. So, for example, in the early 1690s Richard Verstegan’s *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities* (1673), once number 522 in the library, sat next to Thomas Hunt’s *The Rights of the Bishops to Judge in*

⁴ M. A. E. Nickson, ‘Hans Sloane, Book Collector and Cataloguer, 1682–1698’, *eBLJ* (1988), art. 4, pp. 52–89 (p. 89). <<https://www.bl.uk/eblj/1988articles/pdf/article4.pdf>> [accessed 21 May 2020]; Blakeway, ‘The Library Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane’, pp. 5–6.

⁵ Kate Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and his Books: Reading, Newsgathering and Sociability, 1660–1703* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 246–7, 255. On Pepys’s references to his 1660s catalogues see *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College Cambridge, Volume vii: Facsimile of Pepys’s Catalogue*, ed. by David McKitterick, *Part i: ‘Catalogue’ and ‘Alphabet’* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. xi, xii.

Capital Cases in Parliament (1680), which was 523. When Sloane's *Catalogus plantarum quae insula Jamaica sponte proveniunt* (1696) was added to the collection between major numbering sessions and placed between them, it was marked as 522 B. When Thomas Pugh's *Brittish and Out-Landish Prophetes* (1658) was acquired, that became 522 C.⁶

Pepys was keen to keep his collection manageable. In 1668 he decided only to keep enough books to fill two cases, about 500 or so; in 1703, after a lifetime of collecting, he had managed to restrict himself to just under 3000 volumes. This self-discipline required that books be 'Ejected' from his collection – and it was thus not just additions that upset the shelf-numbering and kept up the pressure to alter the catalogue.⁷ Pepys initially relied on family and household servants to assist him with cataloguing, but he later splashed out on a live-in librarian. Paul Lorrain was employed by Pepys from the late 1670s until 1700. In 1699 Lorrain took holy orders. This distressed Pepys, who wrote that he now felt unable to make the demands on Lorrain's time that, in his view, the library required. 'There is', he told his nephew on 19 October 1699, 'a necessity of my transcribing once more my alphabet and catalogue, which 'tis next to impossible for any body to doe to my satisfaction but hee'.⁸ The 'Catalogue' was Pepys's term for his numerical shelf-list, and the 'Alphabet' was an alphabetical list of authors and titles. Fortunately, Lorrain proved amenable to a concerted burst of library work the next year and, with Pepys supervising, began to write the last catalogue of Pepys's lifetime. This involved creating updated versions of the finding aids, but it did not entail the huge labour of renumbering the books. Lorrain compiled for Pepys a new shelf-list headed 'The Catalogue of my Books; adjusted to Michaelmas 1700. From a Review had of the Alterations arisen therein by Books remov'd and added, since ye last Adjustment. A.D. 1693.' The last 'Adjustment' meant the last time the books had been reorganized and renumbered on the shelves. In Pepys's library catalogue for 1700 we therefore have a correlation with the date on the title page in the Sloane papers, as well as with language used ('the last Adjustment'). In both documents the words 'Books' and the years are rubricated.⁹ Whether the catalogue in Sloane's papers itself dates to 1693 is a point to which I will return.

The final shelf-list of Pepys's lifetime was closed in late September 1700. This round of activity included not only a new 'Catalogue', and 'Alphabet', but the introduction of a subject catalogue, the 'Appendix Classica', along with additional tables to help library users.¹⁰ When the collection grew again, these documents were supplemented with a list of 'Additamenta'. The 'Additamenta' were books added between September 1700 and John Jackson's final survey of the collection after Pepys's death – the vast majority being Pepys's additions, not Jackson's. Pepys's will charged his nephew with finalizing the collection, specifying that this should include renumbering it. Jackson finished this work on 1 August 1705, adding the new sequence of numbers to the existing catalogue volumes. The sequence of books in 1693 had run to 1830; the renumbering of 1705 counted 3000.¹¹ These final versions of the Catalogue and Alphabet were, according to Pepys's will, an essential part of his collection, to 'remaine unalterable and forever accompany' the library.¹²

⁶ *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Volume vii, Part i, 'Catalogue'*, p. 38.

⁷ *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols (1971–1983; repr. London, 2000), vol. ix, p. 18 (10 Jan. 1668), vol. x, p. 35; *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Volume vii, Part i, 'Catalogue'*, pp. 165, 167.

⁸ Pepys to John Jackson, in *Private Correspondence*, ed. Tanner, vol. i, p. 201.

⁹ *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Volume vii, Part i, 'Catalogue'*, p. 1.

¹⁰ See McKitterick's discussion in *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Volume vii, Part i*, pp. xxi–xxiii.

¹¹ *Catalogue of the Pepys Library, Volume vii, Part i, 'Catalogue'*, p. 165. Jackson declared 3000 books; strictly speaking there were 2971 as some shelf-marks were not used. See F. Sidgwick (ed.), *Bibliotheca Pepysiana: A Descriptive Catalogue of the Library of Samuel Pepys*, part 2 (1914, repr. Cambridge, 2009), p. xviii.

¹² NA, PROB 1/9, Will of Samuel Pepys, 'The Schemae'.

The versions of the catalogue that have been preserved at Magdalene are not quite as Pepys intended, for he wanted Jackson to have the ‘Catalogue’ and ‘Alphabet’ transcribed again to fully incorporate the volumes from the ‘Additamenta’. Jackson – who was understandably not keen to increase an already considerable labour – avoided this, and instead renumbered the entries in the ‘Catalogue’, ‘Alphabet’, ‘Appendix Classica’ and ‘Additamenta’ without producing new documents. He was able to do so because the catalogues of 1700 had been designed with a future renumbering in mind. Jackson’s disobedience is to our advantage because he preserved evidence of when books were added to the collection after 1693, one side effect being that this helps to interpret the document in Sloane’s papers. The catalogue of 1700 was intended to be a visually impressive record, but also a working document: on each page, an extra column was included and left blank for new numbers to be added at the next adjustment. Therefore, what a user sees on opening the ‘Catalogue’ is, first, a column containing the numbers used in 1700. Many of these numbers, being books added since 1693, are followed by a letter. In 1705, a column heading was added to identify these numbers as ‘Old No.’ (p. 1). At that time the old numbers were also lightly struck through, deliberately leaving them legible. Next on the page, there is a ruled column which, as of 1705, was headed, ‘New No.’. This contains the numbers generated by Jackson which take into account the ‘Additamenta’. For example, the ‘Catalogue’ entry for Sloane’s work on Jamaican plants reads:

Plantæ Jamaicae _____ Dr Sloan. ~~522-B~~ 835 (p. 38)

This resembles the format that the mysterious title page describes: by looking for books whose ‘Numbers are accompanied with a Letter of the Alphabet and another Number’, one can identify books added since the last adjustment. Pepys’s cataloguing methods were intricate, but that was partly the point: it was a simple and aesthetically pleasing shelf arrangement, made functional by an ingenious and thorough cataloguing system, designed to impress the cognoscenti. The cataloguing of 1700 certainly had the desired effect. When the antiquary William Nicolson visited Pepys’s library in 1702 he declared the books in Pepys’s presses to be ‘so well order’d that his Footman (after looking [*sic*] the Catalogue) could lay his finger on any of em blindfold’.¹³

Sloane and Pepys’s friendship

Among the virtuosi impressed by Pepys’s library in the 1690s and early 1700s was Sloane. The earliest letter which testifies to Pepys and Sloane’s friendship dates from 21 January 1695, but they had met long before then.¹⁴ Their acquaintance can be traced back to the mid-1680s, a time when Sloane, who had just finished his education abroad, was setting up practice as a physician. Pepys, meanwhile, was Secretary for the Admiralty and in high favour with Charles II and with his brother and heir James. In December 1684, Pepys was sworn in as President of the Royal Society, with Sloane being one of the very first fellows elected under his term, on 21 January 1685.¹⁵ Pepys’s access to the royal brothers made him an excellent choice as a figurehead for the Society, but his work at the Admiralty meant that he was not routinely available for Society meetings. The first meeting at which the minutes

¹³ ‘Bishop Nicolson’s Diaries: Part II’, ed. [Henry Ware], Bishop of Barrow-in-Furness, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, ii (1902), pp. 155–230 (p. 164).

¹⁴ Pepys to Edward Bernard, in *Private Correspondence*, ed. Tanner, vol. i, pp. 103–4.

¹⁵ London, The Royal Society, JBO/7, Journal Book 1681–1685, p. 290.

clearly record both Pepys and Sloane in attendance was at the start of Pepys's second term as president on 27 January 1686. At this meeting Sloane's credentials were under direct scrutiny: he stood for election as the Society's clerk, losing to Edmond Halley. Perhaps keen to show he was not resentful, Sloane arrived at the next meeting with a gift for the society of 'Severall Ores & Minerall substances, said to be found in England'. The Society asked him to write a catalogue of them – which he duly did.¹⁶ Pepys and Sloane were among the most active members of the Royal Society. They were on the Royal Society's Council together in the 1690s, beginning in November 1693, when Pepys was elected to the Council and Sloane, who was already on it, became one of the Society's Secretaries. They continued to consult on Royal Society business at the end of the decade.¹⁷ Both were also involved with charitable work for Christ's Hospital, the institution charged with care of the City's poor children. Sloane was appointed physician there from 1694, a time when Pepys, who was already one of the governors of the Hospital, was agitating for its reform – it was a campaign that ultimately led to his becoming its Vice President in 1699.¹⁸

The 1690s were years when Pepys and Sloane grew closer, brought together by shared institutional and intellectual networks, by bibliophilia, and by Pepys's declining health. In this decade Pepys, who had lost his job as a result of the Revolution of 1688–9, finally had the time to devote himself to collecting¹⁹ while the 1690s were a crucial decade in the development of Sloane's library, in terms both of its growth and in establishing the methods of organization that would persist over decades. In 1692, Sloane began the main catalogue of his library, a record that he continued to keep (personally or via assistants) until 1752. In 1693 he had around 3000 printed books. Two years later, he married Elizabeth Rose. Her wealth – much of it derived from Jamaican properties and the enslaved people who worked on them – allowed Sloane to start rapidly expanding his collection. By 1698, Sloane is estimated to have owned over 10,000 books. At this point he began to employ assistants to help with the labour of cataloguing. By the time of his death in 1753, his collection was estimated at 50,000 volumes, including manuscripts.²⁰ Extensive detective work by scholars using Sloane's surviving catalogues and the books themselves – now dispersed across many libraries – indicates that early on Sloane, like Pepys, organized his book collection by format (folio, quarto, etc) with no consistent ordering by topic, although by 1705 he had instituted sections for newspapers, atlases, and dried plant collections in his catalogues. His library

¹⁶ The Royal Society, JBO/8, Journal Book 1685–1690, pp. 25–6, 27.

¹⁷ Michael Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660–1700: The Morphology of an Early Scientific Institution*, 2nd edn (London, 1994), pp. 170–1, 212–13. Pepys to Sloane, 12 Jan. and 14 Mar. 1698/9, 8 Jan. 1700/1, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, 270–1, 272, 322. *Private Correspondence*, ed. Tanner, vol. i, 166. Sloane and Pepys were both present at the Council meeting on 21 Nov. 1694 when John Jackson was proposed for admission to the Society. The Royal Society, CMO/2/8/108 <<https://collections.royalsociety.org/dserve.exe?dsqIni=Dserve.ini&dsqApp=Archive&dsqCmd=Show.tcl&dsqSearch=RefNo==%27CMO%2F2%2F108%27&dsqDb=Catalog>> [accessed 21 May 2020].

¹⁸ G. R. de Beer, *Sir Hans Sloane and the British Museum* (London, New York, Toronto: 1953), p. 64; Rudolf Kirk, *Mr Pepys upon the State of Christ-Hospital* (Philadelphia and London, 1935), pp. 25–55.

¹⁹ Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and his Books*, p. 247.

²⁰ Nickson, 'Hans Sloane, Book Collector and Cataloguer', p. 63; Arthur MacGregor, 'Sloane, Sir Hans, baronet (1660–1753), physician and collector', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<https://www-oxforddnb-com.ezproxy4.lib.le.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-25730>> [accessed 25 May 2021]; Alison Walker, 'Lost in Plain Sight: Rediscovering the Library of Sir Hans Sloane', in Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden and Boston, 2016), pp. 400–13 (p. 406); Blakeway, 'The Library Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane', pp. 5, 11–13; *Authentic Copies of the Codicils Belonging to the Last Will and Testament of Sir Hans Sloane* (London, 1753), p. 33.

records show no evidence of shelf-marks; instead most items in the main catalogue were entered as they were acquired and given accession marks which appear to have functioned in lieu of shelf-marks when it came to finding items. The accession marks were an alphabetical letter (allocated by the work's format) and a number – sometimes one accession mark could serve for a batch of items. By around 1715, and probably before, the catalogue was supplemented by an index organized by authors' surnames or by the title if a work was anonymous.²¹ An item could therefore be found by looking up the author in the author-index, which would direct to a page number in the catalogue, which would in turn supply an accession mark and so – at least for those well-acquainted with the collection – where on the shelves it might be found. As William Poole has remarked, in a collection which quickly grew into the thousands, this method of grouping books primarily by accession, aided by an author index, would not have made for an easily browsable or readily navigable library, and it contrasted in a number of respects with Pepys's neat display of his books and precise set of finding aids.²² In retrospect, the later 1690s were crucial in fixing the principles on which Sloane's library would be organized: at this time he had the finances and the practical assistance to expand his collection, while also having a library that was still of a size to allow for major reorganization and for the creation of revised or additional finding aids, should he choose to do so. Interested friends such as Pepys had the expertise and experience to offer potential models.

Judging from the letters circulating among their friends, by 1695 Sloane and Pepys were not simply in contact about books, but were close enough to be acting on each other's behalf in scholarly exchanges. In January 1695 Pepys wrote to thank the astronomer Edward Bernard for the loan of two books, having evidently deputed Sloane to add more fulsome praise in person: 'Dr Sloane will I hope make my just compliments to you about it'. When Dr Arthur Charlett wrote to Sloane from Oxford in October 1698, he opened by explaining that he would not detail the news again in this letter, since 'I gave Mr Pepys our very excellent Friend, lately an Account of some occurrences here, to which I must referre you'.²³ Sloane was one of a group of London friends, among them John Evelyn and the Cotton Librarian Thomas Smith, whom Pepys sometimes hosted at weekly Saturday gatherings in his home. This 'Round Table', which met over food and books, ran from around 1692 to summer 1701. An encouragement to Sloane to attend on the next Saturday survives from January 1699.²⁴

In the early 1700s, Sloane combined medical consultations with consulting about Pepys's collections – or having them shown off to him. In July 1702, Pepys wrote to Sloane that he was 'almost wishing my selfe sick, that I might have a prætence to invite you for an hour or 2 by your selfe [...] I haveing encreased my Collection of Prints by a new volume or 2, that it

²¹ Alison Walker, 'Sir Hans Sloane's Printed Books in the British Library: Their Identification and Associations', in Giles Mandelbrote and Barry Taylor (eds.), *Libraries within the Library: The Origins of the British Library's Printed Collections* (London, 2009), pp. 89–97 (p. 93); Giles Mandelbrote, 'Sloane's Purchases at the Sale of Robert Hooke's Library', in Mandelbrote and Taylor (eds.), *Libraries within the Library*, pp. 98–145 (p. 108); William Poole, 'The Duplicates of Sir Hans Sloane in the Bodleian Library: A Detective Story, with Some Comments on Library Organisation', *Bodleian Library Record*, xxiii (2010), 192–213 (pp. 207–10); Nickson, 'Hans Sloane, Book Collector and Cataloguer', esp. p. 56; M. A. E. Nickson, 'Books and Manuscripts', in Arthur MacGregor (ed.), *Sir Hans Sloane: Collector, Scientist, Antiquary, Founding Father of the British Museum* (London, 1994), pp. 263–77 (p. 266); Blakeway, 'The Library Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane', p. 29.

²² Poole, 'The Duplicates of Sir Hans Sloane', p. 208.

²³ Pepys to Bernard, 21 Jan. 1694/5, in *Private Correspondence*, ed. Tanner, vol. i, p. 104; Charlett to Sloane, 22 Oct. 1698, Sloane MS. 4037, ff. 141–2, The Sloane Letters Project <<http://sloaneletters.com/letters/letter-0099/>> [accessed 21 May 2020].

²⁴ Loveman, *Samuel Pepys and his Books*, pp. 203–4; Pepys to Sloane, 12 Jan. 1698/9, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, p. 271.

would not bee irkesome to your Curiosity to over-looke'.²⁵ In turn, Sloane loaned Pepys books on bullfighting, astronomy, and a bibliography of Spanish works.²⁶ The two men also employed the same experts to consult on their libraries and acquire materials. Pepys had helped introduce the young scholar Humfrey Wanley to London bibliophiles in 1695. In the early 1700s, he drew on Wanley's assistance with library matters, such as sourcing palaeographical samples and information on ballads.²⁷ Meanwhile, Wanley was, by 1698, assisting Sloane in purchasing books at auction; he worked for him as a clerk at the Royal Society from February 1701, and catalogued Sloane's books between 1701 and 1704.²⁸ By 1700, both Sloane and Pepys were also employing John Bagford to hunt down specialist items and advise on their libraries.²⁹ Pepys's 'Home-notes' of around 1700 include reminders to himself to chase up information from Sloane, Wanley, and Bagford about manuscripts, prints, and books.³⁰ As the new century began, Sloane and Pepys each possessed one of the most admired libraries among scholars in the capital. Just as visitors praised Pepys's library at his home in Clapham, they wrote praising Sloane's 'inestimable museum' in Bloomsbury, along with its 'noble library, too [*sic*] large rooms well stocked with valuable manuscripts and printed authors'.³¹

Interpreting Pepys's title page

Pepys and Sloane therefore had ample opportunity to exchange information on cataloguing methods in the 1690s and early 1700s – both directly and via interested intermediaries. They were in contact with each other in 1693 and during Pepys's next round of cataloguing in 1700. There is also, of course, the possibility that the catalogue fragment in Sloane's collection was passed to him after Pepys's death by Jackson, Lorrain, Wanley, or Bagford, all of whom Sloane knew. Pepys was wary of widely circulating information about his holdings, fearing requests from collectors who would then not reciprocate by sharing their own items. However, there is some evidence that he allowed friends to retain copies, or partial copies, of catalogues. For example, in 1683 Dr Nathaniel Vincent wrote to Pepys from Cambridge to offer him a book on magnetism that he had spotted at an auction and purchased with Pepys in mind. This was, he confidently stated, a book 'you have not in your Catalogue', suggesting he

²⁵ Pepys to Sloane, 31 July 1702, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, p. 348.

²⁶ Pepys to Sloane, 25 Mar. 1701, [Aug. 1702], in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, pp. 326, 349. On these exchanges, see Catherine Sutherland, 'Samuel Pepys and Hans Sloane', Magdalene College Libraries blog, 2 July 2019 <<https://magdlibs.com/2019/07/02/samuel-pepys-and-hans-sloane/>> [accessed 21 May 2020].

²⁷ Pepys to Thomas Smith, 15 Apr. 1695 and Pepys to Wanley, 10 Apr. 1701, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, pp. 256–7, 328–29.

²⁸ BL, Sloane MS. 4037, ff. 106–7, Wanley to Sloane, 9 Aug. 1698, The Sloane Letters Project, <<http://sloaneletters.com/letters/letter-0517/>> [accessed 21 May 2020]; Alice Marples, 'Scientific Administration in the Early Eighteenth Century: Reinterpreting the Royal Society's Repository', *Historical Research*, xcii (2019), pp. 183–204 (p. 191); Blakeway, 'The Catalogues of Sir Hans Sloane', pp. 23–5.

²⁹ Pepys to Bagford, 16 March 1696/7, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, pp. 266–7; Margaret Nickson, 'Bagford and Sloane', *eBLJ* (1983), art. 4, pp. 51–55 (p. 51) <<https://www.bl.uk/eblj/1983articles/pdf/article4.pdf>> [accessed 21 May 2020].

³⁰ Tanner proposed a date of 1698 for the notes; however, they concern topics Pepys was investigating 1699–1701. *Private Correspondence*, vol. i, pp. 165–7.

³¹ *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby*, ed. Joseph Hunter (London, 1830), vol. i, p. 341.

had a copy to hand.³² With its messy ‘B’ and pencil lines, the title page in the Sloane papers does not look like a version that Pepys, who was a perfectionist in such matters, would have sanctioned as the main navigational aid for his library. This was the man who, in 1663, had returned his slide-rule to the engraver for correction because some of the lettering had been ‘slubberd over’. That episode prompted him to reflect ‘my delight is in the neatness of everything, and so cannot be pleased with anything unless it be very neat; which is a strange folly’.³³ The sheet in Sloane’s papers could be a copy of a catalogue produced for a friend or, even more likely, a rough draft, produced to help plan a catalogue.

Despite the title page’s flaws, the level of precision that is otherwise apparent – its careful layout and the variety of lettering – is one of the best clues to the catalogue’s date. The wording and layout are ambiguous about whether ‘1693’ means the date of the current catalogue (as work on Sloane has assumed), or whether it refers instead to the date of the ‘last Adjustment’. The evidence points strongly to the latter, especially when we look at similar phrasing and layout in Pepys’s library documents of 1700. The ‘Appendix Classica’ to Pepys’s library is described as having resulted

From a **Review** had of the Alterations arisen therein, by Books
removed and added, since the last Adjustment
A.D. 1693.³⁴

Here the offset date clearly refers to the date of the adjustment, not the date of the catalogue document itself. Also suggestive of a later date for the title page in the Sloane collection is the close analogue between it and the title of a finding aid at the end of the ‘Appendix Classica’, which cross-references the three major parts of the catalogue (fig. 2). This reads:

Here followeth
A Table,

SHEWING
(by the **Numbers** of the **Pages**)
the Various **Places**, where each
Book in the **Catalogue**
Stands enter’d in the
Alphabet, & Appendix Classica:
For the surer and more ready resorting
thereto,
upon **Occasion** of any
Change, Deletion, or Addition,
to be made in the Same.³⁵

³² Pepys to Charlett, 4 Aug. 1694, in *Letters*, ed. Howarth, pp. 245–6; Oxford, Bodleian, Rawlinson MS. A178, f. 227, Vincent to Pepys, 23 Apr. 1683.

³³ *Diary*, ed. Latham and Matthews, vol. iv, p. 270 (10 Aug. 1663).

³⁴ *Catalogue of the Pepys Library at Magdalene College Cambridge, Volume vii: Facsimile of Pepys’s Catalogue*, ed. by David McKitterick, *Part ii: ‘Appendix Classica’* (Cambridge, 1991), title page.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

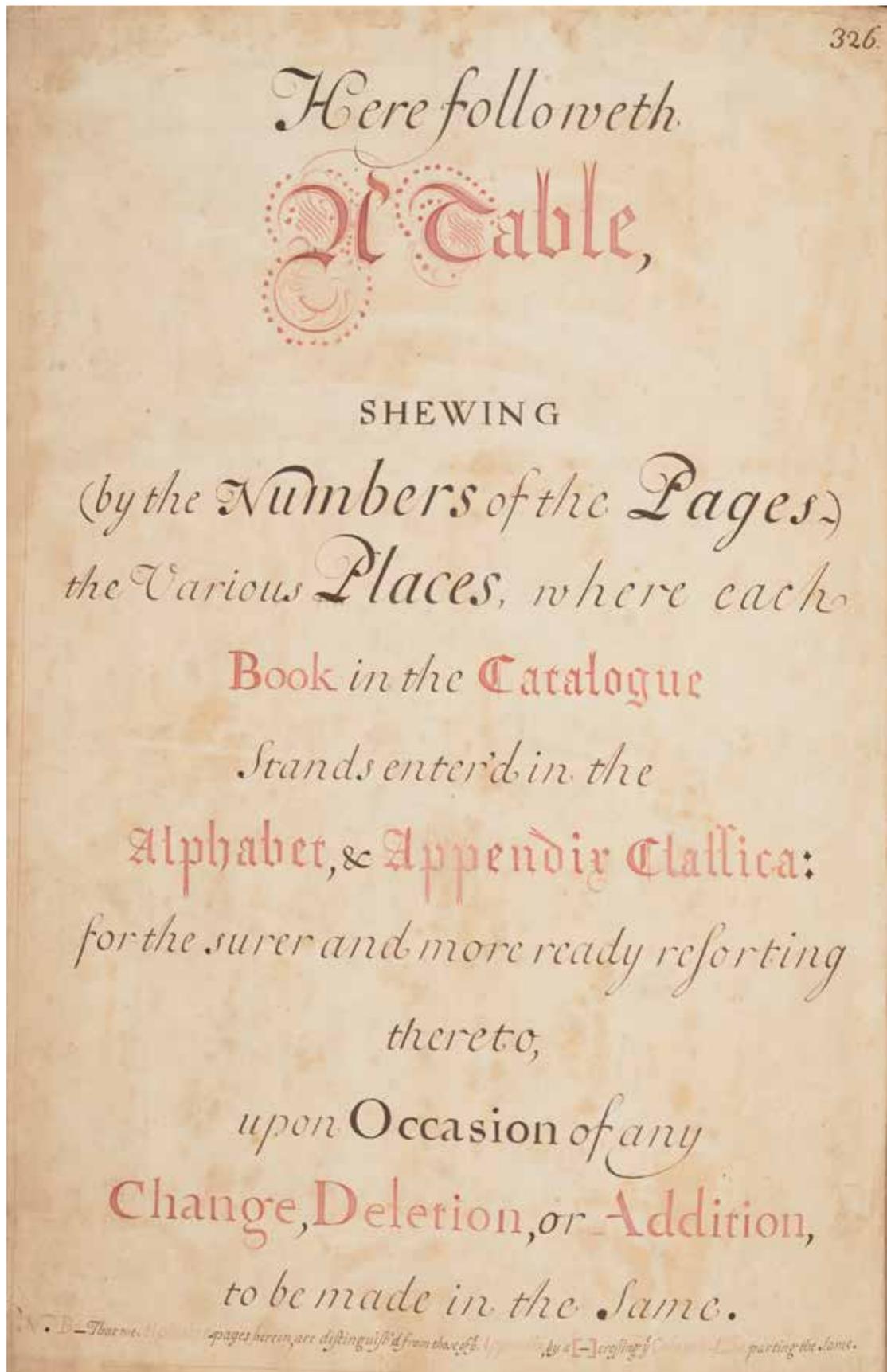


Fig. 2. Pepys's 'Appendix Classica', p. 326. By permission of the Pepys Library, Magdalene College, Cambridge. For requests to reproduce this image, including online, please contact pepyslibrary@magd.cam.ac.uk.

The format here of ‘A Table shewing’ is identical in style and rubrication to the Pepys title page in Sloane’s collection, with other close similarities such as the rubrication of ‘Book’, the use of gothic for ‘Alphabet’, and the choice of words in bold (Numbers, Places). The execution is, however, much more exact, with ‘A Table’ embellished. This points to the Pepys catalogue fragment being fairly close in date to the 1700 catalogue: the sheet is similar enough to this ‘Table’ to suggest that it had either served as a model for it, or that both shared a ‘house style’ for Pepys’s library documents that had been well honed by 1700. The number of books ‘with a Letter’ referred to on the catalogue fragment offers a final clue to the date. When the title page was produced, the number of additions since 1693 to Pepys’s library stood at 678. In the ‘Catalogue’ of 1700, a count of lettered additions gives 746. Between the drafting of the title page and the creation of the ‘Catalogue’ of 1700, the collection had grown by 10%. The title page in the Sloane volume is therefore a copy or draft of a shelf-list to Pepys’s collection, most likely produced in the late 1690s by Lorrain, prior to his major work on the catalogue of 1700.

Conclusions

As a product of Pepys’s library, this sheet ultimately tells us more about his methods than Sloane’s, while standing as evidence of their shared interests and values. It may be a fragment, but it is a revealing one. The fact that Sloane was in possession of one of Pepys’s catalogue documents is a sign of his close relationship with its creator, and – as we have seen – their relationship can be traced back further than previously established. The sheet’s presence in Sloane’s collection is further evidence in support of the idea that Pepys selectively circulated manuscript copies of at least sections of his catalogues. Investigating this sheet has also shown the extent to which Pepys’s catalogues were conceived as working documents, designed to incorporate changes to his collection. The catalogue of 1700 was set up to accommodate the adjustment of 1705; the earlier shelf-list was also designed to allow for two sets of numbers. Pepys and Lorrain had, apparently, been developing a method of organizing the library that allowed them to separate most of the labour involved in writing catalogues from the labour of renumbering the books on the shelves: with this design, the two processes could happen years apart and yet the catalogue still function effectively. This method was evidently in place prior to the final burst of cataloguing in 1700: it was not conceived as part of Pepys’s preparations for the posthumous preservation of his library, but designed to accommodate the library’s growth during his lifetime.

That Sloane and his library workers did not simply dispose of this title page – a catalogue without content amidst the book lists of MS. 4019 – points to an overlooked aspect of library cataloguing, one highly valued by Pepys and apparently appreciated by his fellow collectors. Pepys was fastidious about his catalogues’ organization but also about their appearance: there is precise, elegant lettering and layout across the three catalogues of 1700 and the supplementary documents. Pepys’s attention to such matters was in keeping with his early love of neatness and with the increased attention to calligraphy and typography that he displayed in his later years of collecting – interests fostered by his work with Bagford.³⁶ Rather than the title page having unwittingly become separated from Pepys’s booklist, it is possible that it was significant to Sloane on its own: an example of his friend’s catalogue design that showed both Pepys’s provision for dual numbering and his aesthetic choices within his library documents. Sloane may have received part of a catalogue in draft form because Pepys wanted his views on its design. Pepys had devoted great energy and great

³⁶ Tim Somers, ‘Tradesmen in Virtuoso Culture: “Honest” John Bagford and his Collecting Network, 1683–1716’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, lxxxi (2018), pp. 359–86 (pp. 375, 380).

wealth to the appearance of his library room: he designed the glass-fronted bookcases, had the books they held bound in set styles, and arranged their holdings neatly by size. The whole was designed to convey to visitors an impression of richness, order, and ingenuity. The navigational aids to the library were the library in miniature: they did not just contain its contents, but communicated Pepys's values through the ways those contents were arranged and the style of their presentation. Like the design of the library room itself, the design of the catalogues sought to combine efficient organization with aesthetic appeal. Pepys had developed a distinctive language and style for his catalogues, with elegance being a part of their function. As a result, over 300 years later the source of a single sheet from an unnamed catalogue is still recognizable. The fragment of the catalogue that Sloane retained was a piece of his friend's much larger design, worked on over a lifetime.



Copyright: © 2021 The Author. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 Licence, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for non-commercial purposes only, provided the original creator and source are credited.