‘I burn your letters at your request’, wrote George Savile, the first Marquis of Halifax, to Sir William Trumbull on 22 March 1685/6.\(^1\) Indeed, the only letters between them to have survived are six from Halifax, written between 1686 and 1695, which are merely complimentary or deal with matters affecting his Huguenot sister-in-law.\(^2\) For further evidence of their friendship one must turn to manuscript copies of three of Halifax’s four political works that circulated in this format before being printed.

About fifty manuscript copies of these four pamphlets have been found. For some copies the original owners are known, including, for example, Halifax’s cousins Viscount Weymouth and Sir John Pakington. Besides Trumbull himself, however, only Sir John Lowther and Sir Robert Harley have been identified as owning manuscript copies of more than one pamphlet. The concentration of ownership is consistent with the connections between these men and the author. Lowther was married to Halifax’s cousin Katherine Thynne. Harley, leader of the Country party in the House of Commons, was associated politically with Halifax after 1690.\(^3\) As for Trumbull, several inferences about his relationship with Halifax can be made, not only from the fact of his possessing manuscript copies, but also from the manner of his acquiring them.

Neither Trumbull’s nor Lowther’s papers include a manuscript of Maxims of the Great Almansor, written and published in 1693, which consists of thirty-two aphorisms applicable to the politics of that year. There is no indication, however, that either Harley’s or any other of the seven known pre-1695 manuscripts was received directly from Halifax.\(^4\)

The Character of a Trimmer, of which Lowther owned one manuscript and Trumbull two, was written at the end of 1684 and began to circulate in this format from then until the work was pirated by a printer in 1688. The twenty-one extant manuscripts (with one possible exception) presumably derive from the three, now lost, that Halifax sent anonymously through the post to Archbishop Sancroft, the Earl of Sunderland, and Bab May.\(^5\) Halifax preserved his anonymity until the Revolution: in 1686 even Weymouth, when claiming that his own manuscript of this work had been transcribed from one of the original three, was unaware of his cousin’s authorship. Lowther’s manuscript and one of Trumbull’s appear to be relatively early ones, for they and eight others include two variant readings quoted by the Earl of Mulgrave in January 1685.\(^6\) Inasmuch as neither
manuscript had been distributed directly by the author, however, they have no bearing upon the relationship of their owners to him. Trumbull’s second manuscript, which is more significant in this respect, will be discussed separately below.

Some Cautions Offered to those who are to Chuse Members to Serve in the Next Parliament, written between March 1693 and April 1694, was published posthumously, with non-authorial topical revisions, during the general election of 1695. Apart from the author’s holograph original, the only manuscripts that have been traced were owned by Trumbull, Lowther, and Harley. Harley’s manuscript (dated by him 24 April 1694) was transcribed directly from Halifax’s holograph, as can be seen from several words inserted or deleted in both the original and this copy. Lowther’s manuscript and the first printed edition appear to derive from a lost common ancestor which had been transcribed from the holograph after Harley’s had been. Harley’s manuscript (or its ancestor, if any) was copied from the holograph, but not until after both Harley’s manuscript and the common ancestor of Lowther’s manuscript and the printed edition had been copied. Because Harley’s manuscript and presumably Trumbull’s were transcribed directly from the author’s original — unlike Lowther’s manuscript, which is at least one stage further removed — it would appear that these two manuscript copies were received directly from Halifax.

Rough Draught of a New Modell at Sea, of which Trumbull and Lowther each owned one manuscript and Harley owned three, was written in 1693 and published in 1694. Trumbull’s manuscript, which is in his own handwriting, was transcribed by him directly from the author’s holograph. Lowther’s manuscript, whose text resembles that of the printed edition, seems to be further along the chain of transmission than any of the other manuscripts.

It appears, then, that in several instances Halifax sent copies of his political pamphlets to others or permitted them to be made from his original manuscripts. Having done so, he would have had no control over their further dissemination. Thus for Lowther’s manuscripts of both Rough Draught and Some Cautions to have been copied from other manuscripts is consistent with the political distance between himself and the author. (As a member of Carmarthen’s government, for example, Lowther opposed both the Triennial and Place bills; whereas Halifax, in opposition, advocated these measures in Some Cautions.) Conversely, the characteristics of Harley’s manuscript of Some Cautions and the fact of his possessing multiple manuscript copies of Rough Draught are consistent with his political relationship with their author. His three manuscripts of the latter work are in the same clerical hand, which suggests that he was involved in distributing this pamphlet.

Similar inferences can be made from the characteristics of Trumbull’s manuscript copies of these two pamphlets. The transcription of Rough Draught in Trumbull’s handwriting is of particular interest because it was made directly from Halifax’s holograph at some point after the production of the clerical copy that Halifax retained among his papers. (In the process Trumbull mistook an abbreviation for another word and conflated both states of a passage revised in the author’s original.) By contrast, the
seven other surviving manuscripts, including those belonging to Harley and Lowther, all derive from the clerical copy. Whether the latter did not yet exist when Trumbull made his transcription (he dated it 29 November 1693) or was inaccessible for some reason cannot be determined. In either case, Trumbull’s evident access to the original indicates a closer friendship or political association than the mere possession of a circulated manuscript copy. For such manuscripts, unless sent at the author’s instigation, had nothing to do with him because they derived from manuscript copies that happened to be in the possession of others.

Following *Rough Draught* in the blank volume in which Trumbull wrote it is a list, also in his handwriting, entitled ‘Heads &c.’ (fig. 1), which consists of twenty-two numbered Heads (and an additional ‘Memorandum’) relating to the establishment of gentlemen volunteers in the Navy. The wording of the final passage of the first draft of *Rough Draught* implies that the author was about to discuss ‘the probationary qualifications of an officer at Sea’: in the second draft, however, this passage is revised, the author giving a specious reason for not mentioning these qualifications. Inasmuch as Halifax permitted Trumbull to copy the original manuscript of *Rough Draught*, it is quite possible that he also made available to him a list of the qualifications not included

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Fig. 1. Detail from ‘Heads &c’ in Sir William Trumbull’s hand. Trumbull Add. MS. 88b
in that work. In the absence of any such document from the author’s own papers, however, Trumbull’s list is only presumptive evidence of political intimacy.

Trumbull’s second manuscript copy of The Character of a Trimmer raises several issues because it is in the hand of Halifax’s domestic chaplain. Alexander Sion (1654–1730) did not enter Halifax’s service until some time between October 1690 and March 1692, that is, over five years after manuscript copies of this work first began to circulate. Following his patron’s death in April 1695, he apparently retained his post under the second Marquis until May 1697. In or after 1695 Sion wrote a preface for an intended posthumous edition of four of Halifax’s previously published works, to be entitled ‘Saviliana’. One of the four was to be The Character of a Trimmer. In ‘Saviliana’, Sion’s remarks about The Character of a Trimmer include the statement that ‘the copy from which this is printed was examined by My Lord himself, who not being well-pleased that the former editions should be so faulty, took the pains to correct it.’ Although ‘Saviliana’ never appeared in print, a similar claim was made by the publisher Richard Baldwin in his 1697 edition of The Character of a Trimmer. In 1688 and 1689 Baldwin had published three editions of The Character of a Trimmer, all ascribed to the late Sir William Coventry, Halifax’s uncle. The 1697 edition, although it too is ascribed to Coventry, claims that Halifax ‘with his own Pen deliver’d it from innumerable Mistakes, and Errors that stuff’d and crouded the former Edition’ and ‘gave grounds to expect, if Fate had allow’d Him a few months longer, to have seen it Revised with a second Inspection, and publish’d by his particular Order.’ In 1700, this time identifying Halifax as the author, Baldwin reprinted the 1697 text in Miscellanies, a collected edition of seven of Halifax’s works.

The text of Baldwin’s 1697 edition, followed by that of 1700, agrees very closely with the text of Sion’s manuscript against all other manuscript and printed versions, which fall into two significant groups. The first comprises nine manuscripts (including Trumbull’s first copy) and a 1689 edition published at Edinburgh under a false London imprint; the second consists of eleven manuscripts and the editions published by Baldwin. It seems likely that the first group, which includes a variant reading quoted in January 1685, is earlier than the second, a representative of which was being circulated in 1688 when Baldwin pirated it. Sion’s manuscript, which agrees alternately with both groups, also shows signs of conflation: in some instances it alters a reading shared by the second group to that shared by the first, whereas in other instances it does the opposite. In addition, it is closely linked to the 1697 and 1700 editions, sharing with them a number of new variant readings, some of which may be authorial revisions. Even though the 1697 and 1700 editions agree closely with Sion’s manuscript, they also resemble, to a great extent, the earlier editions published by Baldwin. Accordingly, Sion’s manuscript sometimes agrees with the first group when the 1697 edition agrees with the second. But it never agrees substantively with the second group unless it also agrees with this edition, from which one may infer that Sion’s manuscript and the 1697 edition are related lineally rather than collaterally.
In 1692 the fourth edition of Halifax's anonymous *Advice to a Daughter* had appeared, whose revisions of the previous printed editions tend to agree with the text of the only two extant manuscript copies. That same year the publishers, Gillyflower and Partridge, brought out an anonymous French translation that had been prepared by Sion. His four manuscript drafts indicate that Sion based his translation on the third edition (1688) but then revised it in keeping with the text of the fourth edition. Revisions in the 1697 edition of *The Character of a Trimmer*, like those in the 1692 English edition of *Advice to a Daughter*, appear to go beyond merely correcting the previously published versions: in both works they may reflect the efforts of the author himself as well as the editorial conjectures of his chaplain. Given Sion's evident role in the publication of the French translation of *Advice to a Daughter*, which he would not have undertaken without Halifax's permission, he most probably was the agent by whom the revised English text of that work was conveyed to the printer. A similar transmission of revisions of *The Character of a Trimmer* five years later is therefore quite likely. The alternative is that printers of both works somehow obtained revisions based upon manuscript copies and that Sion merely worked from existing printed editions.

The question, then, is whether Sion's manuscript influenced Baldwin's 1697 edition or vice versa. In order to reconcile the claims of 'Saviliana' and the 1697 edition with each other and with the actual pattern of textual variants, it has been suggested that Halifax marked up a copy of Baldwin's 1689 edition without comparing it closely with a manuscript in his possession; that Sion subsequently conflated these two texts when preparing his own version; and that the latter, or a transcription of it, was sent to Baldwin, who marked up another copy of the 1689 edition for use in setting the text of his 1697 edition. A simpler alternative is that someone — possibly Sion acting with the permission or upon the instruction of Halifax's son — sent Baldwin a marked-up copy of the 1689 edition from which the 1697 edition was set, and that Sion subsequently conflated the latter with a manuscript to which he had access.

Neither hypothesis, by itself, explains Baldwin's odd persistence in attributing authorship to Coventry until 1700. The 1692 edition of *Advice to a Daughter*, which apparently incorporated authorial revisions, remained anonymous, as did that of 1696: not until publication of *Miscellanies* was Halifax named. It is not unlikely that he deliberately avoided having his name appear in print as an author. Thus when bringing to Baldwin's attention the revisions incorporated into the 1697 edition of *The Character of a Trimmer*, Sion may have been honouring the author's wish to preserve his anonymity, at least in public.

Sion's preface to his 'Saviliana' was written between Halifax's death in 1695 and 1700, when the publication of *Miscellanies* would have forestalled the possibility of his securing publication of the less complete edition that he had intended. Because the preface to 'Saviliana' refers to the text as corrected by Halifax, Sion's manuscript of *The Character of a Trimmer* was presumably in existence already. If the revisions incorporated in the 1697 edition were based upon Sion's manuscript (rather than vice versa) and what was sent to the printer at that time was not the manuscript itself but something derived from
it, it is conceivable that Trumbull obtained the manuscript from Halifax himself prior to 1695. Rightly or wrongly, however, one tends to associate Sion’s transcription with his project for ‘Saviliana’, which leaves either Halifax’s son or his chaplain as the likely source for this acquisition. Trumbull’s papers shed no light: they include only two conventional letters (written in 1695 and 1696) by the second Marquis, who died in 1700, and no letters at all from Sion.\(^2\)

It is not clear why Trumbull would want a second manuscript copy of a work that had been printed several times during the decade since it had first circulated privately. Indeed, it is not even known whether he sought to obtain possession of Sion’s transcription or merely received it as an unsolicited gift. Trumbull himself had copied *Rough Draught* from Halifax’s original; his clerical copy of *Some Cautions*, if it too had been copied directly, may have been given to him by the author. He would have reason to believe that his second copy of *The Character of a Trimmer* was a more authentic version than either his first manuscript copy or the various printed editions.\(^3\) Surely he would have appreciated it as such, whether he did so as bibliophile or friend.

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1 The originals are in Trumbull MSS.; calendared in Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Downshire MSS.*, vol. i, p. 135.
2 Ibid., i, pp. 104, 200, 293-4, 338-9, 461.
3 In addition to owning these three pamphlets, Lowther or his wife was the recipient of one of the two extant manuscript copies of *Advice to a Daughter*, written in 1687 and published in 1688: Mark N. Brown (ed.), *The Works of George Savile Marquis of Halifax* (Oxford, 1989), vol. ii, p. 506.
4 Harl. MS. 7017, ff. 79–80; for the other copies, see *Works*, vol. i, pp. 398–9.
5 Twenty manuscripts are listed ibid., vol. i, pp. 343–4; another is in private possession.
6 Ibid., vol. i, pp. 346, 63 n. Lowther’s copy is Cumberland Record Office D/Lons./L. 13/9; Trumbull’s is Trumbull Add. MS. 80.
7 Harl. MS. 1243, ff. 129–143; *Works*, vol. i, pp. 149, 141.
8 Ibid., vol. i, pp. 143, 404.
9 Ibid., vol. i, p. 404.
10 Three leaves in Trumbull Add. MS. 88b; *Works*, vol. i, p. 401.
11 Cumberland Record Office D/Lons./L. 13/7.
13 Ibid., vol. i, p. 402.
16 Trumbull, Add. MS. 81; *Works*, vol. i, p. 344.
17 Ibid., vol. i, pp. xl–xliii.
18 Ibid., vol. i, p. 66.
19 Ibid., vol. i, pp. 344–8.
20 Ibid., vol. i, pp. 348–52.
22 Ibid., vol. i, pp. 66–7.
24 In *Works*, vol. i, pp. 178–243, the text of *The Character of a Trimmer* is printed from Trumbull Add. MS. 80, the clerical copy, with variant readings at the foot of the page from Trumbull Add. MS. 81, Sion’s version. In this edition it was not possible to include a list of errata, the more significant of which for *The Character of a Trimmer* include the following: p. 189, l. 26, for Except read Expect; p. 205, l. 21, for Mortality read Morality; p. 209, l. 9, for statutes read statues; and p. 211, l. 25, for him read them.