

TYLDEN'S ALMANAC:
THE CHAPBOOK OF A ROYALIST
IN THE RESTORATION

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AMONG THE CURIOSITIES in the almanac collection of the Library is a much-worn leather-bound volume, fastened with brass clamps, bearing the elaborate title, "*Calendarium Carolinum: / OR, / A NEW ALMANACK / After the / OLD FASHION / For the Yeare of Man's / CREATION—5612 / REDEMPTION—1663.*" This almanac, "By George Wharton . . . London, Printed by J. G. for the Company of STATIONERS, 1663," belonged to one "Willm Tylden," who used its blank endpapers as a chapbook. Tylden copied down a variety of poems, ballads, epitaphs, epigraphs, and household accounts. His jottings make this old almanac a fascinating reflection of the turbulent years just after the Restoration, as well as a mirror of one man's ardent royalist sympathies and somewhat libertine tastes.

There is no surviving record of William Tylden himself, but he has left us the information that he owed "shoomaker de chart: for one paire of shooes for my wife.—3 — 6," and that he had incurred "for hony and a crock" the indebtedness of 4s 2d. We find that he employed a maid and a man ("I owe him for wages since candlemas. 63. May 18. 64."), and that his uncle Toke was "Sherife." This supporter of Charles II, then, was a man of some means. As appears from internal evidence in the epitaph upon Lovelace, "our Recorder" (discussed below), Tylden probably lived in or near Canterbury. As appears from the lyric, "I am a Blade old," he was not a noble but most likely a prosperous member of the mercantile class.

The verses Tylden chose to remember reveal charming contradictions in his character. On his pages moralistic platitudes jostle cavalier lyrics and a lusty fabliau. Tylden inscribed the following pious

mottoes on the last page of the endpapers; these sentiments probably had little effect upon his conduct:

If thou wilt life contentedly
Observe these rules Diligently.
 First serve ye Lord unfainedly
 Recieue his blessings thankfully
 Relieue thy ~~hoph~~ calling honestly
 Doe noe man wrong unadvisedly
 Passe over troubles patiently
 Answer thy Betters modestly
 Love not, nor wedd wantonly
 Least thou repent thee hastily
 And soe be plagued worthily.

On the other hand it would be uncharitable to suppose that the following Cavalier doggerel is any surer a representation of the man who sang it over his cups. (That he did sing in his cups is attested by "Verses upon ye unfortunate breaking of A glasse in a Taverne.") Here is the doggerel:

I am a Blade old
 yt from a ~~new~~ trade
 have taken out a new one.
 'tis only this
 to court & kisse
 sweare oaths but near a true one.

I can tell an hundred lies
 and a thousand more devise
 now way yt like since Adam
 I can follow whom I please
 wth a flattering disease
 And yr humble servant Madam

.
 I have gott a place at Court
 ne're paid a peny for't
 But yr. humble ser^{vt} madam

.
 The Divill & I
 in Ambush lye
 to catch all kinde of Ladies
 I can call them pretty souls
 though they be as old as Pauls
 Then I a Bonny Ladd am

.

All passions I
 can falsify
 hypocrisy my trade is
 I have of late
 gain'd an estate
 By humouring of Ladies.

And I very well doe finde
 That I serve them in their kinde
 for Eve beguiled Adam
 Women first did cousin men
 And Ile cousin them ag'en
 Wuth y^r. humble serv^t. Ma./.

In the second war against the Dutch, Tylden followed the fortunes of the English fleet with avid and meticulous interest. Sixteen pages of the endpapers contain a catalogue of "His Maiesties Fleet Royall sent out and employed in ye Dutch-warre April. 3^d. 1665," listing the ships in the order of their ratings with figures for their accompaniment of men and guns and the dates of their construction. The final total shows the fleet to have contained 132 ships, 20,970 men, and 4390 guns, surely a formidable armada.

The man who mocked fawning knights also rejoiced to the martial strain of this naval ballad, probably copied down from a broadside of the time:

Verse upon ye late warre wth ye
 Dutch . Feb : ioth 64

Downe Hogen Mogen, Dagon States;¹
 You shall insult noe longer.
 There's noe resisting of your Fates,
 Weake Powers must bow to stronger
 You fight not now wth D'alvas Duke;
 Who could not bring you under.
 'Tis Royall Yorke shall yo rebuke
 Where e're his canon thunder.
 Bribe not in vaine your old acquaintance
 Sr Ambideyser [?] Downing.²

¹ "Down, High and Mighty States-General."

² This is a reference to Sir George Downing (1623?-1684). Of him Burnet writes, "Downing was then employed in Holland, a crafty fawning man, who was ready to turn to every side that was uppermost, and to betray those who by their former friendship and services thought they might depend on him" (*Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, London, 1724, I, 198), and claims that he purposely stirred up the war between the Dutch and the English. The sketch of Downing in the *D.N.B.* remarks

'Tis satisfaction and repentance
 must make Charles leave his frowning.
 The Orange Tree, whose shade & fruite
 Yr failing strengthe renewed
 You would have pluckt up by ye root
 O! Base Ingratitude!

Usurping Nall to satisfy;
 You banish't Charles ye Second,
 And vowed against his Family;
 Those scores han't yet been reckon'd
 Though High & Mighty States long while
 Yr selues you have professed
 You shall return to yr old style,
 Of writing poore distressed.
 Expect noe succors now from France;
 Lesvis [?] is out of Tun — Sr.
 The Turks at Gygory poor — Hance
 Unhectored that your Monsr.
 Those Sturts which Skellums on hand
 jeerd
 Waite at Opdam in ye Narrows.

They'l teare yr Belgik Lyons Beard,
 And Burn your sheath & Arrows.
 Orange restore, with Charles agree.
 Strike sayle without deferring, —
 Or else wee will lett in ye Sea
 And pickle you like Herring. —

Finis.

Among the other verses in Tylden's hand is the following satirical epitaph. Its subject, Francis Lovelace (1618-1658), is often confused with a brother of the poet Richard Lovelace. He was in fact "son of Launcelot Lovelace, of the Canterbury Branch of the family . . . took an active part against the Parliament in Kent, was recorder of Canterbury in the year of the Restoration, and in his official capacity delivered an address to the king and another to the queen (Henrietta Maria) on their passage through the place in 1660.

that "Thanks to judicious bribery he was extremely well-informed of all the debates and counsels of the States-General, and he boasted to Pepys that he had frequently had De Witt's pockets picked of his keys and read his most important papers" (v, 1305). Sir George is the man for whom Downing Street, Whitehall, is named.

He died on 1 March 1664, being then steward of the chancery court of the Cinque Port."³ He was not well liked by Willm Tylden.

Councill: Lovelace his Epitaph
made by T. G. Esq.

Under this stone lyes our Recorder
To whom death was a great disorder
Lovelace his name, who would without fees
The instest cause would let to freeze
Hee was soe used to cheat yt hee
Thought to bribe death, to set himself free
But if he had trepand death soe
The Divell will have his due you know
Lovelace your death, well, lye still, be wise,
For you'l be damn'd, if e're you rise.

A more respectful commemoration is the following full-dress elegy for Colonel George Choute. Doubtless an estimable gentleman of Canterbury, Colonel Choute has left few other memorials to posterity besides this one. He is listed in *Alumni Cantabrigiensis* almost cursorily: "Choute, George. Adm. pens. at Trinity, Sept. 6, 1656. Matric. 1656." As Tylden's almanac contains no date later than 1665, Choute apparently died within a decade of his admission to Cambridge. His "discourse of Infants Baptisme," referred to in the margin of the elegy, does not survive and is not listed in the Catalogue of the British Museum. So all we know of him must come to us from this anonymous elegy.

An Elegy
Upon y^e Death of Coll:
George Choute.

Vivit post funera
virtus

Oh! yt I could; (most noble Collonell)
In tuneful Elegyes, but ring thy knell
A silence rather, doth my worth befitt,
Where there's not language knowne to publish it,
Yet can I not be silent, nor refraine
To mention him; out of whose fluent braine

³ *D.N.B.*, XII, 168.

Did glide apace, full streames of Eloquence,
 (Rich Soule of witt & language) late from hence
 Departed, and exalted where on high
 He sits, and sings wth Heavens Hierarchy } *His discourse
 Has left to us his* Tract a president } of Infants Baptis
 Of piety & learning, to prevent } = me./.
 Our falling from ye Church, and laying hold
 On heresies crept in; which were foretold
 Should come to passe; in these our latter daies
 His paines therefore in this, will be his praise;
 And after-Ages, when the view ye fame
 Shall celebrate his never dying Name.
 Besides his tract, ye learned manuscripts
 Of witt and worth, breath'd from his sweetest lips;
 Drawne to ye life; by his ingenious pen
 The likes not left amongst ye sons of men,
 Indeede his studie, was his sole delight,
 His chiefest solace there (each day and night
 That passed by) he tooke, omitting not
 To leave Examples, nere to be forgott,
 His milde and meekest nature, here below
 Whilst that he lived, All ye world did know
 Of almes and charity, unto the poore
 Distressed fatherlesse, he gave great store.
 His loyalty to Charles ye First was knowne
 Whose iust & lawfull cause, he made his owne,
 Active in armes; to beate proud Rebells downe
 But lost ye day; and soe did Charles his crowne
 A Crowne of glory, now each doth enioy
 That fadeth noth, but flourisheth allway
 Great was ye losse, when wee lost thee Deare Choute
 Lamented much by all; our coasts throughout.
 A worthy Freind I lost, the like did all
 The servants here, when him grim Death did call
 Freind, Father, wife, Uncle, sonne, Sister, Brother,
 All at a losse, did stand, to finde another
 That better was belov'd, than he, theres none
 On earth; like ye Beloved Choute, that's gone,
 Omnipotent Lord God, prepare us then
 His steps to follow; till wee meet agen.
 Longe live ye widdow, wth her fatherlesse,
 Be thou to them a comfort in distresse
 And give to them, and theires thy grace on earth
 To learne to live; and live to dye, when death
 Shall seuze theure corps, grant they may have wth thee
 A resting place, the Saints Felicity.

These lines are weake; the penns of witt in Art
 And larning dipt, shall write thy vast defect
 Who e're then writg, and would define thy parts
 Must needes conclude, with thee rests, All ye Arts.

Reader my new Borne Muse (In english verse)
 Was never loosely pind to any hearse
 Correct therefore th'Erratas wth thy pen
 Or els wth teares, I'le Blot these out agen.

Though Death of late did feele thy Collonells pulse
 Yet at command, we'ele serve thee Capt. Hulse.

There are some felicitous touches in this poem which make one doubt that its author's Muse was "new Borne . . . (in english verse)." Surely the hand that joined Choute and Charles I so gracefully with a "Crowne of glory" had tried making rhymes before. The last two lines before the afterthought final couplet also show a worthy conceit. From the mention of mourning servants before the members of the family, and the conjunction of "A worthy Freind I lost, the like did all / The servants here" one would surmise the poet to have been a retainer of Choute's household. Whoever he was, it is his elegy rather than his good patron's deeds which survives to "celebrate his never dying Name."

And Tylden lives in the endpapers of his almanac. Royalist, patriot, hater of sham, lover of wine and merry tales, punctilious in his debts, sincere in friendship, we see this one man's life during the years when Charles was restored, the Dutch engaged, and London burned. Through him, we savor the age itself.