

## The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726)

Wilkinson, Hazel

DOI:

[10.1093/res/hgy096](https://doi.org/10.1093/res/hgy096)

License:

Other (please specify with Rights Statement)

*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Wilkinson, H 2019, 'The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726): a new document for transatlantic literary studies', *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 70, no. 295, pp. 467–488. <https://doi.org/10.1093/res/hgy096>

[Link to publication on Research at Birmingham portal](#)

### **Publisher Rights Statement:**

This is a pre-copyedited, author-produced PDF of an article accepted for publication in *Review of English Studies* following peer review. The version of record Hazel Wilkinson; The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726): A New Document for Transatlantic Literary Studies, *The Review of English Studies*, , hgy096 is available online at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/res/hgy096>.

### **General rights**

Unless a licence is specified above, all rights (including copyright and moral rights) in this document are retained by the authors and/or the copyright holders. The express permission of the copyright holder must be obtained for any use of this material other than for purposes permitted by law.

- Users may freely distribute the URL that is used to identify this publication.
- Users may download and/or print one copy of the publication from the University of Birmingham research portal for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research.
- User may use extracts from the document in line with the concept of 'fair dealing' under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (?)
- Users may not further distribute the material nor use it for the purposes of commercial gain.

Where a licence is displayed above, please note the terms and conditions of the licence govern your use of this document.

When citing, please reference the published version.

### **Take down policy**

While the University of Birmingham exercises care and attention in making items available there are rare occasions when an item has been uploaded in error or has been deemed to be commercially or otherwise sensitive.

If you believe that this is the case for this document, please contact [UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk](mailto:UBIRA@lists.bham.ac.uk) providing details and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate.

## *The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726): A New Document for Transatlantic Literary Studies*

*Abstract:* This essay contains a reappraisal of the shipwreck and travel narrative *The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726)*. New evidence proves that the narrative is based on the real experiences of the English trader and theatre manager Richard Castelman (d. 1746), whose existence is confirmed here for the first time. The narrative contains new information about transatlantic life in the 1700s which has been overlooked while the narrative was considered fictional. It sheds new light on the colonial management of Bermuda, early life in Charlestown and Philadelphia, and the history of the Quakers in Virginia. Castelman's *Voyage* took on a previously unobserved afterlife when it was incorporated into *The History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Maria Martin (1807)*, an important document in the history of slavery and the American perception of Islam. This essay also considers the literary significance of Castelman's narrative. It is argued that he used the language of prose fiction to describe lived experience in a way that has not been properly accounted for in scholarly discussions of the relationship between fact and fiction in travel writing of the eighteenth century.

*The Voyage of Richard Castelman (1726)* is an account of the travels and shipwreck of an English trader on the east coast of America and the islands of Bermuda in the early eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The narrative has received little attention from scholars. It has been assumed that it is a work of fiction, and that 'Richard Castelman' is the invented narrative persona of an unknown author. This essay sets out new evidence for the authenticity of Castelman's *Voyage*. The real Richard Castelman did travel from England to Bermuda via Charlestown, was shipwrecked on his return journey to America, and resided at Philadelphia for four months. The documentary evidence relating to Castelman's experiences does not

quite agree with the details given in his narrative: the essay investigates why Castelman might have sought to obscure certain details about his adventures, and also explores the implications of his puzzling text for our wider understanding of the relationship between fact and fiction in eighteenth-century travel literature.

There is no modern edition of *The Voyage of Richard Castelman*, so a plot summary is necessary. Castelman writes that he sailed from England to Charleston in the company of Edward Jones, the Secretary and Provost-Marshal General of Bermuda. He gives the date (inaccurately, as we shall see) as 1709–1710. Castelman and Jones spent eight months in Charleston before departing for Bermuda. He describes the political unrest there, and gives an account of the islands' geography and society. Castelman intends to return to England with a newly purchased cargo of cotton, indigo, and straw ware, and a consignment of tobacco that he will collect in Virginia. He purchases a ship with Jones and their friend Captain Bayley. Engaged by his official duties, Jones stays on Bermuda, while Castelman and Bayley set sail for Virginia with a small crew and some passengers. Two days into their voyage the ship alters her course to avoid a Spanish privateer, but the next day they awake to find themselves dangerously close to the sand banks of the Roanoke Sound, Virginia, on which the ship is wrecked. By sending two slaves to swim ashore with a rope, Castelman, Captain Bayley, his wife, the ship's mate, two sailors and the two slaves are saved from the sinking vessel, but the rest of the crew and passengers drown, a death toll of 33, rising to 34 when one of the sailors dies of exposure the next night. They camp one night on the shore before being discovered the next day by a local resident who leads them to safety. Having rescued all that he can of his possessions, Castelman travels by river to the house of his friend Thomas Cary, the Deputy Governor of the Province of Carolina, where he finds a warm welcome. Castelman manages to miss the next boat bound for the port of Kiquotan, from which ships

bound for England set sail. Concerned that he will miss the next homebound fleet, Castelman borrows a horse from Governor Cary to make the journey north to Kiquotan by land. He employs a Quaker as a guide and they travel for several days, encountering rattlesnakes and quicksand along the way, and find shelter and food at the houses of the guide's Quaker friends and family. On arriving in Kiquotan, Castelman finds that the fleet will not depart for several months, so he continues north to Philadelphia. He offers a substantial description of the city and the Pennsylvanian countryside, including details about local customs, industry and resources, wildlife, and politics. On returning to Kiquotan after four months he finds safe passage back to London, but vows not to travel by sea again.

The octavo volume in which *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* was first printed was a double bill: it also contained a 300-page novel, *The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Robert Boyle* by the popular Anglo-Irish novelist William Chetwood (d. 1776).<sup>2</sup> At only 41 pages (12,500 words), Castelman's narrative makes a slim companion to the substantial *Robert Boyle*. Both works feature accounts of the adventures of Englishmen in foreign countries. *Robert Boyle* begins as a domestic drama in London, when its eponymous hero and narrator, an orphaned apprentice, witnesses his employer's wife committing adultery. Boyle betrays the secret, and watches while the wife's lover is gruesomely castrated by the cuckolded husband. Shortly after the castration scene Boyle's employer dies of ill health, and lacking his protection Boyle is trepanned onto a slave ship bound for Virginia. He escapes, only to be made a prisoner on the West African coast, where he meets and falls in love with a captive Englishwoman, Mrs Villars, with whom he successfully hatches another escape plan. Boyle and Villars agree to (and consummate) a common law marriage, but soon afterwards they are separated, and Boyle is led to believe that she has been killed. In despair, he resorts to a life of ruthless privateering in South America and the Azores, where he amasses a great

deal of wealth. The novel features three inset narratives: Mrs Villars, an Italian captive, and a Spanish adventurer all tell their stories. Boyle also encounters a singing eunuch in Brazil who turns out to be the castrated lover from the opening sequence, one of the novel's many improbable coincidences.

The author of *Robert Boyle* was not named in the 1726 volume, where it was presented as the work of Boyle himself, but it has since been firmly attributed to William Chetwood (d. 1766), thanks to the discovery of later advertisements positively identifying his authorship.<sup>3</sup> Chetwood was a bookseller, and co-published titles including Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* and *Colonel Jack* (both 1722). As an author, Chetwood's other works include several plays and maritime novels, including *The Voyages of Captain Richard Falconer* (1720) and *The Voyages, Travels and Adventures, of William Owen Gwin Vaughan* [sic] (1756). Throughout most of his career, up to the publication of his *Five New Novels* in 1741, Chetwood also worked as a prompter at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. After 1741 Chetwood moved to Dublin, where he continued to work in stage management, and wrote the work for which he is best remembered, *A General History of the Stage* (1749).

A short preface written by Chetwood, in character as Boyle, offered to explain how their two texts came to be published together:

The following Sheets are a Detail of Fortunes I have run through for many Years; and however extraordinary they may appear, I shall give you the Circumstances for Truth. Yet this I must own, they lay by me undigested, and I had never any Intention to make 'em publick, if an old Acquaintance had not taken my loose Papers from me, and declar'd, if I would not digest 'em, he would.

The Shipwreck of my Friend Mr. *Castelman*, the Dangers he underwent, together with the Descriptions of *Pennsylvania*, and *Philadelphia* the Capital of that Country, I hope will not displease the Reader. There are no Embelishments [*sic*], nor one Step out of the Road of Truth. I believe every one that knows him, will give him the Character of a Person of the greatest Probity; as the Post he is in will sufficiently testify.<sup>4</sup>

It is unclear whether the reader is supposed to understand the friendship between Boyle and Castelman as real or fictional. To anyone attuned to the generic conventions at play here, Boyle/Chetwood's protestations of authenticity actually declare the fictionality of the volume. Boyle's feigned reluctance to publish his 'Papers', and his claim that 'an old Acquaintance' coerced him into print, were commonplace by 1726, reminiscent of Defoe's famous claim that *Robinson Crusoe* was 'a just History of Fact' without 'any Appearance of Fiction in it'.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the omission of Castelman's job title in Boyle's assurance that 'the Post he is in' is testament to his 'Probity' reads as a calculated withholding of information. Whether or not the title-page and preface lead the reader immediately to understand that *Robert Boyle* is fictional, they are surely in no doubt by the end of the fantastical novel, with its violence, sexual intrigue, and multiple narrators. Turning to Castelman's account, the logical assumption is that it too is fictional, particularly given that its author is introduced as the friend of an obviously invented narrator.

### *The Case Against Castelman*

In 1943 the historian Edward D. Seeber argued that Richard Castelman, like Robert Boyle, was an invented character, and his narrative a fiction.<sup>6</sup> He noted that ‘The *Catalogue* of the British Museum, the *Cambridge Bibliography*, Lowndes, Sabin, Gove, and Cox suggest that both works may have been written by William Rufus Chetwood’, though Seeber rightly disagrees with this suggestion, citing the obvious stylistic differences between the two narratives.<sup>7</sup> Seeber proposes no alternative author, simply positing that Richard Castelman was the alias of an unknown contributor. Everything Seeber met with in Castelman’s narrative supported this assumption, and his article seemed decisively to refute the authenticity of the *Voyage*. He is the only scholar to have discussed Castelman’s *Voyage* at any length.

Seeber built his case against Castelman’s *Voyage* by showing that sections of it were plagiarised from two sources: Gabriel Thomas’s *An Account of Pennsylvania* (1698), and John Oldmixon’s *The British Empire in America* (1708). Thomas’s *Account* was compiled first-hand, but Oldmixon was not a traveller himself, and he drew on a host of other sources including John Archdale’s *A New Description of Carolina* (1707), William Penn’s *Account of the City of Philadelphia* (1683), and John Harris’s *Complete Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1705). Seeber provides a list of passages from the *Voyage* that were lifted or adapted from Oldmixon and Thomas. Not all of these are convincing. A number of the passages listed are generally available facts rather than plagiarisms, such as Castelman’s citation of the latitude and longitude of Bermuda. Castelman’s description of the behaviour and language of American Indians are much more obviously derivative, but in that instance Castelman does cite Gabriel Thomas, making no attempt to pass off the information as new. Nonetheless, it is clear that Castelman did use Oldmixon and Thomas more liberally than he admits. Here is his description of Bermuda:

There is perpetual Spring to be observ'd in these Islands, and the old Leaves never drop before they are thrust out by new ones. Their Fruit is in Blossoms, Buds, and Ripe at the same time. The Air is generally temperate and innubilous, but now and then troubled with violent Thunder and Lightning; and I have been shown several Rocks that they say were split by Lightning.<sup>8</sup>

And Oldmixon on the same subject:

Here is a sort of perpetual Spring, and tho the Trees throw off their old Leaves, there are new ones always coming out at the same Time [...] 'Tis true, the Thunder and Lightnings are here very dreadful, Rocks having been split asunder by the latter.<sup>9</sup>

Clearly Castelman's writing is not entirely original, though the only direct quotation from Oldmixon, 'perpetual Spring', was a stock phrase in travel literature for describing exotic climes.<sup>10</sup> The issue of plagiarism in travel writing is complicated by the fact that the plagiarised sources were always tangled in webs of influence, borrowings, and allusions of their own. 'It is best', writes Joanna Lipking, 'to think of the [travel] writers as compiling a joint encyclopedia, with a generous admixture of folklore and little ever discarded'.<sup>11</sup> To credit Seeber, Castelman does seem to be actively attempting to pass Oldmixon's material off as his own, rather than silently assimilating it. The addition of 'I have been shown' is a deliberate conversion of the second-hand factual account into a narrative of first-hand experience, even if in the generic context this was normal practice.

More convincingly, Seeber showed that a number of details in Castelman's narrative are incorrect or inconsistent. He observed that 'Castelman's insistence on recording precise dates affords an easy check on his veracity'. The first date given is that of Castelman's departure from Bermuda on 5 April 1710 (published in 1726, the narrative is ostensibly set nearly sixteen years in the past). No date is given for Castelman's earlier arrival in Charleston from England, but he claims to have spent 'upwards of eight Months' there.<sup>12</sup> Seeber used this detail to infer that Castelman must have arrived in America in the summer of 1709, making the length of his stay in Bermuda (unspecified in the narrative) three or four months. The next date given in the narrative is 12 April (with no year, though the reader must assume 1710), midway through Castelman's voyage from Bermuda to Virginia; the ship founders on the Roanoke sandbanks the next day. Following the shipwreck, Castelman undertakes his perilous journey north, first to the port of Kiquotan and then to Philadelphia. He tells us that he 'continu'd at *Philadelphia* near four Months'.<sup>13</sup> This agrees with his claim that on his return journey to England his ship entered Deal harbour on 7 November 1710 (he must have departed America in mid-August). Despite the absence of some key dates from the narrative, a timeline can be readily deduced. Indeed, several eighteenth-century translators of the text followed this logic, and added a date (April 1709) and presumed location (Bristol) of Castelman's departure from England.<sup>14</sup> Seeber's problems with these dates, recorded and inferred, is that they do not fit with several historical events alluded to in the narrative. Castelman writes that he arrived in Charleston 'just when Captain Moor had made a Descent upon the Spaniards of St. Augustine, a Plantation to the Southward of Carolina, and return'd with considerable Booty'.<sup>15</sup> Seeber justifiably calls this a 'glaring anachronism'.<sup>16</sup> The reference is to James Moore (1650–1706), Governor of Carolina from 1700–1703, who in 1702 led a siege on the fortress of Castillo de San Marcos, in St. Augustine, Florida. The campaign failed to dislodge the Spanish and incurred enormous expenses, which led to riots

against Moore in Carolina. Moore was forced to resign his post as Governor in 1703. Given that Castelman describes the campaign he witnessed as successful (and that he calls Moore ‘Captain’, and not Governor) it seems that he is referring to one of Moore’s later campaigns on Spanish Florida *circa* 1705.<sup>17</sup> But Moore died in 1706, and Castelman claims not to have arrived in Charleston until 1709. Such anachronisms continue throughout. Castelman recalls that during his visit the incumbent pastor at Gloria Dei, the Swedish Reform Church in Philadelphia, was a ‘Mr. Rudman’.<sup>18</sup> Andreas Rudman had been pastor of Gloria Dei, but he died in 1708, whereas Castelman apparently arrived in Philadelphia in mid-May 1710.<sup>19</sup> Also in Philadelphia, Castelman received ‘many Obligations [...] from his Excellency Governor Evans’, but to quote Seeber ‘[John] Evans was not governor in the summer of 1710; he had been succeeded in 1709 by Charles Gookin’.<sup>20</sup>

There are also a number of implausible claims and circumstances in Castelman’s narrative. The survivors of the shipwreck are found on a beach by a local plantation owner who gives them limes as refreshments, but Seeber points out that limes do not grow in northern North Carolina. Similarly, Castelman’s sea chest is found ‘floating on the Surface’ after the wreck, and the two surviving slaves take it in turns to carry the chest from the beach to the plantation, ten miles away.<sup>21</sup> Seeber argues that ‘if this was the usual kind of bound chest, it is unlikely that two men could carry it, one at a time, for a distance of ten miles’, or indeed that it could float.<sup>22</sup> In Philadelphia, Castelman entertains a young girl by showing her his pocket watch, but Seeber finds this detail suspect, given that the watch, we are told, was in Castelman’s pocket during the shipwreck and presumably received a thorough soaking.<sup>23</sup> Castelman is prone to obvious exaggeration: ‘Reaching shore, Castelman declares that none of those saved “had eat or drank for two Days”, although it appears that they had been on their ship earlier that very day’.<sup>24</sup> The rattlesnake that Castelman encounters on his trip

through the forests surrounding Kiquotan is ‘near six Yards in Length and as thick as a lusty Man’s Thigh’, and later Castelman recalls holding a dried snake’s rattle ‘about a Yard and a half long’.<sup>25</sup> The sizes of both snakes are clearly exaggerated. There are also geographical problems with the narrative. For example, after his shipwreck Castelman takes up residence with the Governor of North Carolina, Thomas Cary, at his plantation on the River Nottoway, on the border between Virginia and North Carolina. Cary offers Castelman a horse ‘to go to Kakatan [Kiquotan], about 120 Leagues from the Place where we were’. Seeber writes that ‘From the Nottoway to the James River, the distance might be as much as 100 miles, but certainly not 360’, a considerable overestimate.<sup>26</sup>

Factual inaccuracies aside, the narrative itself contains several stylistic hallmarks of fiction that bolster Seeber’s argument. For instance, sailing to Bermuda from Charleston Castelman’s ship is stalked by a shark. Castelman is told that the shark is an ill omen, and that ‘some One on Board would die’. Castelman ‘laugh’d at his Superstition’, but sure enough ‘in three Days time a Woman Passenger expir’d of a Fever; whom we committed to the Waves, and [she] was probably entombed in the Bowels of the Shark, for he took his leave of us the same Day’.<sup>27</sup> The omen of the shark foreshadows the shipwreck Castelman will suffer on his return journey, a narrative coincidence that seems too convenient to be true. In addition to such obvious literary devices, Castelman’s narrative persona is itself suggestive of fiction. He is remarkably frank about his own cowardice and avarice. When waves begin to cover the ship the crew lower a small boat into the water, and Castelman admits that ‘I jump’d into her one of the first, but ere we could leave the Side of the Ship, she was stav’d in Pieces’. Castelman manages to get back on board the ship, but reports that ‘yet if I had not held fast hold by the Coat of one that was in the Water with me, and the Foot of another, I must have inevitably perish’d’.<sup>28</sup> It is strange to think that a real author writing under his own

name would admit to jumping into a lifeboat first, and using fellow passengers as buoyancy aids. Like Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Castelman is a master of elliptical confessions that do not actually admit any crime, but allow potentially sinister possibilities. Just as there is implied violence in *Crusoe's* descriptions of his dealings with Friday, so the reader of Castelman's narrative must wonder whether, by grabbing a coat and a foot, Castelman caused two fellow passengers to drown. Castelman's obliviousness to the suffering of others continues. Despite the 'dismal Cries' of the women and children on board, which 'pierc'd my very Heart', Castelman's first thought is for his money:

When I had got Footing upon Deck, I fetch'd my Box out of my Cabin, and was for securing my Money, which amounted to Fifty Pound. While I was busying my self with uncording my Box, the Captain's Sister reprimanded me for thinking on my Money, when all their Lives were in Danger.<sup>29</sup>

Castelman admits that he was 'asham'd' of his behaviour, and offers cursory assistance to the Captain's sister, but she proves 'as timorous as the Children' and, impatient and unsympathetic, he wastes no more time in escaping the ship using the rope that the two slaves have towed to shore. The rope snaps as soon as Castelman reaches land, leaving all the remaining passengers stranded. The following day Castelman is overjoyed to discover his box of money, linen, and account books on the beach, though he immediately buries it to hide it from the local plantation owner who has come to his rescue. Captain Bayley grieves for his lost sister and children, while Castelman laments the loss of his cargo, and calculates that the destruction of his cache of cotton, indigo, and straw wear has cost him £1500. He 'most regretted' the loss of his harpsichord and tambourine, which he finds in pieces on the shore. He also notes that 'the whole Strand was cover'd with Bermuda Hats'.<sup>30</sup> The Bermuda hats

are not the only darkly comical image in the narrative. In his thirst Castelman urinates in his tobacco box, and drinks it ‘with as great a Gusto as ever I have done French Claret before or since’.<sup>31</sup> The next day, the company find a puncheon of fresh water and they all use Castelman’s tobacco box as a drinking vessel, unaware of its recent re-appropriation. Although Seeber focussed on Castelman’s plagiarism and errors of fact, the narrator’s comical frankness and surprising self-incrimination are equally strong indicators that *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* may be a work of fiction. The case against it is strong, and it is no wonder that Seeber’s ‘complete skepticism’ about its authenticity has gone uncontested.

#### *The Real Life of Richard Castelman*

In 1726 readers may have suspected the accuracy of the historical and geographical details of Castelman’s *Voyage*, and they may have interpreted its moments of comedy and high drama as embellishments at the very least. However, in judging its authenticity they possessed a key piece of information that later readers did not: knowledge of Richard Castelman’s real existence and identity. At the time of the publication of the *Voyage*, Richard Castelman (d. 1746) was the treasurer at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. Castelman’s existence, and his role at Drury Lane are confirmed by multiple sources.<sup>32</sup> The actors, managers, and administrative staff of the Drury Lane Theatre were entitled to at least one annual benefit performance during the months of March to May. Castelman’s first benefit was staged on 12 June 1711, and his final benefit was on 5 May 1739.<sup>33</sup> Benefit performances were advertised in the newspapers, and in the period from 1722 to 1736 the details of Castelman’s benefits were recorded in the diary of the actor and dramatist Benjamin Griffin. In Griffin’s diary, Castelman’s name first appears alongside his benefit performance of a dramatic adaptation of

*Oroonoko* on 21 May 1722.<sup>34</sup> When Richard Steele was given responsibility for the Theatre in 1714, he entered into regular contact with Castelman. Steele's share of the Theatre's profits was handled by Castelman, who was also entrusted with the safekeeping of the Theatre's patent.<sup>35</sup> Colley Cibber likewise left copious records of Castelman's involvement at Drury Lane. Among Cibber's papers from his time as a manager of the Theatre are several notes addressed to Richard Castelman, chiefly relating to actors' salaries, and the hiring and dismissing of workers. The Cibber papers contain several specimens of Castelman's signature on payment orders between 1720 and 1727.<sup>36</sup> In 1733 Benjamin Griffin launched a campaign against the managers of the theatres, accusing them of colluding to lower actors' wages. Griffin published a letter he had received from Castelman informing him of a reduction in his pay, which is of interest as a surviving snippet of Castelman's correspondence (albeit one in which he is acting in a mercenary role).<sup>37</sup> Castelman lived next door to the Sun Tavern in Russell Street, near the Theatre.<sup>38</sup>

What else can we know about Castelman's life? His age at his death in 1746 is unknown. His place of birth cannot be determined exactly, but possibly he was from the West Country. Legal records document the existence of a Castelman family living near Bristol as early as the 1400s, and the name is not common.<sup>39</sup> He had two brothers, one of whom lived in Chepstow, a nephew, also named Richard, who was a distiller in Bristol.<sup>40</sup> Castelman describes Philadelphia as 'a noble, large, and populous City, standing on as much Ground as our *English City of Bristol*', showing his familiarity with the city.<sup>41</sup> Some details about Castelman's later life and retirement can be gleaned from his will, which was made on 1 May 1741 and amended numerous times before his death in January 1746. When he made the will in 1741 Castelman was a resident of East Sheen, in the parish of Mortlake, presumably having moved there following his retirement from the theatre in 1739. In his narrative

Castelman tells us that he owned and travelled with a harpsichord, a detail supported by the fact that he left five Guineas to Joseph Mahoon (d. 1773), harpsichord maker to George II. In later life Castelman retained the interest in trade that seems to have taken him to the Americas: in his will he disposed of 205 shares in the English Copper Company.

It was probably at Drury Lane that Castelman met William Chetwood, who was a prompter there from 1715 until approximately 1741. Chetwood also took advantage of benefit performances, and in 1726, the year of the publication of their joint volume, Castelman and Chetwood staged benefit performances on consecutive days for the first and only time.<sup>42</sup> When Chetwood-as-Boyle wrote in his preface to *Robert Boyle* that Richard Castelman was ‘a Person of the greatest Probity; as the Post he is in will sufficiently testify’, he must have been referring to his role as treasurer at Drury Lane. Although Castelman’s ‘Post’ was not advertised explicitly in the volume itself, the link was made elsewhere: a notice in the *Daily Post* on 4 May 1726 attributed the *Voyage* to ‘Richard Castelman, Gent. Treasurer to his Majesty’s Company of Comedians at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane’.<sup>43</sup> This shows that despite his appearance in print alongside the fictional Robert Boyle, readers in 1726 *were* expected to recognise Richard Castelman’s name, and to understand that he was not a fictional persona.

The real life existence of Richard Castelman seriously complicates Edward Seeber’s understanding of the *Voyage* as a straightforward fabrication. However, the majority of Seeber’s arguments cannot simply be dismissed as misunderstandings resulting from imperfect contextual information. Castelman *did* plagiarise Oldmixon and Thomas, he mistook the dates of several historical events, and he exaggerated or misremembered details. He did also confess his own cowardice and avarice, despite writing under his own name. The

fact of Castelman's existence does not in itself guarantee the truth of his narrative. For the modern reader, as perhaps for Castelman's contemporaries, many questions remain. Foremost among these must be: did Richard Castelman really go to Charleston, Bermuda, and Philadelphia? And was he shipwrecked? The fact that the answer to these questions is "yes" only serves to complicate matters further.

### *Castelman and Bermudan Intrigue*

That there is any surviving evidence of Castelman's voyage, other than his own narrative, is due to the fact that he played a brief but significant role in Bermudan politics. Several glimpses of Castelman's real life activity in the Americas can be found in the Colonial Series of the *Calendar of State Papers*. Castelman writes, 'I embark'd on Board Captain *Cox*, bound for *Charles-town* in *Carolina*, with Mr. *Jones* and his Family'.<sup>44</sup> This was Edward Jones, who had been made Secretary and Provost-Marshal General of Bermuda in 1699. Nothing is known about Edward Jones before this appointment, but his activities on Bermuda in the 1700s caused the storm of paperwork in which Castelman eventually became caught. Jones was a staunch ally of George Larkin, an English official who was sent to Bermuda by the Council of Trade Plantations (CTP) in 1700, with a commission to investigate the actions of pirates, and bring them to trial.<sup>45</sup> In 1701 Benjamin Bennett was made Governor of Bermuda, and he immediately clashed with Larkin and Jones. Larkin was zealous in his attempts to execute his commission, with Jones's support, but Governor Bennett, their superior, took a different line. Michael Jarvis has called Bennett 'Bermuda's smuggler-friendly governor'. Bennett 'heavily promoted privateering and took steps to standardize Bermuda's vice-admiralty court proceedings and regulate privateers' conduct'.<sup>46</sup> Privateering brought wealth

to the islands, and to enter into disputes with privateers and pirates was potentially dangerous. The issue caused a deep rift between Bennett on one side and Jones and Larkin on the other, and the CTP was inundated with complaints from all parties. Jones accused Bennett of supplying pirates with gunpowder from the common stores of Bermuda,<sup>47</sup> while Bennett accused Jones and Larkin of lewd and violent behaviour.<sup>48</sup> Bennett imprisoned Jones and Larkin several times, and denied them permission to leave Bermuda. B. R. Burg suspected that Bennett's administration fabricated their charges against Jones and Larkin in a bid to have them replaced by others who might support their policy of toleration towards piracy.<sup>49</sup> The CTP initially defended Jones and Larkin, and in 1702 it recommended that the Queen reprimand Bennett, and order him to allow Larkin free passage to Jamaica or the Leeward Islands.<sup>50</sup> These orders came too late, for Larkin and Jones had absconded from Bermuda without Bennett's permission in late 1702. In December 1702 Bennett wrote to the Earl of Nottingham expressing his confusion as to how Larkin and Jones had managed to leave the islands unobserved.<sup>51</sup> Jones returned to England where he was given a renewed mandate as Bermuda's Secretary and Provost Marshal General. Larkin also attempted to return, but died on the voyage in 1704. In the summer of that year Jones sailed for America again, travelling first to Charlestown, where he waited for word that Bennett was prepared to accept his reinstatement. Bennett stalled for as long as possible but grudgingly confirmed that 'on Jan. 5 [1705] arrived here Capt. Jones, with the duplicate of H.M. Order to take off his suspension and to remit the fines imposed on him'.<sup>52</sup> This sets the stage for Richard Castelman's first documented involvement in Bermudan life.

Despite the dates to the contrary in his *Voyage*, it must have been on this journey from England to Bermuda, via Charleston, in 1704–1705 (and *not* 1709–1710) that Richard Castelman accompanied Edward Jones. Castelman claims that he sailed from England to

Charleston with Jones, and that it after eight months in Charleston Jones was ‘oblig’d to go to Bermuda, being Secretary and Provost-Marshal of the Summer-Islands’. Castelman followed ‘a short time after’ with Jones’s family.<sup>53</sup> The journey from England to Charleston must have taken place shortly after the decision of the Council to reinstate Jones, which was made on 29 March 1704. They would have arrived in Charleston around May 1704, and Bennett confirms that Jones finally returned to Bermuda in January 1705. This agrees with Castelman’s claim that they were in Charleston for eight months. That Castelman visited Bermuda in 1705, and not 1710, is confirmed by further documentary evidence. In April 1707, Governor Bennett was accused of detaining Castelman’s ship, two years earlier in 1705. The accuser was not Castelman, but one Dr Starr, Bermudan resident and perennial supporter of Jones. Starr claimed that the supposed detainment of Castelman’s ship (not mentioned in the *Voyage*) ‘was the occasion of her being lost, he [Castelman] narrowly escapeing with his life’.<sup>54</sup> Bennett denied the charge in a letter of 1708:

I did not stop him [Castelman] nor his ship one moment, nor acted any thing that he seemed to take amiss, and the day he sail’d, he came by six in the morning to take his leave, and returned me thanks for my great civilities to him, which again (after being cast away) he acknowledged by his letter dated from Philadelphia, May 17, 1705, a copy of which my brother has, and will be produced when your Lordps. pleases to desire it.<sup>55</sup>

Bennett’s letter corroborates Castelman’s claim that he was shipwrecked, and it also confirms that he did journey to Philadelphia thereafter. This letter is an important, and entirely overlooked, document for the reinterpretation of Castelman’s *Voyage*. We should revise the date of Castelman’s shipwreck from 13 April 1710 to the same day in 1705. According to the

details given in the narrative, the journey north from Roanoke to Philadelphia took 30 days (give or take a day or two), dating Castelman's arrival in Philadelphia to 13 May 1705 (or perhaps 12 or 14). This fits exactly with Bennett's claim that he received a letter from the 'cast away' Castelman in Philadelphia dated 17 May 1705.

The Bermudan political feuds which provide evidence of Castelman's visit to the island, and of his subsequent shipwreck, are also an integral part of Castelman's narrative itself, in which Jones, Larkin, and Bennett all feature. Castelman accuses the inhabitants of Bermuda of having 'gain'd much by Pirates'. In his narrative he represents Larkin's commission to try pirates as a noble pursuit, but writes that Larkin 'met with a very cold Reception' from the people of Bermuda, and that Jones, who 'as Provost-Marshal, was oblig'd to execute the Warrants', 'met with Resistance every where, and was very ill us'd by some of them, even to the Hazard of his Life'.<sup>56</sup> In Castelman's version of events, Jones and Larkin were wrongly imprisoned by Bennett: 'when Hate is fix'd in the Minds of some Men, 'tis never to be rooted out'.<sup>57</sup> Regarding the escape (or illegal flight) from Bermuda of Larkin and Jones in 1704, Castelman gives some new details that do not appear elsewhere in the records. According to Castelman, Larkin managed to escape from prison and board a ship by donning 'the Habit of a Woman'.<sup>58</sup> This is presumably not first-hand knowledge, since Castelman arrived in Bermuda in 1705, by which time Larkin was dead: if this was Castelman first visit to the island, of course, a detail which is unclear in the *Voyage*. Indeed, Castelman claims that he 'happen'd to be at *Bermuda* when [Larkin] arriv'd there', that is, in 1700. It is certainly possible that Castelman visited Bermuda multiple times, possibly accompanying Jones on his first stint there, but collapsed these visits into one to simplify his story. Indeed, after the shipwreck Castelman meets one Captain Cratbach at the home of the

Deputy Governor of North Carolina, and describes Cratbach as ‘a Native of Bermuda Island, and one I had long been acquainted with’.

Problematically, during a hearing against Jones in 1707 an affidavit was produced which would seem to place Castelman *back* in Bermuda in June 1705, a month after his arrival in Philadelphia (where he claims he stayed for four months, before returning to England).<sup>59</sup> In the affidavit Castelman apparently testifies that he was present at an assizes in Bermuda in June 1705. It seems improbable that Castelman would have returned directly to Bermuda in June, having just left at great peril and cost. I suspect that either the affidavit was fabricated, or the date of the assizes in Bermuda has been incorrectly recorded (it is written ‘Jun 1705’, which could be mis-transcription of ‘Jan[uary]’, when Castelman *is* known to have been in Bermuda). Both sides in the dispute regularly accused the other of producing false affidavits, and Castelman’s affidavit was produced with another to the same effect from Thomas Dunscomb, a supporter of Jones who was later indicted for fraud. If we discount the evidence of Castelman’s affidavit as either deliberately falsified or erroneously dated, the majority of the events of the *Voyage* make sense, with the dates of the action revised from 1709–1710 to 1704–1705. The only remaining outlier is Castelman’s claim that he was in Philadelphia when a false alarm of a French attack was raised by the Governor, in order to test the resolve of the Quaker inhabitants’ pacifism. This actually occurred in May 1706. There is no external evidence to suggest that Castelman was in Philadelphia in that year, and given that his account of the false alarm is short and entirely unoriginal, and that the event was widely documented later, it is likely that Castelman simply added this detail to increase the drama of his Philadelphian residence. The rest of the historical anachronisms that Seeber pointed out no longer apply, and the internal chronology of the narrative agrees with the external evidence. Castelman would have been in America during James Moore’s 1705

assaults on Spanish Florida; Andreas Rudman would have been Pastor at Gloria Dei; and John Evans Governor of Pennsylvania.

Why is the date 1710 printed in the narrative? It may be a simple error. Writing twenty years after the fact, Castelman may have mistaken the date, or it could be a misprint (The actual year '1710' is only given twice). Other dates, including that of the shipwreck, are given by month and day, without the year. A more intriguing possibility is that Castelman deliberately confused the date of his voyage to avoid somehow incriminating himself in various political intrigues. In 1708 Governor Bennett reported his interception of two letters from England, which he believed to have been written by Jones's clerk and signed by Jones. The letters apparently reveal that Jones was plotting to overthrow Bennett as Governor of Bermuda and replace him with none other than Castelman (then in London).<sup>60</sup> It took nearly two decades, but Jones eventually lost the case against Bennett; the latter was exonerated in Chancery in 1723.<sup>61</sup> Jones remained an unsavoury person to be connected with.<sup>62</sup> Whether Castelman had been knowingly complicit in a criminal conspiracy to defame Bennett, or whether he genuinely believed Jones's cause was righteous, is a question that is not likely to receive an answer. Castelman may have deliberately confused the dates in his *Voyage* to make the text difficult to use as evidence against him, should the twenty-year dispute ever come under investigation again. This possibility seems less likely, however, when we consider the scant regard Castelman pays to his reputation when describing his ruthless (perhaps murderous) acts of self-preservation during the shipwreck. Regardless of how we interpret the murkier aspects of Castelman's involvement in Bermudan politics, what the historical records do make clear is that *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* has a verifiable foundation in fact. Castelman certainly did go to Bermuda and Philadelphia, and he survived a known shipwreck.

### *Historical Significance*

The knowledge that Castelman really experienced most of the events he describes necessitates a reappraisal his narrative on several fronts. It has a previously unappreciated value as a historical document; it exerted an appreciable literary influence on an important later shipwreck narrative; and it may pose a challenge to some of our assumptions about travel writing. First, considered as a historical document Castelman's *Voyage* makes a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the early life of Bermuda, Charlestown, and Philadelphia. Most obviously, it enriches the story of the feuds over Bermudan governance, providing numerous new details and insights into a complex situation which has never been quite untangled by historians. Castelman's description of Charlestown is relatively short and derivative, but he does make reference to being treated for a minor ailment by 'Madam *Rhett*, the only good Surgeon in the Place', who he calls 'another [Anne] *Dacier*' for her learning.<sup>63</sup> Sarah Rhett, the wife of the British-born Colonel William Rhett (1666–1722), is a known early inhabitant of Charlestown, but Castelman is the first to mention her surgical abilities, increasing our knowledge of life in the young town, and the role of women there. The Philadelphia section contains more unique details found in no previous narrative. For instance, in his list of those who showed him kindness in Philadelphia, Castelman includes the following: 'Among the rest of my Friends, I must not forget the facetious Mr. *Staples*, Dancing-Master, who was the first Stranger of *Philadelphia* that did me the Honour of a Visit, and to his merry Company I owe the passing of many a dull Hour'.<sup>64</sup> This is the only extant reference to the existence of a dancing teacher in Philadelphia this early in the life of the city. When the Library Company of Philadelphia acquired a copy of *The Voyage of*

*Richard Castelman* in 1963 it was remarked in their annual report that the reference to Staples superseded previous sources on dancing in Philadelphia: we now know Staples was active as early as 1705.<sup>65</sup> Likewise, Castelman's description of Badcock's brewery ('a noble, large Building, and has in it one single Vessel that will hold eight Ton of Liquor') has no parallel in any of his sources.<sup>66</sup> He also described meeting 'Reverend Mr. *Brooks* [...] by Chance at *Philadelphia*: His Business there was to raise Subscriptions for a new Church near *New-York*'.<sup>67</sup> Reverend Brook was sent to Elizabeth Town, New Jersey, by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Under Brook's supervision, work began on the Church of St John the Baptist, Perth Amboy New Jersey, in 1706. The information that Reverend Brook travelled as far as Philadelphia in his pursuit of subscriptions for his church is unique to the *Voyage*. Castelman is also a source of new information about the distribution and culture of Quakers in early Virginia. He made his first journey to Kiquotan in the company of a Quaker guide, who can be identified as the son of Richard Ratcliffe (1638–1718) head of a prominent Quaker family, whose residence in Isle of Wight, Virginia, was used as a Quaker meeting house.<sup>68</sup> No previous historian of Quaker life has had informed access to this information. Castelman's narrative is an important document for new information about leisure and worship in early colonial America.

### *Later Editions and Influence*

Although Castelman has been forgotten by modern scholars, his narrative had a significant afterlife in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was reproduced in twelve editions between 1728 and 1844, in London, Liverpool, Wigan, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Dublin, and Edinburgh, and on the European continent in nine foreign language editions, the first of

which was a French translation printed in Amsterdam in 1730. In all of these reprints Castelman appeared alongside its companion piece, *Robert Boyle*. Castelman's *Voyage* was an important part of the *Boyle* volume in Europe, as demonstrated by the care that was taken over the illustration of Castelman's shipwreck that appeared in the Amsterdam edition in 1730 (shown in Figure 1). The image faithfully depicts the scene Castelman describes. Six survivors have made it to land, which means that the man in the water being guided by one of the slaves is Castelman (the eighth and last survivor). His face is fixed in an expression of comic surprise, which fits the tone of his narrative perfectly. The illustration was included in three Dutch language editions, published in Amsterdam in 1740, 1761, and 1794. An Italian edition was published in Venice in 1734, three German blackletter editions appeared in 1735, 1744, and 1793; a second French language edition was printed in Amsterdam in 1787, and sold in Paris. Chetwood's novel was first reprinted without Castelman's contribution in 1759, and a number of standalone editions followed, though Castelman's *Voyage* was reintroduced in the London edition of 1772, and several other British editions thereafter.

The first American edition of *Robert Boyle* was printed in Boston in 1792, but Castelman's *Voyage* was not included: his pointed support of the British administration in America would certainly have been unpalatable across the Atlantic.<sup>69</sup> Although Castelman was not printed in America, his narrative apparently made its way there in exported British editions. Castelman's influence is found in an 1807 text printed in Boston, *The History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Maria Martin, Who Was Six Years a Slave in Algiers*.<sup>70</sup> The scholarly consensus is that Maria Martin did not really exist. Her narrative, which is about the same length as Castelman's, is an account of a shipwreck, in which Martin is captured, imprisoned, and kept in chains by the 'Algerines'. Daniel E. Williams, recent editor of this narrative, theorised that its probable author was its publisher William Crary.<sup>71</sup> *Maria Martin*

was reprinted in America ten more times between 1807 and 1818, and was enormously popular and influential. The affecting account of Martin's imprisonment in Algiers 'did much to fashion early American attitudes toward both slavery and North African Muslims'.<sup>72</sup> What has never been noticed before is that the shipwreck Maria Martin undergoes in her narrative is lifted *verbatim* from *The Voyage of Richard Castelman*: only the names of the characters are changed throughout the whole of the long scene. Other details leading up to Martin's wreck are also transcribed *verbatim* from Castelman, including her ship narrowly avoiding an enemy frigate; the disregarded warning that 'the colour of the water had changed'; and the Captain's appearance with 'tears in his eyes' on realising the ship will run aground.<sup>73</sup> The extended use of Castelman continues up to the survivors' first night on the shore, but instead of being rescued the following day they are captured, at which point the narrative departs from its source. Although Castelman's *Voyage* was not printed in America, it is embedded in a document which helped fashion the nation's attitudes towards important issues. This also demonstrates that William Crary had access to Castelman's *Voyage* in Boston at the turn of the century, presumably in an imported edition. For a relatively short and irregular shipwreck narrative by a novice author, *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* achieved an impressively wide circulation in Europe and, in another guise, across the Atlantic.

### *Literary Challenges*

Beyond its historical significance, Castelman's *Voyage* bears examination as a literary text. As a hybrid of fact and fiction, it is not in itself unusual. Percy G. Adams coined the term 'travel liars' to refer to the eighteenth-century vogue for invented voyages and journeys, and for inserting spurious 'facts' into experience based narratives.<sup>74</sup> Some authors of outright

fiction, like Chetwood, made fairly cursory attempts at dissimulation, whereas others more earnestly attempted to conceal their identities, notably George Psalmanazar in his *Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa* (1704). The motive for ‘travel lying’ was seldom more sinister than that of selling copies, but benignly intended or otherwise, pseudonymous or anonymous publication encouraged authors to take licence. Even in the *Tour Thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–1727), an authoritative source of information about early eighteenth-century Britain, ‘Defoe compounded several trips of his own, undertaken over many years, and interlarded his own memories with crafty borrowing from published sources’.<sup>75</sup> The history of travel writing, both fictional and experience-based, is one of exaggeration and fabrication, and Castelman’s sensationalised shipwreck and borrowed facts were all perfectly in keeping with the traditions of the genre in 1726. However, Castelman’s narrative contains an unexpected reversal of some of the *stylistic* norms of travel writing. Experience based accounts by the likes of William Dampier, Gabriel Thomas, and Defoe in the *Tour* insisted on their veracity by refusing to avail themselves of the devices of fiction, such as dialogue, dramatization, and characterisation, all of which Castelman makes effective use of. Even when inserting exaggerations or outright lies of the kind documented by Adams, real travellers attempted to maintain a tone of detached observation. Neil Rennie has shown that William Dampier’s ‘Plain and Just’ style is itself a relative of the ‘Mathematical plainness’ that Thomas Sprat had recommended to members of the Royal Society as appropriate for scientific observation.<sup>76</sup> Few authors who had actually survived shipwrecks and adventures in exotic locations were prepared to risk having their fundamental authenticity called into question by adopting certain devices which had come to be regarded as hallmarks of prose fiction (dialogue, comedy, narrative coincidences), even if they were prepared to pepper their accounts with invention, exaggeration, and plagiarism.

To explain the curious stylistic choices Castelman made in his *Voyage*, we might turn to its closest relative, *Madagascar, or Robert Drury's Journal* (1729). The importance of *Drury's Journal* has lately undergone a significant reappraisal, the outcomes of which suggest that Castelman's narrative ought to be considered another important text in the history of travel literature. *Drury's Journal* is a lengthy account of a young Englishman's fifteen-year enslavement on the island of Madagascar. Drury was employed on the *Degrave*, an East India Company ship, which was lost off the southern shore of Madagascar. The majority of the castaways were killed after they launched an attack against the Antandroy people. The few survivors were split up: two men were rescued by Dutch sailors in 1705, but Drury was put to work as a cattle farmer until 1717, when he was picked up by Captain William Mackett of the *Drake*. A declaration from Mackett appears at the beginning of *Drury's Journal*, declaring its contents to be true. This is followed by a preface in which we are told that Drury's original papers were revised for publication (put 'in a more agreeable Method') by an anonymous editor under Drury's supervision.<sup>77</sup> At the end of the narrative, Drury declares his reliability:

I am every Day to be spoken with at *Old Tom's* Coffee-house in *Birchin-Lane*; where I shall be ready to gratify any Gentleman with a further Account of any Thing herein contain'd; to stand the strictest Examination, or to confirm those Things which to some may seem doubtful.<sup>78</sup>

These earnest assurances seem to have had the same effect as Chetwood's preface to *Boyle-Castleman* volume, later commentators having sceptically taken them as the hallmarks of inauthenticity. Defoe has regularly been proposed as the author of *Drury's Journal*, or as Drury's editor or amanuensis, and *Drury's Journal* long occupied a similar position to

Castelman's *Voyage*, being considered a work of either fiction or semi-fiction.<sup>79</sup> However, in the 1960s Arthur W. Secord began producing evidence for the real life existence of Robert Drury, including records of Drury's birth, and printed accounts of the other survivors of the *Degrave*.<sup>80</sup> At the time of the publication of his *Journal*, Drury was working as a porter at East India House, and lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Others followed Secord in confirming the real existence of Drury beyond doubt, though many have still suspected that Defoe was the editor.<sup>81</sup> Recently the archaeologist Mike Parker Pearson has used new geographical and anthropological studies of Madagascar to show that *Drury's Journal* is a more accurate description of eighteenth-century Madagascar than had been assumed.<sup>82</sup> Parker Pearson and his team discovered the foundations of the Madagascan village in which Drury was held captive, and the remains of the *Degrave* off the coast.<sup>83</sup>

Both Castelman's *Voyage* and *Drury's Journal* adhere so successfully to what we now understand to be the generic conventions of fictional travel writing that they have baffled critics for over two centuries. Judgement has been clouded by over-sensitivity to 'the pretence of authenticity and the fictional realism that characterize this genre', and consequently the 'inconsistencies, mistakes, and problems' of both texts have been overplayed.<sup>84</sup> On the determination of generations of scholars to assign *Drury's Journal* to Defoe, Neil Rennie writes: 'The question worth pursuing here is not whether Defoe wrote *Drury's Journal*, but why the difference between a narrative of travel and a novel should be so hard to tell'.<sup>85</sup> To answer this, Rennie investigates the influence of the language of experience-based travel writing on fiction, focussing on the widespread influence of William Dampier's 'Plain and Just' style. Of course, as Rennie points out, 'Language of perfect "Mathematical plainness" can describe a fiction as accurately as a fact', and novelists had no trouble in faithfully mimicking the tone of empirical observation.<sup>86</sup> *Robinson Crusoe* was

initially taken for fact by some contemporaries, and if it seems transparently fictional now, it is because we have drawn a line between reportage and the novel that did not exist in the early eighteenth century. We might assume, for example, that it is only in the novel that events can be carefully structured to show the workings of providence, but Rennie shows that even plain-dealing Dampier draws on the language of fate and destiny. Castelman's *Voyage* has a stronger providential structure than any experience based text Rennie surveys: it features the (presumably fabricated) omen of the predatory shark that follows the ship on his first voyage; Castelman's interpretation of the placement of a tree stump on the shore, to which the slaves are able to tie the life-saving rope ('divine Providence had so order'd it, there was not any Thing like a Tree for half a Mile on each Side of us'); and his description of their rescuer the next day, who arrives as soon as 'we address'd our selves to the All-seeing Power', and appears like a 'Dove ... to the Patriarch *Noah*'. Castelman not only overlays his real experiences with a providential structure, he fashions for himself a narrative persona that is by turns comic and sinister. His self-incriminating statements during the shipwreck scene have been cited earlier, but are worth quoting in full here:

We had several Women with Children on Board, and their dismal Cries pierc'd my very Heart. We order'd the Boat out, to see if we could gain the Shore that way. I jump'd into her one of the first, but ere we could leave the Side of the Ship, she was stav'd in Pieces. All we could do in this Exigence was get into the Ship again; and with much difficulty we compass'd it, being dragg'd in by main Force; yet if I had not held fast hold by the Coat of one that was in the Water with me, and the Foot of another, I must have inevitably perish'd, for I was under the Keel. When I had got Footing upon Deck, I fetch'd my Box out of my Cabin, and was for securing my Money, which amounted to Fifty Pound. While I was busying my self with uncording

my Box, the Captain's Sister reprimanded me for thinking on my Money, when all their Lives were in Danger. I must own, other Thoughts had been more suitable to my Condition, therefore I was ashamed of what I was about, and had no other Regard than to assist in saving our selves.<sup>87</sup>

This passage has all the conflicted interiority of Crusoe struggling to reconcile his instinct for self-preservation with his fragile faith. We might compare Castelman's cowardice with Crusoe's fainting fit during his first shipwreck off the British coast, and his subsequent shame at the thought of returning home.<sup>88</sup> There is also a clear parallel between Castelman's fixation on his money and Crusoe's much-discussed obsession with types of wealth. The fact that we find such a striking passage in a work that is verifiably based on its author's own experiences tells us as much about Defoe's art, and that of any writer of travel fictions, as it does Castelman's. With *Crusoe*, Rennie writes, Defoe 'did not aim to suspend disbelief, but to do away with it completely'.<sup>89</sup> Castelman shows us that Defoe was not undermining that aim by giving his hero a complex interior life, articulated through a pattern of action, confession, and regret, with an overarching providential structure. Our understanding of what Defoe thought he was doing in creating Crusoe will be modified by the example of Castelman, an authentic traveller writing under his own name, confessing his own cowardice and avarice in print. Castelman was writing after *Crusoe*, and may have been influenced by Defoe's confessional style, but all the same his narrative demonstrates that it was perfectly possible for experience-based writing to avail itself of devices that have only later been categorised as novelistic.

The basis in reality of Castelman's narrative has escaped detection for so long because he did little to maintain a sense of realism while describing extraordinary events.

Remarkably for its genre, the only protest of authenticity made by Castelman is put in the mouth of Chetwood's fictional narrator. If it seems puzzling that Castelman was apparently not interested in whether his account was believed, it should be remembered that, like Drury, he was able to persuade the public of his reliability in other ways. Both Drury and Castelman were writing not for posterity but for their contemporaries, and particularly for Londoners. Drury had become a celebrity, and the reading public were invited to call on him at Old Tom's Coffee House. Castelman did not openly offer such an invitation, but Chetwood's preface drew attention to Castelman's public 'position' at Drury Lane, and clearly the reader was expected to recognise Castelman's name, which was frequently in the newspapers in connection with the theatre. Unlike *Crusoe*, which relied on the successful masking of the real author for the suspension (if not the total avoidance) of disbelief, the works of Castelman and Drury actually derived much of their meaning from their authors' relationships to the reading public of London in the 1720s.<sup>90</sup> They ask us to consider London as a reading community in which the meaning of a text is constructed socially as well as on the page. It is only the loss of the knowledge of Castelman's public identity that cast doubt on the fundamental authenticity of his narrative in later generations, and that knowledge is now recovered. *Robert Drury's Journal* has received new recognition as an important text, and *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* should be acknowledged as its key predecessor. The scholarly neglect of Castelman's *Voyage* might serve as a cautionary tale: prose style is not a reliable barometer of a text's status as fact or fiction in early travel writing. We ought to continue to scrutinise the relationship between fact and fiction, and ways of articulating lived experience, in the travel literature of the eighteenth century.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Voyage, Shipwreck, and Miraculous Preservation, of Richard Castelman, Gent. With a Description of the City of Philadelphia, and the Country of Pennsylvania* (London, 1726).

Referred to by the short title *The Voyage of Richard Castelman*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Voyages and Adventures of Captain Robert Boyle, In several Parts of the World* (London, 1726), referred to by the short title *Robert Boyle*.

<sup>3</sup> See William Hallam Bonner, *William Dampier, Buccaneer Author* (Stanford, 1934), 189, and John J. Richetti, *Popular Fiction Before Richardson* (Oxford, 1969), 211.

<sup>4</sup> Chetwood, *Robert Boyle*, sigs A4<sup>r-v</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), ed. J. Donald Crowley (Oxford, 1972), 1.

<sup>6</sup> Edward D. Seeber, 'The Authenticity of *The Voyage of Richard Castelman, 1726*', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 37 (1943): 261–74.

<sup>7</sup> Seeber, 'Authenticity of *The Voyage*', 261–62. Philip Babcock Gove had declared *The Voyage of Richard Castelman* to be 'imaginary' in *The Imaginary Voyage in Prose Fiction: A History of its Criticism and a Guide for its Study* (New York NY, 1941). Sabin and Cox tentatively suggested that it 'bears marks of authenticity' but went no further in their analysis; Joseph Sabin *et al.*, *A Dictionary of Books Relating to America*, 29 vols (New York, 1935), 4.14.

<sup>8</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America*, 2 vols (London, 1708), vol. 2, sig. 2B3<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> See Joanna Lipking, 'Introduction' to Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko: An Authoritative Text, Historical Backgrounds, Criticism* (London, 1997), xii.

<sup>11</sup> Lipking (ed.), *Oroonoko*, xiii.

<sup>12</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y8<sup>r</sup>.

---

<sup>13</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> *La Relation du Voyage, du Naufrage & de la Conservation Miraculeuse du Sr. Castelman*, 2 vols (Amsterdam, 1730), vol. 2, sig. I9<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Seeber, 'Authenticity of *The Voyage*', 270.

<sup>17</sup> See Charles W. Arnade, 'The English Invasion of Spanish Florida, 1700–1706', *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, 41 (1962): 29–37.

<sup>18</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A6<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> See Peter Stebbins Craig and Kim-Eric Williams (eds), *Colonial Records of the Swedish Churches in Pennsylvania*, 5 vols (Philadelphia, 2006), 2.154.

<sup>20</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A8<sup>v</sup>; Seeber, 'Authenticity of the *Voyage*', 272.

<sup>21</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z5<sup>v</sup>, Z6<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Seeber, 'Authenticity of *The Voyage*', 272. These details are not necessarily as outlandish as Seeber claims. Limes could have been brought to Carolina from further south, and we are not given sufficient details about Castelman's chest to determine its buoyancy.

<sup>23</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z6<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Seeber, 'Authenticity of *The Voyage*', 272.

<sup>25</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Seeber, 'Authenticity of *The Voyage*', 273. Other geographical problems include Castelman's claim that Philadelphia is 200 miles from the sea, an overestimation of almost 100 miles; his recollection of walking eight miles across the Delmarva Peninsula, from the port of Lewes on the Delaware River to Chesapeake Bay, a walk which would in fact be sixty or seventy miles in length.

<sup>27</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y8<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sigs Z2<sup>v</sup>–Z3<sup>r</sup>.

---

<sup>29</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>30</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z5<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z5<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Castelman's position at Drury Lane is recorded in Philip H. Highfill, Jr., Kalman A. Burnim, and Edward A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Managers, and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, 16 vols (Carbondale, 1973–1993), 3.103–4. Drury Lane's Castelman (spelled Castleman by Highfill *et al.*) has not previously been connected with the author of the *Voyage*.

<sup>33</sup> The date is provided by Highfill *et al.*, *Dictionary*, 3.103.

<sup>34</sup> The diary of Benjamin Griffin, British Library MS Egerton 2320, f. 28<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> See Highfill *et al.*, *Dictionary*, 3.104.

<sup>36</sup> Folger Shakespeare Library MS Y.d.467(1). The call numbers of the papers relating to Castelman are Y.d.467(1–6). For Castelman's signature, see an agreement with Barton Booth's wife, Folger MS Y.d.467(2) fol. 1<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> The letter appears in *Daily Post*, 11 June 1733 (issue 4286).

<sup>38</sup> The address is from an advertisement for Castelman's final benefit performance in 1739. It is not clear when Castelman first took up residence in Russell Street. See Highfill *et al.*, *Dictionary*, 3.104.

<sup>39</sup> For the fifteenth-century Castelmans see *Calendars of Wills And Administrations Relating to the Counties of Devon and Cornwall*, ed. Edward Alexander Fry (London, 1914), 603. The Castelmans of nearby Hunstpill are documented in National Archives, London, Common Pleas Plea Roll CP40/1157 (1554). In the 1740s a John Castelman served as a Prebendary of Bristol, and published *A Sermon Preached Before the Subscribers to the Bristol Infirmary* (London, 1744).

- 
- <sup>40</sup> Richard Castelman's will, proved 1746, National Archives, London, PRO PCC Canterbury 11/752.
- <sup>41</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A6<sup>r</sup>. Castelman compares the Pennsylvanian countryside to the Vale of Evesham, approximately 50 miles north-east of Bristol.
- <sup>42</sup> British Library Egerton MS 2320, f. 37<sup>r</sup>.
- <sup>43</sup> *Daily Post*, 4 May 1726 (issue 2062).
- <sup>44</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y7<sup>r</sup>.
- <sup>45</sup> *Calendar of State Papers Colonial: North America and the West Indies 1574–1739*, 44 vols (London, 1860–1963), vol. 18 (1700), 296–302. Hereafter *CSPC*.
- <sup>46</sup> Michael J. Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill, 2010), 241–42.
- <sup>47</sup> *CSPC* 23 (1706–1708) 142–66.
- <sup>48</sup> *CSPC* 21 (1702–1703), 609–39.
- <sup>49</sup> B. R. Burg, *Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition: English Sea Rovers in the Seventeenth-Century Caribbean* (New York, 1983; rev. 1995), 99.
- <sup>50</sup> *CSPC* 21 (1702–1703), 377–94.
- <sup>51</sup> *CSPC* 21 (1702–1703), 57–80.
- <sup>52</sup> *CSPC* 22 (1704–1705), 456–75.
- <sup>53</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Y8<sup>r</sup>.
- <sup>54</sup> Dr Starr, April 1707, quoted in Bennett to the CTP, 4 August 1708, *CSPC* 24 (1708–1709), 58–9.
- <sup>55</sup> *CSPC* 24 (1708–1709), 58–9.
- <sup>56</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sigs Z1<sup>r-v</sup>.
- <sup>57</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z1<sup>v</sup>.
- <sup>58</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. Z1<sup>v</sup>.

---

<sup>59</sup> From the accounts of the hearing against Edward Jones, June 1707. ‘Journal Book L’, in *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* (London, 1920), 1.370–97.

<sup>60</sup> Bennett to CTP, 10 February 1708, *CSPC* 23 (1706–1708), 652–75.

<sup>61</sup> *CSPC* 33 (1722–1723), 206–21.

<sup>62</sup> John Hope, Bennett’s successor, was describing Jones as a ‘turbulent insect’ in 1724. *CSPC* 34 (1724–1725), 202–16.

<sup>63</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. C8<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>64</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> *The Annual Report of the Library Company of Philadelphia for the Year 1963* (Philadelphia PA, 1964), 53–4.

<sup>66</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A6<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>67</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sig. 2A8<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> See Miles White Jr, *Early Quaker Records in Virginia* (1902–1903, repr. Baltimore, 2008), 40.

<sup>69</sup> Eve Tavor Bannet has discussed the reception of *Robert Boyle* in America in *Transatlantic Stories and the History of Reading, 1720–1810* (Cambridge, 2011), 66. Tavor Bannet does not investigate the authorship of Castelman’s *Voyage*.

<sup>70</sup> *The History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Maria Martin* (Boston, 1807). *Maria Martin* was first printed in 1806, but substantially revised for the 1807 edition, the text used in *Liberty’s Captives: Narratives of Confinement in the Print Culture of the Early Republic*, ed. Daniel E. Williams (Athens, 2006), 105–30. Citations are from this edition.

<sup>71</sup> Williams (ed.), *Liberty’s Captives*, 106. See also Janet Moore Lindman and Michele L. Tarter, *A Centre of Wonders: The Body in Early America* (Ithaca, 2001), 235.

<sup>72</sup> *Maria Martin*, 106. See also Robert J. Allison, *The Crescent Obscured: The United States and the Muslim World, 1776–1815* (Chicago, 1995, repr. 2000), 79–83, and 239–40n.

---

<sup>73</sup> *Maria Martin*, 114–15. All of these details in *Maria Martin* have been assumed to be original by commentators. See Allison, *The Crescent Obscured*, 80.

<sup>74</sup> Percy G. Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars 1660–1800* (Berkeley, 1962).

<sup>75</sup> Pat Rogers, introduction to Defoe, *A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (Harmondsworth, 1971), 33.

<sup>76</sup> Dampier, preface to *A Voyage to New Holland* (London, 1703), and Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society* (London, 1667) both quoted in Neil Rennie, *Far Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas* (Oxford, 1995), 60. On travelers and the ‘stylistic principles’ of the Royal Society, see Ilse Vickers, *Defoe and the New Sciences* (Cambridge, 1996), 137.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Preface’ to *Madagascar: or Robert Drury’s Journal During Fifteen Years Captivity on that Island* (London, 1729), sig. A2<sup>f</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Drury, *Madagascar*, sig. 2G4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>79</sup> Proponents of the argument for Defoe as author/editor include John R. Moore, *Defoe’s Sources for Robert Drury’s Journal* (Bloomington, 1943), 11–87, and more recently Anne Molet-Sauvaget, *Madagascar ou le journal de Robert Drury par Deniel Defoe* (Paris, 1992), 7–19.

<sup>80</sup> Arthur W. Secord, *Robert Drury’s Journal and Other Studies* (Urbana, 1961), 7–71.

<sup>81</sup> For example, Rodney M. Baine, ‘Daniel Defoe and Robert Drury’s Journal’, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 16 (1974): 479–91. P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens argued persuasively that Defoe was *not* the author of the *Journal* in *Defoe-De-Attributions: A Critique of J. R. Moore’s Checklist* (London, 1994).

<sup>82</sup> Parker Pearson, ‘Reassessing “Robert Drury’s Journal” as a Historical Source for Southern Madagascar’, *History in Africa*, 25 (1996): 233–56, 251.

---

<sup>83</sup> Documented throughout Parker Pearson and Karen Godden, *In Search of the Red Slave: Shipwreck and Captivity in Madagascar* (Stroud, 2002).

<sup>84</sup> Pearson and Godden, *In Search of the Red Slave*, 235.

<sup>85</sup> Rennie, *Far Fetched Facts*, 58.

<sup>86</sup> Rennie, *Far Fetched Facts*, 61.

<sup>87</sup> Castelman, *Voyage*, sigs Z2<sup>v</sup>–Z3<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>88</sup> See *Crusoe*, ed. Crowley, 12–15.

<sup>89</sup> Rennie, *Far Fetched Facts*, 65. Defoe has precursors in ‘the realistic imitation of real travel books’, including Henry Neville, *The Isle of Pines* (London, 1688). See Rennie, *Far Fetched Facts*, 66–7.

<sup>90</sup> To an extent the two texts have this in common with Behn’s *Oroonoko*, in which the narrator is a semi-fictionalised version of the author, who cites ‘the reputation of my pen’ as a guarantee of the narrative’s worth (Lipking (ed.), *Oroonoko*, 65). However, the fact that Behn was known as an author of fictions makes her invocation of her public persona quite different to Castelman’s and Drury’s, who were not known in any other literary contexts.