

# Background and Analysis: "Roman Poets of the Republic" by William Sellar (1881)

Post by "Joshua" of July 7, 2020 at 2:44 PM

Oh, have no fear on that point, Cassius. I am certain you've spent more time with Munro than I have! No, it was the very interesting word *cavalier* that distracted me, and that is where my reading may bear me out: we studied the cavalier poets when I was at the University; they were Royalists devoted wholeheartedly to the cause (and person) of Charles I, and to the eventual restoration of his heir Charles II after the Interregnum.

The great problem of the manuscript in the Bodleian library is that we know almost nothing whatever about it. Here is what little we do know about the text, known to scholars as *Ms Rawlinson D. 314*.

The concrete facts are coded in the title just mentioned; it is a hand-drafted fair copy manuscript (Ms), bequeathed to Oxford as part of the extensive collection—over 5,000 articles of every description—of [Richard Rawlinson](#), being the 314th item under the heading *D.* for *Miscellaneous*.

And, what we do not know:

- 1.) The identity of the translator.
- 2.) The date of its composition.
- 3.) The early provenance of the text—which is to say, how it came to be in Rawlinson's collection to begin with.

Everything else that can be surmised is to be derived through textual criticism. It is believed to be a direct translation of a 1659 French revision of an earlier French edition of the Latin text, presented by Denis Lambin in 1563 (this being the same Lambinus mentioned above by Munro.)

And so from this, an earliest date of 1659 is suggested for the text.

On a slightly unrelated note, it was a copy of Lambin's edition that was found with Montaigne's extensive marginalia.