

The epistolary record shows that Jefferson's granddaughters worked regularly as his amanuenses in 1823 and 1824. But Trist was enlisted instead; and the project, far from requiring days or weeks, was completed apparently over several months, after Trist had left Monticello and taken his copy texts with him. The timeline, as well as Jefferson's apologetic response to Trist seeking pardon for "the difficulty" of the task, conspire to suggest that the textual history of the 1823 Trist catalog is more complex than Gilreath and Wilson's account allows. It might be suggested that Jefferson was here referring to the "difficulty" of Trist's writing out the 114 pages of the 1823 catalog, but that ignores an alternate reading of Jefferson's letter: the "difficulty" to which Jefferson "subjected" Trist was that of disentangling his system of organization with recourse only to the 1783 catalog, its sporadic notes and marginal instructions, and an unannotated 1815 printed catalog.

After recounting the evidence, our theory can now be laid out in full: our account of the copy text(s) of the 1823 Trist catalog renders an annotated 1815 catalog unnecessary. We might go even further: with only the 1783 catalog (and its notes) and a copy of the 1815 catalog to hand, anyone well versed in Jefferson's shelving schema and his epistemological habits of thought could produce a document nearly equivalent in form and makeup to the Trist manuscript, though with occasional variants resulting from ambiguities in the arrangement of entries in the 1783 catalog. In Trist's case, with the written instructions from Jefferson in the 1783 catalog and some verbal preparation—likely imparted while Trist was at Monticello after June 1821, or when he began studying law with Jefferson at Monticello in spring of 1823—Jefferson's desired order could have been reconstructed.³⁷ Where ambiguities arose or when a revised order was required, Jefferson's marginal instructions in the 1783 catalog guided Trist's work; or alternatively, Trist could fall back on his own knowledge of Jefferson's "sometimes chronological, sometimes analytical" arrangement or the order of Jefferson's shelving, as recorded in the shelf mark numbers printed in the 1815 printed catalog.

Having introduced the first four catalogs relevant to our argument—the 1783 catalog, the 1812 fair copy, the 1815 printed catalog, and the 1823 Trist catalog—we advance the pattern of filiation illustrated in the stemma in figure 7. This stemma, and the bibliographical evidence enumerated above offer a new textual account of the 1823 catalog, but leaves the reason for its production obscure: what was its purpose and the uses to which it was put? Why would Jefferson want Trist to laboriously compile an eclectic catalog, reproducing the contents of the 1815 printed catalog and the arrangement of the annotated 1783 catalog, as late as 1823? Was it because Jefferson simply hoped to recover the extent and arrangement of his library before its sale to Congress in 1812? Or was it because Jefferson was engaged in the most significant and demanding project he undertook in retirement: the formation and planning of the University of Virginia and its library? Douglas Wilson allowed this point in his article announcing the rediscovery of the 1823 catalog.³⁸ Similarly, Endrina Tay has linked the 1823 Trist catalog to Jefferson's plan for the university's library, noting that Trist's copy was made "so that [Jefferson] would have on hand a reference list of the books in his previous library ordered by subject as he began to plan the library collection for

37. See Hackford, "Nicholas Philip Trist."

38. Wilson, "Sowerby Revisited," 624. Quoted above.