

## HENRY ELLIS, RICHARD GOUGH'S PROTÉGÉ

By RICHARD SHARPE

THE COLLABORATION between Richard Gough and John Nichols produced many works of topographical and antiquarian interest – and one star pupil. Sir Henry Ellis (1777–1869), principal librarian of the British Museum from 1827 to 1856, is well known for his important contribution to the understanding of Domesday Book, his much enlarged second edition of Dugdale's *Monasticon*, and the many volumes of selected letters published by him between 1824 and 1846.<sup>1</sup> He represents an easily overlooked generation of minor antiquaries between the eighteenth-century collectors and the early Victorian revival in the study of medieval history. Ellis's surviving correspondence is a reflection of his career as a librarian with literary interests on the side. He was not, however, one of those people who kept every letter he received.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore the more significant that he preserved a particular batch of letters from his time as schoolboy and undergraduate, and the correspondent whose letters he cherished was Richard Gough.

Ellis met Gough through the printer and editor John Nichols. He had known Nichols from an early age. Indeed Ellis was only fifteen, still Mr Samuel Bishop's pupil at Merchant Taylors' School, when he contributed his first note to Nichols's house-journal, *Gentleman's Magazine*, in August 1793.<sup>3</sup> And it was Nichols who produced Ellis's first book, *The History and Antiquities of the parish of St Leonard, Shoreditch, and Liberty of Norton Folgate*, in his standard topographical format. The book was dedicated to Richard Gough on 6 October 1798, when Ellis, still only twenty, described himself as fellow of St John's College, Oxford. Gough's own grangerized copy – of this as of so much else – is among his topographical books in the Bodleian.<sup>4</sup> How the connexion came about can be recovered in some detail. In a brief note on his early life, Ellis wrote: 'It was in 1794 when I first projected the History of Shoreditch that I made Acquaintance with Mr Gough. Having left my papers in the hands of Mr Nichols, he carried them to Mr Gough at Enfield, who perused them and gave their Author an Invitation which was afterwards succeeded by numerous acts of friendship and closed with a legacy of £300'.<sup>5</sup> The reference to Gough's legacy shows that this was written after 1809, and Ellis's memory for dates is faulty. It

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was, in fact, the summer of 1795 when Ellis presented the first drafts for his history of Shoreditch to Nichols, and Nichols took them to Gough. This is obvious from Gough's first known letter to the young Ellis, which he naturally kept. It reads:<sup>6</sup>

18 Sept. 1795

Sir,

Mr Nichols put into my hands your collections for a History of Shoreditch which I read over with much pleasure. I wish it were in my power to assist you: but fear the subject has been so little attended to that all your materials will be found within your own reach. Your addition to the topographical literature is the best proof of this.

Mr Browne of Newington can give you better information of many things in his neighbourhood than I can. Whatever I can inform you of I am very ready to do & to offer you my name as a subscriber when you think of printing.

You seem to be under some mistake in supposing that *Domesday book* could be compressed into the *Gent Mag* & particularly with the addition of notes & glossary. Parts of it will appear with such accompaniments in future histories of counties or towns: but it is to be regretted that no body has undertaken a commentary on the whole: except Mr Kelham in a short octavo volume published 1788.

I shall be glad to hear of your progress, & am, Sir, your obedient humble servant.

R. Gough

Ellis was seventeen at this date, having been born on 29 November 1777. He had grown up at a house in Primrose Yard, off Primrose Street, in Bishopsgate ward and the parish of St Botolph, where his father was master of the free school. The western end of Primrose Street in fact lay in the southern part of the parish of Shoreditch, which extended from Moorfields to Hoxton. It was the history of Shoreditch that first led Ellis to apply, in March 1795, to be admitted to the library of the British Museum. Upon his admission, he presented a manuscript to the library (now BL, Add. MS. 5663) and he kept the letter of acknowledgement.<sup>7</sup> If Ellis answered this letter in writing, Gough did not keep the reply. Gough's second letter shows him at work on Ellis's manuscript. Without a word of pleasantries, it is business from the start:<sup>8</sup>

Sir,

Your account of Balmeshouse is very satisfactory. Mr Lysons in the II. volume of his *Environs of London* has given a very short account of it, p. 488, from the Hackney register. It would be a very acceptable addition to our *Portraits* to have <a> good engraving of the picture you mention.

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Cervantes was born 1549, published first part of *Don Quixote* 1605 & 2d 1615, so that it is hardly likely the builders of the house could take subjects for tapestry from it.

Mr Nichols can furnish you with the original Domesday for Haggerston manor from his printed copy.

Joel Gascoyne's survey of Limehouse I have mentioned; but had not seen that of Bethnal Green.

I wish it was in my power to give you any information about Haliwell priory more than is in print already. I have somewhere read of paintings on the wall of King John's palace there but never could find them. You know it was the manor house of Sir Tho. Lovell who was brot to it to be buried in Shoreditch church. Lysons II. 295.

Add to the list of prioresses

Juliana 32 H. III

Benigna in same reign

Christiana 53 H. III

..... sister of Matilda Mountague 1341

Isabella Norton 1390

Clemencia occurs 1521

Joan Lynde occurs 24 April 1532

Among Rowe More's MSS additions to Tanner's *Notitia Monastica* in my possession in which pp. 306. 307 you will see an account of this house.<sup>9</sup>

Among their revenues were rents in Essex & Kent. Fin. 50 H. 3. Lands in Olmele in Kent Fin. 32 H. 3.

If I can be of further use to you,

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

R. Gough

Enfield

Oct. 22. 95

[Address:] Mr H Ellis.

[Note:] Rec'd Oct. 31. 1795

Some of this went straight into the draft of *Shoreditch*: the list of prioresses in exactly this form appears at p. 200, and on p. 201 Ellis quotes the letter, 'Mr Gough informs me, that he has "somewhere read of paintings on the wall of (what is called) king John's palace", but has never been able to find them'; a footnote explains King John's Palace as 'the vulgar appellation given to the remains of Haliwell priory', which as recently as 1785 had suffered the loss of the gateway mentioned by Camden. The comment on Domesday Book anticipates Ellis's later role in completing the Record Commission edition. Nichols's 'printed copy' is the parliamentary edition, edited by Abraham Farley, which Nichols had printed between 1773 and 1783 but which remained unpublished. The record type used to represent the manuscript was designed by the young John Nichols and was made by

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Joseph Jackson no later than August 1773. It was available for Nichols to use in printing John Hutchins's *History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset* (1774), years ahead of the release of the whole text of Domesday Book in 1783.<sup>10</sup> Nichols used this record type again in a note by Ellis on Nomansland, the only *terra regis* in Domesday Middlesex, and in setting the quotations from Domesday Book in Ellis's *Shoreditch*.<sup>11</sup> Another letter in the same vein followed in less than a month:<sup>12</sup>

Sir,

Inclosed I send you what may be added to the full account given of St Mary Spital in Dugdale, Stowe, & Newcourt, which you will incorporate together & when you have so done I will look over your account.

Can you tell where about stood this famous hospital, from which the Spittle sermons were removed to St Brides as at present. Perhaps you may be able to procure some list of them & their preachers, tho I do not recollect one in print. I suspect a house taken down & rebuilt a few years ago in the E side of Norton Folgate occupied by a former (?) draper & having a bay window full of arms was part of the old house, but of this more when you have ascertained this fact.

Of Sir George Wheeler you will find an account in \Wood's Athenae Ox. II 1004 Fasti 222/ the Biographical Dictionary & in Huchinsons History of Durham \II 177/ where he was prebendary of the 2nd stall from 1684 till his death 1724. It would be adviseable to get a sight & a copy of his will in the prerogative office.

A list of the 50 new churches intended by Q Anne & how many were actually built would be a good addition to your work. \I thank you for the plans of Bath./

I am, Sir, your very humble servant, R. Gough

Nov. 12. 95

[Address]: Mr Ellis. By favour of Mr Nichols.

These are the first three in a series of letters kept by Ellis. A list of them is included in the appendix below. It is clear that Gough wrote to the young Ellis through Nichols, and it may be presumed that Ellis picked up the letters at Nichols's house in Red Lion Passage. Eight letters full of facts and advice for the writing of *Shoreditch* had passed before we have any surviving answer written by Ellis, but from May and June 1796 three letters from Ellis to Gough were retained by Gough and eventually bound with Ellis's *History of Shoreditch*. I quote only the first:<sup>13</sup>

Dear Sir,

In my last I entirely forgot to thank you for the reference to the Engraved View of Balmes; the Arms, "a Chevron between 3 cinquefoils", yet remains amongst the scattered Fragments of painted glass, hinted at in Mr Nichols's Canonbury, p. 10 *in notis*. My Materials for the History of this House

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have unexpectedly increased, and shall in a few days be submitted to your Correction. Mr Lysons might have traced it by Hackney Register (anterior to its becoming the property of Sir Geo. Whitmore) to have been inhabited by the Weld family.

The Revd Mr Hutton of Houghton le Spring Co. Durham, minister of Sir Geo. Wheeler's Chapel, promises to furnish me with some authentic Documents of the Chapel, Sir Geo. Wheler, & his Family.

Would you advise me to introduce Memoirs of the Shoreditch Family immediately after the Account of the Manor of Shoreditch, of which Sir John de Sordig was Lord, or as a Supplement to the History? I have only to say, They are ready, and flatter myself that the Pedigrees of this Family from Sir John to 1650, and again from 1720 to the present time, will not be unacceptable to Antiquarian Readers.

Mr Rose, of St Martin Outwich, seemed to think you was not satisfied where the Cloister of the Old Church was situated. Since which, I have found mention of the "Inner Cloister;" might not the *inner* Cloister have been behind the Almshouses (where Mr Forster's House now stands); and the Outer cloister on the site of the present Rectory House?<sup>14</sup>

The Foundation \stone/ of St Martin Outwich New Church was laid on May 4th at the N. E. corner of the building by Mr Rogers, Master of the M<sup>r</sup> T<sup>rs</sup> Company.<sup>15</sup>

I have sent a curious MS. List of Pamphlets Pro & Con. in the Popish Controversy in the Reign of James the 2<sup>d</sup> which I found amongst a collection of old papers, for your acceptance.

With respectful compliments to Mrs Gough \I/ remain

Your obedient servant  
to Command,

Henry Ellis

May 12.  
1796

Some material in Gough's hand now bound with his copy of *Shoreditch* had been included in the text. Some twenty letters survive from Gough to Ellis before the publication of this book; they provide a dense illustration of how far Gough guided Ellis in this his first work.

During the same period a second correspondence was under way, and again Ellis preserved the letters he received from Samuel Denne (1730–1799). Denne's father was Dr John Denne (1693–1767), who was instituted vicar of Shoreditch in 1723 and rector of Lambeth in 1731.<sup>16</sup> Samuel was vicar of Wilmington in Kent. Rosemary Sweet has written, 'Denne senior had at one time been vicar of St Leonard, Shoreditch, and Samuel continued the family interest in the parish of Shoreditch, providing Henry Ellis with considerable assistance in his parochial history. He also maintained the family connection with Lambeth, of which his father had been rector, with his Historical Particulars of Lambeth Parish and Lambeth Palace,

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published in 1795'.<sup>17</sup> Denne's *Lambeth* was of course produced by Nichols. His many letters to Richard Gough are in the Bodleian, MS. Gough gen. top. 39.<sup>18</sup> Denne refers to Nichols's sending him some of *Shoreditch* in proof as early as June 1796.<sup>19</sup> One fruit of a triangular correspondence between Ellis, Gough, and Denne was a paper in the transactions of the Society of Antiquaries on the use of Arabic numerals in medieval England, 'in a letter to Richard Gough'.<sup>20</sup> The letter is dated at Wilmington, 22 November 1796. Here we read that, 'Mr Henry Ellis, a very young student of St John's College in Oxford, who has a strong and an useful propensity to antiquarian researches, has found in a leaf of a MS. of Trivet super Ovidii Metamorphos. in the library of that college, in an old hand, this entry: "Liber quonda(m) Mag(ist)ri Thome Egburhab. M. Rob. Elyot A<sup>o</sup> Doi 1471 dat'ad fit q. no(n) vendat(ur) post ejus mortem, &c. Orate qu. p. an(im)a ejs". The remark of Mr Gough, who communicated to me this extract, is, that it will at least make Arabic numerals in MS. keep pace with the specimens on brasses'.<sup>21</sup> Gough passed the information to Denne by letter on 17 August 1796, which Denne acknowledged on 22 August.<sup>22</sup> Behind this is a letter from Ellis to Gough, dated 12 August 1796, in which we read:<sup>23</sup>

Mr Denne when in town informed me (if I mistake not) that he (in conjunction with yourself) was employed in writing an Essay on the Antiquity of Arabic Numerals in England. Amongst the MSS in our Inner Library at St John's, No. 137, is *Trivet super Ovidii Metamorphosios*, in the fly-leaf of which in an old hand is

Liber quonda(m) Mag(istri) Thome Eyburhale dat(us) M(agistro)  
Rob(er)to Elyot A<sup>o</sup> D(omi)ni 1471 Ad terminum vite sit q(uod) non  
vendat(ur) post ei(us) morte(m) &c. Orate qu. pro Anima ei(us).

The singularity of this, with Arabic Numerals, determined me to notice it. Whether it is worthy of your attention, I am ignorant.

The manuscript in question, St John's College, MS. 137, is in fact a copy of the common *Ovidius moralizatus* by Pierre Bersuire (d. 1362); this is by no means the only English copy to carry an ascription to Nicholas Trevet. Ellis's first-hand copy is better than Denne's at third or fourth hand.<sup>24</sup>

Ellis was elected to an exhibition at St John's College, Oxford, on 11 June of that year, one of eight exhibitors supported by the Merchant Taylors' Company.<sup>25</sup> He matriculated on 27 June 1796, aged eighteen.<sup>26</sup> Clearly he had lost no time before exploring the manuscripts in the Inner Library of his college.

On the same day as he wrote this letter to Gough, we find Ellis writing to John Nichols about work done for him in the Bodleian. The letter was pasted at the back of Richard Gough's copy of James Bentham's *The History*

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*and Antiquities of the Conventual and Cathedral Church of Ely* (Cambridge, 1771):<sup>27</sup>

Dear Sir,

I have carefully collated the Leicester Abbey Catalogue with the original, & I hope it may render you satisfaction. I received the clean proofs &c. on Sunday morning last, & return you many thanks. I hope to be in London on September the 5th. Though perhaps you will before that time arrive in Oxford to the no small pleasure of

Yours to command,  
Henry Ellis

St John's

Aug. 12, 1796

P. S. Can I render you any further assistance? You know I am always ready. A parcel for Mr Gough accompanies this, Pray excuse haste.

[address:]

Mr Nichols

Red Lion Passage

Fleet Street,

London

This was the cover-note that accompanied his letter to Gough just quoted. The letter reveals in a concrete form the connexion between the three men: Ellis's parcel, sent to Gough via Nichols, must have reached its addressee, who communicated some of its contents to their mutual friend Mr Denne; and the brief letter to Nichols also ended up in Gough's hands, for otherwise it would not now be pasted into a volume owned by Gough. Neither letter specifies whether the parcel might also have contained this copy of Bentham's book, but it is tempting to think so.

Ellis refers to Bodl., MS. Laud Misc. 623, the late-fifteenth-century catalogue of the books owned by Leicester abbey, compiled in the 1490s by a canon named William Charite. Nichols was engaged on his huge work, *The History and Antiquities of the county of Leicester*, four volumes published in eight parts between 1795 and 1815. Behind it lay a number of essays relating to Leicester in his series, *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica* (1780–90). The two parts of volume one of *Leicester* are dated 1795; the second part of volume four did not appear until 1811, and the final index, addenda, and corrigenda in 1815. Nichols's own grangerized copy is now in the Leicestershire Record Office.<sup>28</sup> Gough's copy, naturally, is in the Bodleian, Gough Leicester 14–20. In 1796 Nichols was actually still drawing together the material to complete the second part of volume one; he had asked Samuel Denne for his help with the appendix on Leicester abbey. It appears that he had decided to print the medieval library catalogue, though he never saw it

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nor knew its true extent. Indeed, the work done for Nichols on this valuable document was a sorry business. It has been discussed by Alan Broadfield in his unpublished book on John Nichols.<sup>29</sup> Ellis's immediate role in this context had been mentioned a few days earlier in a letter from the Oxford antiquary, John Gutch, friend of Richard Gough, to Nichols, who said, '& [I] have compared your proof sheets of Leic. Abbey Lib. by the help of Mr Ellis, & now return them'.<sup>30</sup> Among the additions in volume i, pt 2, Appendix xvii, he prints charters and abstracts from the rental of Leicester abbey (pp. 53–108), drawing on Bodl., MS Laud Misc. 625, and a short extract from the fifteenth-century library catalogue (pp. 101–108). Of this he prints the table of authors (fols. 1<sup>r</sup>–3<sup>r</sup>) with extensive notes on the authors mentioned. Unattributed in the edition, these notes were mostly the work of Richard Gough.<sup>31</sup> Following this he prints in abstract the account of liturgical books and the concluding list of books procured by William Charite himself for the abbey (fols. 47<sup>r</sup>–51<sup>r</sup>). The catalogue has since then been printed entire on two occasions, so that students have no reason to consult Nichols for this.<sup>32</sup> Nichols had no great understanding of or interest in the books owned by the abbey, for in omitting the main catalogue, he comments, 'Many books are referred to some other arrangement; many have only 2 folia. The first words of some are given; and, after all our enquiries, many of the writers here enumerated must remain as unknown as they are uninteresting; and perhaps posterity has very little reason to regret the loss of the Library of Leicester Abbey'. Whether or not the transcript obtained by Gutch from William Cowderay, 'Mr Price's man' in the Bodleian, had been thoroughly defective, Gutch and Ellis in comparing the proofs with the manuscript appear satisfied with printing only a shadow of the catalogue and neither of them drew Nichols's attention to the deficiency of what he printed. Eighteen authors' names from the table are omitted from the printed text, which is disfigured by several gross misreadings.<sup>33</sup>

At Oxford Ellis continued to explore antiquities for himself and his patrons not only in the Bodleian Library but also in the field. He provided Gough with notes on the gravestones of members of the Willis family in both North and South Hinksey.<sup>34</sup> He published an account of Wytham (Berks.), just outside Oxford, in 1797, and around the same time he proposed an *Essay on the Antiquities of Oxfordshire* for submission to the college as the Founder's Exercise.<sup>35</sup> This work was not developed.

There is a swift decline in the extent of the preserved correspondence after the publication of *Shoreditch* towards the end of 1798. It continues to be triangular in character, as may be seen from a letter from Ellis to Nichols dated 20 June 1799, in which he expressed regret that neither Gough nor Nichols had attended the recent festivities in Oxford. Nichols marked the

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letter 'Read and return' and sent it to Gough, who wrote on it that he had not received notice of this expectation before sending the letter back to Nichols; what remains of the letter is now cut in two pieces in George Ashby's copy of the Leicestershire section of Thomas Cox's part-work, *Magna Britannia et Hibernia* (1720–31), formerly owned by Nichols and now apparently untraceable.<sup>36</sup> By then Ellis held a law fellowship at St John's, to which he was elected on 29 June 1797.<sup>37</sup> In 1799 and 1800 he also received exhibitions from the college. He would graduate as BCL in 1802, without first taking an Arts degree, but there is no sign that the practice of law attracted him. His first employment beyond his obligations to St John's was as a librarian. In Oxford Ellis had quickly come into contact with another friend of Richard Gough's, John Price (1735–1813), who had been Bodley's Librarian since 1768. A more recent holder of that office, David Vaisey, has written: 'His correspondence reproduced by Nichols shows in particular how much the bequest of Richard Gough's enormous topographical collection to the Bodleian owed to Price's careful cultivation of the benefactor'.<sup>38</sup> It was Gough's recommendation that led Price to appoint Ellis to an assistantship in the Bodleian Library, which was worth £15 per annum.<sup>39</sup>

In the early evidence considered here, we find much of Ellis's later work already foretold. He would spend several years studying Domesday Book, particularly between 1809 and 1813, when working on the introduction and indexes for the Record Commission.<sup>40</sup> It appears from Gough's first letter to him that he had made a proposal concerning it, and he quoted the text at several points in his *History of Shoreditch*. The treatment of Haliwell priory and of the medieval hospital of St Mary in Shoreditch anticipates his later work in updating Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum* using the revised editions of Tanner's *Notitia monastica* as a starting-point. And as in the *Monasticon* he transcribes charters in support of his histories. We even find him including a list of prioresses, admittedly provided by Gough. In his mature years he was drawn to letters as testimony to English history and the thoughts of eminent men. Already in the *History of Shoreditch*, he prints a letter from Arthur Bedford to Dr Arthur Charlett, whose correspondence had been bequeathed to the Bodleian by George Ballard in 1755. He must have been browsing this correspondence, since he can hardly have known to look for this particular letter for its relevance to Shoreditch.<sup>41</sup> Nichols had taken an interest in Ballard. Perhaps he had recommended Ellis to read the correspondence Ballard had preserved, for Nichols himself was someone who set a high value on the interest of letters. When *Shoreditch* was complete, Ellis wrote his acknowledgements, which are printed at the back of the book. Seven people are thanked: first is Richard Gough, to whom the book is dedicated; next come Samuel Denne and John Nichols; after

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them two librarians, Samuel Ayscough from the British Museum and John Price from the Bodleian; finally, two men who helped with the records in the Augmentation Office, George Limming and John Caley. The first three were his intellectual mentors, Price and Ayscough were to start him on his career as a librarian. He would later have much to do with Caley, secretary of the Record Commission, who would even put his name on Ellis's edition of Dugdale's *Monasticon*. Caley, like Ellis, had grown up in Bishopsgate.

This antiquarian training under Gough and Nichols brought its rewards. In July 1800 he was ready to leave the Bodleian and accept the position of extra assistant librarian in the department of manuscripts at the British Museum. The offer came from Samuel Ayscough, assistant librarian in the department of manuscripts since 1791, who had helped Ellis in his work on the history of Shoreditch. Ellis wrote to John Nichols on 11 July:<sup>42</sup>

When in town I forgot to inform you that I shall quit the Bodleian sometime in next month. Having changed my Gown, I am not confined by my Fellowship to constant residence in Oxford, and having in past formed an engagement with Mr Ayscough in the British Museum, to assist in arranging the Library there, upon terms far more advantageous than the Bodleian is ever likely to produce, I found an inclination, which Mr Price but reluctantly seconds, to quit my employment here. The reward of my services at BM during the hours it will be open (exclusive of the time allowed me to keep terms at Oxford) is to be 40£ per annum, which added to my Fellowship when not regularly resident will produce a clear income of at least 90£. While should I with constant residence retain the 15£ from the Bodleian, after my Battels were settled I should not receive more than 10£ from my Fellowship. Such are the considerations which induce me to relinquish the place Tom Hearne once occupied.<sup>43</sup>

He also kept a letter from Samuel Ayscough, though it is neither the offer of a position nor an introduction to the role; it is merely the acknowledgement that he might defer the commencement of his employment to 1 September.<sup>44</sup> Starting on £4 per month, Ellis's pay was increased to £60 per annum in January 1803 and to £80 per annum from May 1803.<sup>45</sup> On 27 March 1805 he succeeded Ayscough as assistant librarian on £120 per annum with additional pay for attendance in the library above two days per week. This promotion played a significant role in his decision to marry: he kept a note of the exact sequence of events from his new appointment to his marriage to Frances Frost on 5 December 1805, which necessitated the resignation of his fellowship.<sup>46</sup> With other sources of income, however, he was doing well enough. His notes on his early life tell us that in the year 1800, during which he moved to London in August, his income was £123; in 1805, when he began regular work for the Record Commission, it was £383 5s 7d, and in 1806, surprisingly, a little less, £374 12s 1½ d.<sup>47</sup> During

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the years 1803–6 his sporadic literary earnings amounted only to a total of £74 14s 6d.<sup>48</sup> Gough's legacy of £300 in 1809 was no doubt a material help, but it became payable only upon Mrs Gough's death, and by then Ellis had a career in the library.<sup>49</sup> Promotion came unexpectedly in the wake of a crisis: theft of prints from the Museum led to the dismissal of the keeper of printed books, William Beloe, and Ellis's promotion to his place. Ellis was notified of this in the postscript to an indiscreet letter from Taylor Combe, head of coins and medals, which Ellis preserved among his select letters; it was dated 12 July 1806, with the postscript added next day, before it was delivered to Ellis, elsewhere in the Museum.<sup>50</sup> On 14 July Ellis conveyed the news to Richard Gough, who replied 'with equal astonishment and pleasure at what has happened at the Museum', a letter which Ellis also kept among his select letters.<sup>51</sup> This exchange of letters was the first for some years, since in London they no doubt had many opportunities to meet. It closes with the last letter I have found from Ellis to Gough, dated 22 July 1806, acknowledging his debt to him and to Nichols:<sup>52</sup>

My dear Sir,

Your letter increases the obligations I am already under. Every thing that has of late years promoted my interest took its rise from Mr Nichols's and your patronage of the History of Shoreditch.

Mr Planta [*principal librarian at the Museum*] and Mr Price are, I assure you, not less pleased than yourself at my good fortune. The salary I suppose you know is more than £200 and the apartments are quite large enough for a family.

When you return from Warwickshire I will wait upon you with the Bond. Mrs Ellis joins me in best respects to Mrs Gough.

Believe me, Dear Sir,

With great gratitude,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

H. Ellis

B. Museum

July 22. 1806

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### APPENDIX

The sources for this table reflect the retention of letters by the recipient. (1) Letters received by Ellis are represented chiefly by a section of BL, Add. MS. 38626 (acquired in 1912), which begins with letters that had belonged to Gough and must have been given to Ellis (fols. 1–11); there is then a continuous series of letters from Gough and Denne, which tails off after 1798 (fols. 12–93). Many of the earliest letters have now discontinued numbers on them, which may reflect something of Ellis's archive in 1795–6. The remainder of the volume is made up of miscellaneous later letters to Ellis. The first letter in the table below was removed from the context of these early letters by Ellis himself and included in a collection of letters to him to which he attached particular importance, now BL, Add. MS. 41312, the first of ten volumes of papers given to the library by Ellis's grandson, H. J. Ellis. Similarly the letter from Ayscough confirming his appointment to the British Museum was kept by Ellis among his small collection of early life-records in BL, Add. MS. 42506, the last of these ten volumes. (2) Letters from Ellis to Gough are not among the series of Gough's select correspondence, now Bodl. MSS. Gough gen. top. 39–47 (SC 47260–68) (acquired 1947–55). Some letters are found in printed books that belonged to Gough. Otherwise the main source is BL, Add. MS. 36987 (acquired in 1904), in which letters from Ellis to Gough have been combined with letters from Ellis to John Nichols, John Bowyer Nichols, and John Gough Nichols; this collection may have been brought together by the last, who transferred Ellis's letters to Gough from Gough's archive, which had passed to John Nichols in 1809. Where there is no address on the letter, the addressee is identified in square brackets on internal evidence. Some letters have been separated from the collection because they circulated as specimens of Ellis's autograph; the two strays from 1797, as it happens, both concern inscriptions from the graves of members of the Willis family in North and South Hinksey, near Oxford. Many letters from Ellis to Gough are marked 'Ellis' at the top left hand corner; the hand resembles Gough's but is surely Nichols's: a letter from Ellis to Samuel Bentley (1785–1868) is marked in the same way, which was never in Gough's hands but was in Nichols's, since Bentley was his nephew and lodged with him in Red Lion Passage at the time (Bodl., MS. Eng. lett. d. 111, fol. 86). Letters from Ellis to Gough earlier than August 1796 may be presumed not to have been found. Some letters from Ellis to Nichols are found in the same gathering, but others, even of this early period, are found elsewhere. The absence of any letters from Nichols to Ellis suggests that Ellis did not retain them.

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	Date	Writer and addressee	Reference
1 §	18 Sept 1795	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 41312, fol. 1 (no. 2)
2 §	22 October 1795	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 12 (no. 4)
3 §	12 November 1795	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis (via Nichols)	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 14 (no. 7)
4	27 November 1795	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 16 (no. 8)
5	[December 1795] <sup>§3</sup>	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 18 (no. 9)
6	7 January 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 20 (no. 10)
7	28 January 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 22 (no. 15)
8	13 February 1796	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 24 (no. 18)
9	17 February 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 26
10	25 February 1796	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 29 (no. 22)
11	1 March 1796	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 31 (no. 23)
12	12 May 1796	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	Bodl. Gough Middx 35 (4)
13	17 May 1796	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	Bodl. Gough Middx 35 (5)
14	19 June 1796	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	Bodl. Gough Middx 35 (8)
15	23 June 1796	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 33 (no. 30)
16	3 August 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 35 (no. 34)
17 §	12 August 1796	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	Bodl. Gough Cambs. 100
18 §	12 August 1796	Henry Ellis to [Gough] (via Nichols)	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 1
19	15 August 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 37 (no. 32)
20	12 September 1796	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	Rutgers 86-540 (N 5197)
21	15 October 1796	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 39
22	17 December 1796	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 2
23	18 December 1796 (a)	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 4
24	18 December 1796 (b)	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 6
25	29 December 1796	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 40
26	5 January 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 42

§ = Nichols Archive Database

§ = printed above

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27	24 January 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 44
28	12 February 1797	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 8
29	[February 1797] <sup>54</sup>	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 93
30	13 March 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 46
31	14 March 1797	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 10
32	16 April 1797	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	Rutgers 86-540 (N5159)
33	22 April 1797 (a)	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	Bodl. MS. Don. d. 88, fol. 26
34	22 April 1797 (b)	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 12
35	5 May 1797	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 48
36	12 May 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 50
37	27 May 1797	Henry Ellis to [Richard Gough]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 14
38	20 June 1797	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 52
39	7 August 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 54
40	10 August 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 55
41	28 August 1797	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 57
42	7 September 1797	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 15
43	9 September 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 59
44	12 September 1797	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 61
45	26 September 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 63
46	18 December 1797	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	Bodl. MS. Eng. lett. d. 1111, fol. 82
47	19 December 1797	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 65
48	31 December 1797	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 67
49	1 January 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 69
50	4 January 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 71
51	15 February 1798	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 73
52	17 February 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 75
53	13 March 1798	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 17
54	27 March 1798	Henry Ellis to [John Nichols]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 19
55	29 March 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 77
56	8 June 1798	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 20

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57	22 June 1798	Henry Ellis to [Richard Gough]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 22
58	29 June 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 79
59	[July 1798]§5	Henry Ellis to [John Nichols]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 26
60	26 July 1798	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 81
61	27 July 1798	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 24
62	3 August 1798	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	Rutgers 86-540 (N5363)
63	29 August 1798	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 83
64	9 September 1798	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 85
65	4 October 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 87
66	28 October 1798	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 88
67	3 November 1798	Samuel Denne to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 90
		<i>History of Shoreditch</i> is published	
68	[November 1798?] <sup>§6</sup>	Henry Ellis to [Richard Gough]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 29
69	5 January 1799	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 92
70	16 February 1799	Henry Ellis to [John Nichols]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 27
71	16 February 1799	Henry Ellis to [Richard Gough]	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 28
72	20 June 1799	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	see above, p. 199 and n. 36
73	6 March 1800	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 30
74	6 March 1800	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 32
75	11 July 1800	Henry Ellis to John Nichols	BL.Add. MS. 36987, fol. 34
76	12 July 1800	Samuel Ayscough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 42506, fol. 100
		Ellis takes up a position at the British Museum	
77	1 January 1801	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 39687, fol. 36
78	12 January 1802	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 39687, fol. 38
79	28 January 1806	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 38626, fol. 95
80	14 July 1806	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 39687, fol. 40
81	17 July 1806	Richard Gough to Henry Ellis	BL.Add. MS. 41312, fol. 14
82 §	22 July 1806	Henry Ellis to Richard Gough	BL.Add. MS. 39687, fol. 41
		§ = printed above	
		N = Nichols Archive Database	

## Bodleian Library Record

\* I am grateful to Julian Pooley for his comments on this paper and his directions concerning Nichols material.

<sup>1</sup> Ellis is remembered in histories of the British Museum, particularly that by Edward Edwards, who knew him for thirty years from 1839 to 1869; *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* (London, 1870), pp. 528–41. His entry in the *DNB* was written by Richard Garnett, then an assistant keeper in the department of printed books at the British Museum; Michael Borrie, of the department of manuscripts in the British Library, contributed his entry in *ODNB*.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Correspondence 1795–1860’ in BL, Add. MS. 38626, fols. 12–211; ‘general correspondence 1795–1866’ in BL, Add. MS. 41312. The library also holds his autobiographical memoranda, BL, Add. MS. 42506, among which are several portraits; the earliest and most engaging dates from 1813 (fol. 15). For other correspondence, most of it from after 1820, see *Papers of British Antiquarians and Historians*, Guides to Sources for British History 12 (London, 2003), 63–4, and the sources cited by Borrie in *ODNB*.

<sup>3</sup> H. Ellis, *Gentleman’s Magazine* 63 (1793), 712, accompanying drawings of the font and of a carving in the porch of Netteswell church, Essex, done in 1792. The note is dated at Primrose Yard, 30 June 1793. On his schooling see his own notes, BL, Add. MS. 42506, fols. 90<sup>r</sup>–91<sup>v</sup>, 93<sup>r</sup>–<sup>v</sup>. He had a high regard for Samuel Bishop (1731–1795), MA, St John’s College, Oxford, and rector of St Martin Outwich, who died in 1795 and was succeeded as master by Thomas Cherry; the young Ellis wrote an unsigned obituary in *Gentleman’s Magazine* 65 (1795), 972–3. Ellis has left a list of his earliest publications, nearly eighty of them, mostly in various magazines, between 1793 and 1804 (BL, Add. MS. 42506, fols. 102–5). He published a longer note on Netteswell church, written in 1794, in *Gentleman’s Magazine* 66 (1796), 380–3.

<sup>4</sup> Bodl., Gough Middlesex 35 (1). The British Library has Ellis’s own copy, shelf-mark 577. h. 17(2), which is bound with a copy of a 28-page pamphlet, *The Following Register of Benefactions to the parish of St Leonard, Shoreditch, Middlesex, was collected and composed by the Rev. Dr John Denne . . . in the year 1745* (London: Thomas Holt, 1777), with manuscript notes by Henry Ellis. Gough too had a copy of this pamphlet, now Bodl., Gough Middlesex 35 (14). Much of it is repeated by Ellis, *Shoreditch*, pp. 243–80, with additions by Ellis, pp. 281–9.

<sup>5</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fols. 93<sup>r</sup>–94<sup>v</sup>, bound among other items from Ellis’s youth.

<sup>6</sup> BL, Add. MS. 41312, fol. 1, the only one of Gough’s letters to be included in this select group of letters. It has the number 2 on it, which connects with the numbering on other early letters to Ellis in BL, Add. MS. 36987. One can only wonder what letter was numbered 1; it was presumably not a letter from Gough.

<sup>7</sup> The printed letter of thanks, dated 5 June 1795, is a folded sheet, now BL, Add. MS. 42506, fols. 97–8. Add. MS. 5663 is a short work in Latin on Hebrew expressions and syntax calqued in the Greek text of the New Testament, presented to Henry VIII at Christmas 1544, by the author, Thomas Wakefield (d. 1575), regius professor of Hebrew at Cambridge since 1540. Ellis inserted a note on the author and his brother Richard Wakefield. In keeping the letter of thanks he also wrote a note on its blank side which shows that he recognized from its author’s preface and from the Henry VIII binding that it had belonged to the Royal Library, ‘and was supposed to have been stolen thence at the time of the grand rebellion. I purchased <it> at Mr Luckington’s (in whose shop I found it lying amongst the waste paper) for eightence pence. I presented it to the British Museum (Royal Library) at the time of my making application for the use of the Library there whilst collecting materials for the History of Shoreditch (March 1795)’ (Add. MS. 42506, fol. 98<sup>r</sup>). It had been in private hands since the sixteenth century to judge from the hand that wrote ‘The price

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ij<sup>s</sup> vj<sup>d</sup> on the first leaf. The Museum replaced the Henrician binding, which is now lost. This is one of more than 1,600 manuscripts accessioned between 1783 and 1828 for which no description has been published, a fact which may account for the want of mention in the entry on Wakefield in *ODNB* (2004). Ellis himself set to work on such a catalogue in 1817, between finishing work on the Lansdowne catalogue and starting on the Burney catalogue (P. R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library 1753–1973* (London, 1998), pp. 49–50, 82). The catalogue progressed until 1821, covering Add. MSS. 5018–6665, but when Frederic Madden became head of manuscripts he ‘personally rewrote all Ellis’s descriptions’ for a new catalogue covering Add. MSS. 5018–7079 (T. C. Skeat, *The Catalogues of the Manuscript Collections in the British Museum* (London, 1951), p. 5). Madden’s version is available in the Manuscripts Room.

<sup>8</sup> BL, Add. MS. 38626, no. 4, fol. 12. On Balmes House, see *Shoreditch*, p. 126; the portrait in question shows Nathaniel Balms aged 37 in 1543. He was supposed to be Spanish, and Ellis dated the house to c.1540. The tapestries depicting scenes from *Don Quixote* continue to be mentioned. The house had been rebuilt by Sir George Whitmore in 1631.

<sup>9</sup> The reference is to Edward Rowe Mores (1730–1778), whose annotated copy of the 1744 edition of Tanner’s *Notitia monastica* is now Bodl., Gough Eccl. Top. 86 (SC 17704). These particulars are entered in Mores’s hand in the margin at p. 306; to which Gough added – presumably at a later date – the name of ‘Eliz. Prudde 1474’. Gough bought a good deal at the Mores sale in 1779. Compare Ellis to Gough, dated 18 December 1797, ‘I should be glad to use Mr More’s Collections for Godstow Nunnery MSS which from the British Topography I learn are <in> your library’ (Bodl., MS. Eng. lett. d. 111, fols. 82–3); this refers to Gough’s *British Topography* (London, 1780), ii, 173\*, ‘Mr Mores’ MS collections for a history of Godstow, with a view of it, engraved by Green, are in my hands’; now Bodl., MS. Gough Oxon. 18. Gough owned six copies of the original 1695 edition of *Notitia Monastica* with notes by different antiquaries as well as two copies of the 1744 edition and one of the 1787 edition.

<sup>10</sup> Nichols himself says, ‘The part of the survey which relates to Dorsetshire was prefixed to Mr Hutchins’s excellent History of that county in the same types’ [as the 1783 edition] (*Leicestershire*, vol. i, pt 1, p. xxxvii). A letter from Richard Gough to William Cuming, dated at Enfield, 30 August 1773, concerning the printing of Hutchins’s work, already refers to Nichols’s plan to print the account of Dorset from Domesday Book ‘in his type’, evidence that the fount was already in hand (Bodl., MS. Top. gen. c. 8, fol. 194; quoted by A. H. Smith, ‘John Nichols and Hutchins’s *History and Antiquities of Dorset*’, *The Library* 5th ser. 15 (1960), 81–95 (at p. 88), which is based on the extensive correspondence between Hutchins’s editor William Cuming and his adviser Richard Gough). The investment in the new type was made for Domesday Book, not for Hutchins; G. H. Martin is in error in his article, ‘Farley, Abraham (1712–1791)’, *ODNB* (2004), saying that Farley and his rival Charles Morton were ‘able to agree in 1774 on the use of a record type designed by John Nichols for texts in John Hutchins’s *History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset* and refined by Nichols and his apprentice Vincent Figgins’. Joseph Jackson (1733–1792) was the type-founder who made the punches for Domesday Book, as we learn from Nichols, ‘types, which the editor of this work had the honour to project and the late Mr Joseph Jackson the skill to execute’ (*Leicestershire*, vol. i, pt 1, p. xxxvii). Vincent Figgins (1766–1844) would serve his apprenticeship with Jackson, but he was far too young to be involved in making the type for Domesday Book.

<sup>11</sup> Ellis’s note on the first entry under Middlesex (*DB*, i. 127ra) is in *Gentleman’s Magazine* 66 (1796), 292. Ellis, *Shoreditch*, pp. 96, 119, 151, 304. Nichols also used the record type for Domesday in his own *Leicestershire*, i, pt 1, pp. i–xxx.

<sup>12</sup> BL, Add. MS. 38626, no. 7, fol. 15; the enclosed notes are now fol. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Bodl., Gough Middlesex 35 (4).

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<sup>14</sup> John Rose (1754–1821), MA, St John's College, Oxford, undermaster at Merchant Taylors' School from 1779 and rector of St Martin Outwich from 1795.

<sup>15</sup> St Martin Outwich, at the corner of Bishopsgate and Threadneedle Street, was rebuilt during 1796–8; Ellis refers to an event little more than a week earlier. In January 1797 there was published by Robert Wilkinson, *Antique Remains from the parish church of St Martin Outwich, London*, and Ellis published additional notes from Harleian manuscripts, *Gentleman's Magazine* 67 (1797), 464 (signed 'E. H.'). Ellis's elder brother, the Revd John Joseph Ellis (d. 1855), would become its rector in 1821. The new church was demolished in 1874 and its parish joined to that of St Helen's Bishopsgate, of which the Merchant Taylors' Company was also patron.

<sup>16</sup> Ellis, *Shoreditch*, pp. 32–3, gives the impression that Denne continued to hold the vicarage of Shoreditch during the whole time that he was vicar of St Margaret's, Rochester (1728–31) and rector of Lambeth (1731–67). In Denne's time St Leonard's church, Shoreditch, was taken down and rebuilt to the design of George Dance (*Shoreditch*, pp. 8–9). Ellis includes depictions of the old church in 1735 and the new one in 1740.

<sup>17</sup> R. H. Sweet, 'Denne, Samuel (1730–1799)', *ODNB* (2004). It was Ellis who wrote the unsigned obituary of Denne in *Gentleman's Magazine* 69 (1799), 722–3.

<sup>18</sup> This volume contains scores of letters dated between 1783 and 1799; 115 letters were printed, in full or in part, by J. B. Nichols in *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1817–58), vi, 609–787, who marked up the copy in pencil; it is one of nine volumes of Gough's select correspondence long retained by the Nichols family and sold only in 1874. Ellis's letters to Gough were not kept together in this manner.

<sup>19</sup> 'On Sunday I received from Mr Nichols a proof of your Shoreditch History, which I revised in the evening and left directions that it should be returned by Monday's post' (Denne to Ellis, 23 June 1796, BL, Add. MS. 38626, fol. 33).

<sup>20</sup> 'An Examination of an Inscription on a Barn in Kent; the Mantle Tree in the Parsonage House at Helmdon in Northamptonshire, as described by the Professors Wallis and Ward, revised; and Queries and Remarks on the general Use of Arabic Numerals in England. In a letter from the Rev. Samuel Denne, FAS, to Richard Gough, Esq.', dated 22 November 1796, *Archaeologia* 13 (1800), 107–40, with additional remarks, dated 25 March 1797, pp. 141–68.

<sup>21</sup> *Archaeologia* 13, p. 149. In a private letter, Samuel Denne to Richard Gough, dated at Wilmington, 10 February 1797, Denne refers to Ellis as 'the juvenile antiquary of St John's College, Oxon' and mentions that he has asked him to look out for Arabic numerals 'upon the shelves and in the boxes of the bursar's rooms in some of the principal colleges' (Bodl., MS. Gough gen. top. 39, fol. 153; Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, vi, 689).

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Denne to Richard Gough, dated at Wilmington, 22 August 1796: 'Mssrs Ord, Ellis, and yourself have a claim to my thanks for the notes concerning Arabic Numerals communicated in your letter of the 17th curr.' (Bodl., MS. Gough gen. top. 39, fol. 123; Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, vi, 677, no. 52).

<sup>23</sup> BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 1. Months later Denne was writing to Ellis about Arabic numerals in two letters dated 24 January and 13 March 1797 (BL, Add. MS. 38626, fols. 44, 46).

<sup>24</sup> Ellis deliberately imitated the numerals as written and also reproduced the conventional abbreviations. The inscription reads: 'Liber quondam Magistri Thome Eyburhale datus Magistro Roberto Elyot Anno domini 1471 Ad terminum vite sic quod non uendatur sed post mortem eius detur alteri uolenti predicare. Orate igitur pro anima eius' ('This book, formerly owned by Mr Thomas Eborall, was given to Mr Robert Elyot AD 1471 for the term of his life upon condition that it shall not be sold but shall be given to someone else willing to preach. Therefore pray for his soul'. Thomas Eborall was Master of Whittington College in London from 1444 until 1464 and thereafter rector of All Hallows, Honey Lane,

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London, until his death in 1471 (A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to AD 1500* (Oxford, 1957–9), i, 622–3, where other books once owned by him are noted). Robert Elyot relinquished a benefice in Buckinghamshire no later than August 1471 and was admitted fellow of Eton College, where he remained till his death in 1498 (*ibid.* p. 638). A printed bible, Venice 1481 (*GW* 4286), now in Brasenose College library, S. 1. 38, was given by Elyot to John Davies on a similar condition that it be passed on as a gift from scholar to scholar in memory of him.

<sup>25</sup> He preserved the printed notice of the elections (BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 95) and includes the date in his notes on his early life (fol. 91<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>26</sup> He kept the certificate signed by the Vice-Chancellor (BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 96).

<sup>27</sup> Bodl., Gough Cambridge 100.

<sup>28</sup> Described in detail by Broadfield, pp. 893–918.

<sup>29</sup> A. A. A. Broadfield, 'John Nichols as historian and friend' (written 1974–83; deposited in Oxford, New College, RS 3717–3721), pp. 811–15.

<sup>30</sup> John Gutch to John Nichols, dated 4 August 1796 (Bodl., MS. Eng. lett. b. 11, fol. 116). This is one of a small batch of letters from Gutch among a series of letterbooks relating to Nichols's editorial work, described under *Summary Catalogue* 40490–517. Two previous letters (fols. 112, 114) from 1792–3 show that Gutch had helped obtain for Nichols a copy of the Leicester abbey rental, written by the same compiler as the library catalogue, William Charite, and also in the Bodleian, Bodl., MS. Laud Misc. 625.

<sup>31</sup> So identified in John Strutt's index to the first volume, *Leicestershire*, vol. 1, pt 2, General Index, p. 66, s.v. *Library of Leicester abbey* ('with Mr Gough's illustrations and biographical notices of the chief writers'). Gough's first person is only altered to his name when he refers to a book in his possession. One note initialled 'S. D.' (p. 102 n. 15) was provided by Samuel Denne.

<sup>32</sup> M. R. James [1862–1936], *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society* 19 (1936–7), 118–61, 378–440, and 21 (1939–41), 1–88. A new, annotated edition by Dr Teresa Webber was published in T. Webber & A. G. Watson, *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons*, Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues 6 (London, 1998), 104–400; the parts printed in abstract by Nichols can be found here at pp. 109–20 and 389–99.

<sup>33</sup> First observed by M. V. Clarke, 'Henry Knighton and the library catalogue of Leicester abbey', *English Historical Review* 45 (1930), 103–7, who illustrates 'how completely Nichols misunderstood or misrepresented the catalogue'. She was unaware that he had never seen the manuscript. She found it 'almost incredible' that he was so obviously unfamiliar with the convention of identifying a particular book by the first word or two of the second leaf ('2<sup>o</sup> fo'), which he 'hilariously misperceived' (D. Williman & K. Corsano, 'Tracing provenances by *dictio probatoria*', *Scriptorium* 53 (1999), 124–45, at p. 128) as indicating that books had only two leaves.

<sup>34</sup> Both these letters were separated from the main series and are now Bodl., MS. Don. d. 88, fol. 26 (22 April 1797) and Bodl., MS. Eng. lett. d. 111, fol. 82 (18 December 1797).

<sup>35</sup> The piece on Wytham, dated at Oxford, 27 March 1797, was printed in *Gentleman's Magazine* 67 (1797), 651–4. It was the topic of a letter to Richard Gough on 14 March (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 10). An outline of the intended Essay was sent to Gough on 27 May 1797 (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 14).

<sup>36</sup> Broadfield, 'John Nichols as historian an friend', p. 922. Broadfield, who was local studies librarian in Leicester, refers to the book as 'now at Leicester'. It cannot be identified with any of the eight copies in the local studies library, now at the Record Office, nor the two copies in the University Library. Compare a slightly later letter, Ellis to Nichols, dated 11 July 1800, marked by Nichols at the top 'Return this' (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 34).

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<sup>37</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 92<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> D. G. Vaisey, 'Price, John (1735–1813)', *ODNB* (2004). The correspondence of Price with Gough and Nichols (1771–1811) was printed in *Literary Illustrations*, v, 514–61 (from manuscripts no longer in series). As Nichols himself remarked, 'To his assiduous applications and marked attentions to Mr Gough, with whom he was a frequent correspondent and by whom he was greatly respected, it is in a great measure owing that the Bodleian Library can boast of the most extensive and perfect collection of British Topography that any library can produce' (*Literary Illustrations*, vi, 475).

<sup>39</sup> The date of his appointment is unclear owing to contradictory statements by Ellis himself. Garnett in *DNB*, followed by Borrie in *ODNB*, gives the year of his appointment as 1798; his source was evidently W. D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian* (Oxford, 1868; 2nd edn, 1890), pp. 278–9, where Macray indicates that he had the year 1798 from Ellis himself by letter in 1868 (when Ellis was over 90); the letter also mentioned that he shared the role with H. H. Baber who was his senior in appointment by a year or two. This date is corroborated by a letter to Gough, dated 13 March 1798: 'The appointment at the Bodleian is not to take place these six weeks. It is one of the assistant librarianships. At the time Spooner wrote to you I had by Mr Price's direction applied to the Governing part of the society to know what days each week I might be allowed wholly to appropriate to the Bodleian' (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 17). In two summaries of his early career, written around 1810, Ellis himself says, 'Toward the close of the year 1796 (having been introduced to Mr Price, the Keeper of the Bodleian Library, by Mr Gough at my first entrance) I received the appointment of one of the assistant librarianships of the Bodleian. The office was worth but £15 a year, but the opportunities it gave of increasing my stock of knowledge were far more than adequate to a much larger recompense' (BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 93<sup>r</sup>); 'After Christmas 1796 I became one of the underlibrarians in the Bodleian and in June of the following year was admitted to a Law-fellowship at St John's' (fol. 87<sup>r</sup>). Library records shed no light on the matter.

<sup>40</sup> Ellis's papers and correspondence relating to this work are now BL, Add. MSS. 38514–15. In the preface to the octavo reprint of the 1816 Record Commission edition, Ellis states himself that the introduction was written in 1813 (H. Ellis, *A General Introduction to Domesday Book* (London, 1833), i, p. iii). He continued to take an interest in the subject over succeeding years.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur Bedford to Dr Arthur Charlett, dated at Newton St Loe, 11 December 1719, from Bodl., MS. Ballard 34, fol. 111, in Ellis, *Shoreditch*, pp. 143–6. We learn from a letter of Samuel Denne to Richard Gough, dated at Wilmington, 7 August 1797 (Bodl., MS. Gough gen. top. 39, fol. 179<sup>v</sup>; Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, vi, 709), that Ellis was approaching Ballard's forty-four volumes of letters via an index.

<sup>42</sup> BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 34.

<sup>43</sup> It is noteworthy that he should refer to Thomas Hearne in this sentimental manner. While working in the Bodleian he had published a piece that included letters of Thomas Tanner and William Brome about Hearne's death in 1735, together with remarks that show he had read enough of Hearne to know his man, *Gentleman's Magazine* 69 (1799), 271–2.

<sup>44</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 100.

<sup>45</sup> These figures, based on library records, are taken from Harris, *History of the British Museum Library*, p. 60.

<sup>46</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 18. This does not mention the resignation of his fellowship on 4 December 1805 (for which see fol. 107<sup>r</sup>); among his selection of significant letters he kept the letter of acceptance and congratulation from the President of St John's, dated 6 December 1805 (BL, Add. MS. 41312, fol. 9). We learn elsewhere that he had first met Miss Frost on 10 April 1802 (BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 92<sup>r</sup>).

<sup>47</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 110; figures for 1801–4 also at fol. 92<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>48</sup> BL, Add. MS. 42506, fol. 106.

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<sup>49</sup> Ellis of course kept the letter from one of Gough's executors, James Hall (BL, Add. MS. 41312, fol. 16); neither *DNB* nor *ODNB* reveals how long Mrs Gough survived.

<sup>50</sup> Combe to Ellis, 12 July 1806 (BL, Add. MS. 41312, fol. 13).

<sup>51</sup> Ellis to Gough, 14 July 1806 (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 40); Gough to Ellis, dated 17 July 1806 (BL, Add. MS. 41312, fol. 14).

<sup>52</sup> Ellis to Gough, 22 July 1806 (BL, Add. MS. 36987, fol. 41). Ellis's salary was £200 per annum plus £50 p.a. for each additional day of regular attendance, rising to £75 for each day in 1813, when Ellis was serving two additional days per week (Harris, *History of the British Museum Library*, p. 63).

<sup>53</sup> Undated but Ellis dated its receipt, 23 December 1795; hence it was correctly placed in sequence.

<sup>54</sup> Undated and out of sequence. It acknowledges Ellis's letter of the 12th inst., and on content that is likely to be the letter of 12 February 1797.

<sup>55</sup> Undated, but somehow in sequence. Ellis refers to Lady Harcourt's 'presenting us with our colours' last Thursday and Mr Blackstone's sermon on the occasion, which was to be published. This leads us to the date: *A sermon, preached before the Oxford University volunteers, at the presentation of their colours by the Right Hon. the Countess Harcourt, on Thursday, July 5, 1798. By the Rev. C. Blackstone, AM, Fellow of New College* (Oxford: sold by J. Cooke; and by Mssrs Rivington, London, 1798). The letter was written within a week following.

<sup>56</sup> Undated and out of sequence. Ellis is 'glad to hear Mr Browne is so active at St Albans', which forms a link with Gough's letter of 28 October 1798, in which he writes about helping Mr Browne move from Newington to St Albans. The letter is evidently later than the publication of *Shoreditch*, for Ellis has had communication from Samuel Ayscough about a mistake, and Ellis wishes that Ayscough had brought this to his attention earlier, when he had sight of proofs.