

# The Nichols Archive Project and its Value for Leicester Historians

*by Julian Pooley*

This article examines the personal and business papers that were accumulated by John Nichols and his successors between c.1770 and 1873. As historian of Leicestershire, Nichols established strong ties with the county that were maintained by his family. The many references to Leicestershire in their letters and travel journals will be of considerable interest to local historians and archaeologists. Although thousands of Nichols papers are held by repositories around the world, thousands more survive in private collections. The Nichols Archive Project aims to prepare an analytical guide to this important archive of printing and antiquarian history.

## Introduction

On the 10 June 1766 William Bowyer (1699-1777), master of one of London's largest printing houses, received an unwelcome letter from a young man who, barely two months earlier, he had taken into partnership. He had taken the boy as an apprentice in 1757, trained him carefully for the printing trade, set him Latin exercises, introduced him to authors whose works were passing through their press and entrusted him with delicate business negotiations. Now his hopes that the young man would devote himself to their business and, perhaps, one day inherit it, seemed to be in jeopardy. The young man, John Nichols (1745-1826), was in love with the daughter of a tailor from Little Wyld Street and clearly meant to marry her,

'In short, Sir, you cannot but have observed of late Absence of Mind in a person you once (not without reason) thought *alert*. You must have *seen* a Remissness in my Behaviour; and eager Desire of *retreating* from Business at every Leisure Minute. [...] To deal openly with you I *love*, love with *my Eyes open* and *must* marry. In the first Rise of my passion I acquainted you with the most material of the Measures I had taken. -You disapproved. -I strove to comply [...] Pity me, but spare your blame'.<sup>1</sup>

Nichols had been seeing the young lady, Anne Cradock, for some time. A year earlier he had confessed his infatuation to his schoolfriend, William Tooke (1744-1820), and expressed concern about his career prospects,

<sup>1</sup> Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York, Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, 1713-1874, John Nichols to William Bowyer, 10 June 1766. The 1,064 items in this collection have not been catalogued to item level but a microfilm of them is held by the Bodleian Library, Oxford, as Bodl. MS Film 1529/1-3. This letter is on film 1529/1.

'I have at last met with the Girl who answers *all* my expectations [...] I begin to be very serious! No frolics to the *Garden* now, no breaking Glasses nor battering enfeebled Watchmen! [...] But consider my *Uncertainties*. Entirely a *dependant!* [...] Think how ill I should brook the situation of Journeyman *printer*, the most despicable drudge in the universe. No hopes of promotion. In youth a slave to the spare-box for a moderate subsistence; in age, the scoff of the profligate and the pity of the benevolent. From this situation, my Friend, we may hartily [sic] pray "Good Lord, deliver us!" '2

Although Bowyer complained, he and Nichols weathered their storm and, when he died in 1777, John Nichols inherited his business and its lucrative printing contracts. As well as printing for the House of Lords, House of Commons and undertaking regular work for the Stationers' Company, the Bowyer press had been appointed printer to the Society of Antiquaries in 1736, the Society for the Encouragement of Learning in the 1740s and the Royal Society in 1761.<sup>3</sup> Beyond these contracts, Nichols also inherited many of the literary friendships that his former master and partner had cultivated through printing works of literature and history for private gentlemen.<sup>4</sup> Bowyer had trained his apprentice well and Nichols' own business acumen, which was to be inherited by his son and grandson, ensured that the business prospered until its closure in 1939. His marriage to Anne Cradock, which took place on 22 June 1766 in St Giles in the Fields, proved to be equally successful. She was the only daughter and heiress of William Cradock, a tailor in London but descended from a Leicestershire family and related to the Onebye family of Barwell in Leicestershire. Anne Cradock died in 1776 but, in 1778, Nichols married again, to Martha Green of Hinckley. John Nichols visited his relations in Leicestershire regularly and it can be argued that the magisterial eight-volume history of the county that he eventually published between 1795 and 1815 developed from these family ties with Leicestershire as much as it did from his own acquisition of the manuscript materials collected by William Burton, Francis Peck and Richard Farmer.<sup>5</sup> But the involvement of the Nichols family of printers and antiquaries with the county did not end with the publication of the final volume of the county history in 1815. The ties of kinship and friendship established by John Nichols were maintained by his family throughout the nineteenth century. Their visits to relations in Leicestershire, friendships with county gentry, clergy and antiquaries, business associations with local printers and booksellers and their own,

<sup>2</sup> Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York, Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, 1713-1874, John Nichols to William Tooke, August 1765, Bodl. MS Film 1529/1. William Tooke (1744-1820) had attended the school of John Shield in Islington with John Nichols. In 1771 he became chaplain of the English church at Cronstadt. *His History of Russia from the Foundation of the Monarchy by Rurik to the Accession of Catherine II* 2 vols 1800 was one of several books that he wrote about the country. He also edited the *New and General Biographical Dictionary* in 1798. For further details, see his entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* 22 vols, Oxford, 1885-1900 [hereafter, DNB] and John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* [hereafter, *Literary Anecdotes*] IX 1814, 168-180.

<sup>3</sup> Keith Maslen and John Lancaster, eds., *The Bowyer Ledgers* London: The Bibliographical Society, 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Keith Maslen, 'Printing for the Author: from the Bowyer printing ledgers, 1710-1775', *The Library* 5th Ser., 27 (1972), pp. 302-309.

<sup>5</sup> For further discussion on John Nichols, *History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* 8 vols, London, 1795-1815, see Jack Simmons, ed., *English County Historians* Wakefield: EP Publishing, 1978, pp. 11-12; Charles Phythian-Adams, 'Leicestershire and Rutland' in Christopher R. J. Currie and Christopher P. Lewis (eds), *English County Histories. A Guide* Stroud, 1994, pp. 230-235, A H Broadfield, 'John Nichols as Historian and Friend. Suum Cuique' MS copies in Leicester University Library and at LLRRO and, most recently, Rosemary Sweet, 'John Nichols as Historian of Leicestershire' *Transactions of Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 74 (2000), pp. 1-20.



1. John Bowyer Nichols, c. 1815. Undated miniature by an anonymous artist. Private Collection.  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*

personal research interests can all be traced through their surviving letters, journals and collected papers, now scattered among over fifty libraries and archives and at least ten private collections.<sup>6</sup> In the course of this article I will briefly trace the course of the accumulation of the Nichols archive between the time of John Nichols and the death of his grandson, John Gough Nichols in 1873 and show how it can be used to supplement their published works. The Nichols Archive Project aims to provide an analytical guide

<sup>6</sup> For a location register of public repositories holding papers of the Nichols family, see Julian Pooley, 'The Papers of the Nichols Family and Business: New Discoveries and the Work of the Nichols Archive Project' *The Library* Seventh Series 2.1 (March 2001) pp. 10-52. For a list of private collections of Nichols papers, see below, Appendix 1. I am very grateful to the owners of the private collections for their interest in and support for my work.

to these papers, making them accessible to scholars interested in the full range of the Nicholsons' printing and research achievements. As we shall see, their papers are also a rich source for Leicestershire historians.<sup>7</sup>

### Accumulation and Dispersal of the Archive

John Nicholsons' printing business and editorial skills were inherited by his son, John Bowyer Nicholsons (1779-1863), (illustration 1) who supervised the publication of many other county histories printed by their press, assisted his father in his encyclopædic *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, 9 vols (1812-1815)<sup>8</sup> and completed its sequel, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* 8 vols, (1817-1858). His grandson, John Gough Nicholsons (1806-1873), also wrote and edited many important books and journals relating to English topography, genealogy and heraldry.<sup>9</sup> Their business and research interests and their successive editorship of the *Gentleman's Magazine* involved each of these men in a wide correspondence to which they added through their own purchase and collection of literary manuscripts. The largest collection of Nicholsons papers in the UK is held by the Bodleian Library, whose association with the Nicholsons can be traced to 1809 when, as executor of the will of Richard Gough (1735-1809), John Nicholsons oversaw the bequest of his large and important topographical collections to the Library.<sup>10</sup> As these papers included much of Gough's correspondence with other leading antiquaries of his day, with whom Nicholsons also collaborated and for many of whom he printed, the Bodleian Library has continued to acquire the papers of John Nicholsons and his successors. Like the other large Nicholsons collections in the UK, at the British Library and the John Rylands Library at the University of Manchester, the Nicholsons papers at the Bodleian have often been acquired piecemeal through dealers as a result of sales of the Nicholsons papers by Sotheby's between the death of John Gough Nicholsons in 1873 and 1951.<sup>11</sup>

The Nicholsons papers now held by the Butler Library at the University of Columbia in New York, which include the two letters cited in the introduction to this paper, and the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington can also be traced back to these sales. These large collections form easily identifiable parts of the original family archive and, like most of the surviving Nicholsons papers, are extensively annotated. The annotations provide a concordance to many of the documents, identifying anonymous or pseudonymous writers, explaining events and commenting on the personalities,

<sup>7</sup> I would like to record my thanks to the Bibliographical Society for the two grants they awarded to the Nicholsons Archive Project in 1996 and 2000. I am also very grateful to Robin Myers and Keith Maslen for their advice and assistance with my work and to Rosemary Sweet who kindly read an earlier version of this paper.

<sup>8</sup> For general biographical studies of John Nicholsons see the *DNB* XIV pp. 447-50; Albert H. Smith, 'A Biography of John Nicholsons, 1745-1826, with a Critical and Descriptive Account of Works Written and Edited by Him' University of Leicester MA thesis, 1959; Albert H. Smith, 'John Nicholsons, Printer and Publisher' *The Library* 5th Ser., 18.3 (1963), pp. 169-190; and James M Kuist, *The Works of John Nicholsons. An Introduction* New York: AMC Press Inc., 1968. For further biographical information relating to John Bowyer Nicholsons see the *DNB* XIV pp. 450-1 and his obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1863) pp. 794-798.

<sup>9</sup> For John Gough Nicholsons see the *DNB* XIV pp. 451-3 and Robert C. Nicholsons, *Memoir of the late John Gough Nicholsons* Westminster, 1874.

<sup>10</sup> For further information on the contribution of Richard Gough to the study of antiquities in the eighteenth century, see Rosemary Sweet, 'Antiquaries and Antiquities in Eighteenth-Century England' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34. 2 (2001), pp. 181-206.

<sup>11</sup> For a list of the Sotheby sales of Nicholsons papers, see Appendix 2.

relationships and achievements of those named in the letters. Keith Maslen has shown how the Columbia Nichols papers were originally sold by Sotheby's as lot 136 in their Nichols sale of 18 November 1929.<sup>12</sup> This lot, described as 'Bowyer and Nichols Family Records' in fourteen volumes included seven volumes of family records covering the period c.1760-c.1800 that relate chiefly to the domestic world of John Nichols. Scholars have often overlooked these papers because of this domestic detail, but Edward Hart has shown that this is their greatest strength.<sup>13</sup> They take us to the heart of the family firm, allowing us to follow its daily progress and study the finer details of its business. The personal correspondence of John Nichols is invaluable for the study of his printing business, family relationships and antiquarian friendships. His letters typically range from the health of his family through to editorial decisions on the *Gentleman's Magazine*, instructions for printing particular books, comments on the internal politics of learned societies and discussion of antiquities. The same can be said for the papers of his son and grandson.

This is particularly evident in the Nichols papers held by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington that include an annotated set of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and some six thousand letters. James Kuist and Penelope Peoples have shown how these were sold from the collections of John Gough Nichols in 1879 and eventually purchased by Henry Clay Folger in 1911.<sup>14</sup> Professor Kuist has indexed the anonymous and pseudonymous contributors identified by the Nicholsons in this set of the magazine and Dr Peoples has shown how the letters in this collection relate principally to the career of John Gough Nichols as editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* and other works of family history and heraldry.<sup>15</sup>

The association of the Nichols press with the *Gentleman's Magazine* was central to its success and to the accumulation of so large an archive. Since its foundation by Edward Cave in 1731 the *Gentleman's Magazine* had been pre-eminent among English literary periodicals.<sup>16</sup> It was the first magazine in the modern sense of the word; mixing articles from other publications with news, reviews and letters to the editor (known as *Sylvanus Urban*) from a large and national readership. In 1778, within a year of inheriting Bowyer's business and in the same year that he married Martha Green, John Nichols purchased a large share in the magazine and became its editor.<sup>17</sup> This was a clever move for both commercial and personal reasons because it placed Nichols and his press at the centre of the network of antiquaries and anecdotists that flourished at that time. Nichols built on the traditions established by Edward Cave by giving greater emphasis to historical and literary articles and enlarging the obituary section of each

<sup>12</sup> Maslen and Lancaster, 1991, as n.3, pp. xl-xlii.

<sup>13</sup> Edward L. Hart, (ed)., *Minor Lives. A Collection of Biographies by John Nichols* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1971 pp. xx and 168.

<sup>14</sup> James M. Kuist, *The Nichols File of the 'Gentleman's Magazine'* London: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1982, pp. 3-10; Penelope Peoples, 'The Folger Nichols Manuscript Collection: A Description and Analysis', University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, doctoral thesis, 1980, pp. 16-25.

<sup>15</sup> Professor Kuist's identification of the authors of thousands of articles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, published in his *Nichols File*, was never intended to be a complete listing but is confined to the attributions provided by the Nicholsons in their own copy of the magazine. For an account of the work of other scholars in identifying contributors to the magazine see the six articles by Professor Emily Lorraine de Montluzin, originally published in *Studies in Bibliography* 44 (1991), pp. 271-302; 45 (1992), pp. 158-187; 46 (1993), pp. 320-349; 47 (1994), pp. 164-195; 49 (1996), pp. 176-207 and 50 (1997), pp. 322-358. These, together with an electronic copy of Kuist's index, are now accessible and searchable as a database at <http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/bsuva/gm/>.

<sup>16</sup> Carl. L. Carlson, *The First Magazine* Providence, 1938.

<sup>17</sup> Kuist, 1968, as n. 8, pp. 8-12.

monthly number of the magazine. In time, his reputation for judgement and reliability as an editor was such that people entrusted him with their manuscript materials; in turn, Nichols used the pages of the magazine to elicit further letters and papers to embellish its pages and assist his own biographical and antiquarian research.<sup>18</sup> The family of Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729), the author and politician, sold him Steele's letters which Nichols subsequently edited,<sup>19</sup> and the antiquaries Samuel Pegge the elder (1704-1796), Richard Gough and George Hardinge (1743-1816) all made him their literary executor which greatly increased Nichols' personal archive and supplied the raw materials for many of his own literary and antiquarian publications. As John Bowyer Nichols later remarked,

'After Mr Gough's Death, my Father's Collection of original Letters &c became much enlarged; and they formed materials for many of his future literary labours.'<sup>20</sup>

The journalistic experience that Nichols gained as editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* was vital to the ultimate success of *The History and Antiquities of Leicestershire* for it enabled him to forge links with a large team of local antiquaries, natural historians, clergy and gentry in the county whose contributions he could then edit into the final work.<sup>21</sup> His ingenuity as an editor is evident in the appeals he would make in the magazine, hiding behind one of his many pseudonyms, for local genealogical information. In addition, the annual tours that he made to Leicestershire to see his family provided the perfect opportunity for surveying churches and visiting his correspondents. As we shall see, the letters that he wrote home when on these tours are an important source for the ways that he conducted his research.

That so many letters have survived can, paradoxically, be attributed to the disastrous fire that nearly destroyed his business on the night of 8 February 1808. Fires were a common hazard in the cramped allies and courts of London's printing community in the early nineteenth century. Nichols' office, in Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street, was crammed with correspondence and paperwork. Amidst the huge presses and reams of crisp paper, apprentices and journeymen printers fried mutton chops on open fires.<sup>22</sup> It was a tinder box and, when both printing office and warehouse were consumed that night, Nichols lost nearly £30,000 of stock and equipment, the entire stock of the

<sup>18</sup> Edward L. Hart, 'An Ingenious Editor: John Nichols and the *Gentleman's Magazine*' *Bucknell Review* 10 (March, 1962), pp. 232-242.

<sup>19</sup> *The Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele containing letters to his second wife, Mrs Mary Scurlock and her two daughters ... illustrated with literary and historical anecdotes by John Nichols*. Printed by and for John Nichols, 1787.

<sup>20</sup> Annotation by John Bowyer Nichols, 25 May 1846, on the *Gentleman's Magazine* obituary of Richard Gough (1809) pasted into Nichols 'Family Records' VIII, 1808-1810, now in Private Collection 4, PC4/1/f82 [NAD2169]. For a list of the private collections of Nichols papers, see Appendix 1. For a discussion of the volumes of 'Family Records' see below, p. 49. Documents on the Nichols Archive Database have two references, a unique number generated by the database, prefixed NAD, and a reference number used by the public repository holding the original document or devised to preserve the order of the documents as found in the private collections. The reference PC4/1/f82 shows, therefore, that this document is in Private Collection 4 and is on folio 82 of the first volume to be examined. For a typical entry from the database, showing all the fields used, see Fig. 2.

<sup>21</sup> Simmons, 1978, as n.5, p11.

<sup>22</sup> The habit of Thomas Bennett, compositor in the Nichols office, of cooking 'his own Beefsteak, mutton chop, &c on the office fire' is vividly described by John Bowyer Nichols in his annotation of Bennett's letter to him now in Private Collection 2 'Family Records' XII, PC2/3/f16/1 [NAD2704]. Nichols also tells us that Bennett was Richard Gough's favourite compositor and was called down to the shop whenever Gough visited.

*Gentleman's Magazine* from 1783, most of volume two of Manning and Bray's *History of Surrey*, much of John Hutchins' *History of Dorset*, and the last part of his own *History of Leicestershire*. On 15 February he lamented to Richard Gough that,

'Every Atom of Leicestershire and Bowyer that was printed off is destroyed. But of the last Volume of Leicestershire about 120 have been sent out to those who best deserved them. Luckily, your copy (by being in the dwelling house) is saved – and comes to you herewith [...].'<sup>23</sup>

Immediately after the fire Nichols and his son, began to rebuild their business and take stock of the papers that survived the flames. John Bowyer Nichols had been superintending the family's business and accumulated papers since becoming a partner to his father in 1800. He had begun annotating and indexing the *Gentleman's Magazine* before the fire and, when this work was lost, he reconstructed it from the set that Richard Gough bequeathed to the family on his death in 1809. The new set, now held by the Folger Library, became the central record of the family's association with the magazine where they filed original letters, papers and drawings and where they noted the names of their anonymous and pseudonymous contributors.<sup>24</sup> But John Bowyer Nichols' concern to preserve his family's papers went further than this. Throughout his life he sought to retain, annotate and arrange the vast quantity of personal, business and collected correspondence that he had inherited. I have deduced from the surviving correspondence that other members of the family assisted him.

The family archive had grown rapidly. Whenever John Nichols or his son were away from London, touring antiquarian sites and monuments with Richard Gough, calling on friends in Leicestershire, visiting the Sea Bathing Infirmary at Margate which they had helped to establish or just on holiday at Worthing or Brighton, they exchanged letters with each other almost daily. Personal letters, newspapers and packets of proofs and business correspondence were directed to inns along their route and the houses where they were staying.<sup>25</sup> Journals and descriptive letters written during these tours by other members of the family were also circulated around the family before returning to John Bowyer Nichols for safekeeping.<sup>26</sup> At the same time the archive was augmented by their own enthusiasm for collecting autograph letters. James Granger's *Biographical History of England* (1769) had started a craze for autograph hunting as people sought to extra-illustrate, or 'Grangerize' this and other works, such as county histories and John Nichols' own *Literary Anecdotes* with original examples of their subjects' handwriting, illustrations and portraits. The publication of John Gough Nichols' *Autographs of Royal, Noble, Learned and Remarkable Personages Conspicuous in English History* in 1829

<sup>23</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VIII, PC4/1/f7 [NAD1973], John Nichols to Richard Gough, 15 February 1808.

<sup>24</sup> Kuist 1982, as n.14, pp. 13-22.

<sup>25</sup> For an example of postal directions see Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XII, PC2/3/f69/2 [NAD2812], Isabella Octavia Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 28 September 1818. John Nichols and his daughters were visiting the Herrick family at Beaumanor, Leicestershire, and Isabella requested her brother to send the newspapers to them at Mrs Spencer's at the Talbot Inn, Welford, on Thursday and Friday's 'Times' to Woburn from where they will write on Saturday,

<sup>26</sup> Evidence of travel journals being read by other members of the family will be found in John Gough Nichols' letter to his aunts Nichols at Highbury, dated 1830. Nichols was in Durham, visiting Robert Surtees and wrote 'My dear Aunts, It is so long since you read the first part of my Northern Tour, that to save you the trouble of finding the place where you stopped, I beg to point it out to you. – You accompanied me in your former perusal as far as Doncaster p62'. Bodl. MS Eng. lett. c.6165 f. 81. The journal itself is now in Private Collection 6, PC6/1/1 [NAD1511]. For discussion of the Leicestershire references in this journal, see below, pp..86-8.

itself did much to promote this fashion and illustrates how seriously the Nicholse pursued their interest in this field.<sup>27</sup> In 1816 John Nichols admitted to T. Fitzwilliam that his principal amusement was in 'biographical researches and the collection of genuine letters of eminent persons'<sup>28</sup> and, in 1824, Mary Anne Herrick of Beaumanor thanked him for the 'valuable contributions' he had made to the autograph collection of her friend, Helen Corbett. Miss Corbett was pleased that Nichols wished to add some of her father's autographs to his collection and asked Miss Herrick to tell him that she was 'enriching with autographs' Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides* and Lord Byron's *English Bards*.<sup>29</sup>

In 1822 Nichols encouraged his daughter, Anne Susannah Nichols (1788-1853), in this 'harmless' pursuit,

'There can be no reasonable objection to your collecting the Autographs of Persons who have been eminent either for high station or Literary Talent, as the hand-writing is often the index of the Mind; the pursuit is harmless and even meritorious, provided it be made as a matter of amusement and not of business which would be incompatible with the duties of a Female. I never had the leisure, or the inclination to make such a Collection for which during the long period of sixty years I had every Facility, and I now regret that I have destroyed many hundreds and given away many more, which might have furnished for you a rich Collection. I am glad, however, to be still able to add a few names of eminence in Letters addressed to myself, and not doubting but you will meet with many others, from our various Friends.'<sup>30</sup>

Although the Nicholse gave letters away, they also increased their collections by trading with collectors like William Upcott (1779-1845), assistant librarian of the London Institution who amassed a collection of some 32,000 autographs at his home, Autograph Cottage, in Islington, and Dawson Turner of Yarmouth (1775-1858) who also supplied Nichols with portraits etched by his wife and daughters.<sup>31</sup> When John Nichols died in 1826, Turner offered to purchase his literary collections but John Bowyer Nichols and his sisters did not wish to sell.<sup>32</sup> They had inherited their father's topographical library and collection of prints under the terms of his will, and decided to sell part of the library in 1828;<sup>33</sup> but the bequest had not specified what they were to do with his manuscript collections. After some discussion they mutually agreed that they be consigned to John Bowyer Nichols for one hundred pounds.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>27</sup> A. N. L. Munby, *The Cult of the Autograph Letter in England* London: The Athlone Press, 1962.

<sup>28</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/2/f68, [NAD1682], John Nichols to T Fitzwilliam, 17 August 1816.

<sup>29</sup> Bodl. MS Eng. b. 2071 ff. 106-8, 'Family Records' XIV, Mary Anne Herrick to John Nichols, 11 Aug 1824.

<sup>30</sup> Stationers' Company Records, London; Q5, f. 10r, copy letter of John Nichols to Anne Susannah Nichols, 22 February 1822. Further evidence for the autograph collections of John Nichols and his daughter will be found in his letter of 22 May 1824 to Abraham Rees, mounted in Family Records XIV, Bodl. MS. Eng. b. 2071, f. 68 quoted in *The Bodleian Library Record* 16. 4. (October 1998), p. 354.

<sup>31</sup> Munby 1962, as n.27, pp. 13-60.

<sup>32</sup> Rutgers State University, MS 86-540/2, [NAD1882]. Dawson Turner to John Nichols, 31 May 1826. Evidence for Dawson Turner's offer to purchase the papers of John Nichols will be found in Bodl. MS. Eng. b. 2076, f. 274, John Bowyer Nichols' journal of his visit to Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridge in 1846.

<sup>33</sup> The catalogue of John Nichols' library of printed books was prepared by his daughters and has recently come to light in Private Collection 1. See also Bodl. MS. Eng. c. 6165/1, f. 49, Anne Susannah Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 1827.

<sup>34</sup> Bodl. MS Eng. c. 6165/1, f. 20, John Bowyer Nichols to Sarah Nichols, 18 October 1827.



It is largely due to John Bowyer Nichols' care for the papers that his father had accumulated that so much of the archive survives today. Most of the annotation on Nichols papers held in both the public and private collections is in his hand, showing that he did most of this work in the 1840s and 1850s. Three events in the 1840s may have prompted this. The first was the death of his eldest sister, Sarah Nichols, in 1843. When John Nichols' second wife, Martha Green, died in 1788 it was Sarah, his eldest daughter by his first marriage to Anne Cradock, who became responsible for running the family home. She maintained the family accounts, managed her father's domestic arrangements and, after his death, continued to oversee the family from her home in Islington. When she died, John Bowyer Nichols inherited her papers and found that they included proposals of marriage from a John Robinson in 1787 and James Moyes, the printer, in 1802. Sarah had turned them both down but preserved their letters of proposal. John Bowyer Nichols' annotation of these letters and other of her papers is dated 1846. The second event was the death of John Bowyer's wife, Eliza, in January 1846 and his subsequent removal from The Chancellors in Hammersmith to Hanger Hill in Ealing. Again, the dated annotations by John Bowyer Nichols on so many Nichols papers – together with the watermark date of paper he used to mount or make copies of letters – suggest that it was in 1846, after this bereavement and during his removal from Hammersmith, that he undertook most of this work. It may also be significant that, during these years, he was preparing the final volumes of his father's *Literary Illustrations* for publication in 1848 and 1858 respectively. The introductions to these volumes show that he had still not exhausted the papers he had inherited and the deaths of his sister and his wife, followed by his decision to move house, may have caused him to undertake an enormous sort of the piles of papers around him. When he died in 1863 he left all his 'works or Writing in Manuscript and Collections of Correspondence' to his eldest son, John Gough Nichols.<sup>35</sup>

John Gough Nichols (1806-1873) had joined the family firm in 1824 and, though his own prodigious editorial achievements and biographical studies, may be regarded as the natural successor of his grandfather, John Nichols (illustration 2). His indefatigable editorship of the *Gentleman's Magazine* lasted from 1826 to its sale in 1856 but, through his zeal to print original sources and biographical materials, he was also the founding editor of the *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* (1834-1843), the *Topographer and Genealogist* (1846-1858), the *Herald and Genealogist* (1863-1874) and the *Register and Magazine of Biography* (1869). As well as contributing to Sir Richard Hoare's *History of Modern Wiltshire* (1822-1844) he wrote many articles for *Archæologia* and the publications of the Camden Society, Surtees Society and Shakespeare Society, all of which he had helped to found. When he died, in 1873, his library at Holmwood Park, near Dorking in Surrey, housed one of the largest collections of topographical and historical books of his time. It was also the home of many thousands of family, business and collected papers that he and his family had been accumulating for over a century. In the course of the next fifty years a succession of sales by Sotheby's triggered the dispersal of the Nichols archive to its many present locations in public repositories and private collections around the world.

<sup>35</sup> Principal Registry of the Family Division (Probate), 42-49 High Holborn, London, WC1V 6EA. Will of John Bowyer Nichols, 1863.



2. John Gough Nichols with his sister, Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols. Copy of the portrait of the children of John Bowyer Nichols by Daniel Maclise, 1831. Private Collection. *Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*

### Recent Discoveries

My interest in the Nichols archive began in 1982 when I purchased a tiny volume of manuscript pocket diaries in a bookshop. I found that they had been kept between 1823 and 1834 by Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols (1813-1870), the eldest daughter of John Bowyer Nichols (illustration 3). Miss Nichols shared her family's interest in antiquities and the arts and her diaries are full of accounts of literary dinners, musical evenings and visits to places of historic interest.<sup>36</sup> Robert Blemmel Schnebbelie (d.1849), son of Jacob Schnebbelie (1760-1792) who had contributed so many plates to John Nichols' *History of Leicestershire*, gave her lessons in drawing and she went on to win medals from the Society of Arts, exhibit her own paintings at London galleries, and attract favourable reviews in *The Art Union*.<sup>37</sup> Miss Nichols was also interested in architecture

<sup>36</sup> For further discussion of the contents of the pocket diaries of Mary Nichols see Julian Pooley, 'A Publisher's Daughter in Hampstead' *Camden History Review* 17 (1992), pp. 21-26; Julian Pooley, 'The Diary of Mary Nichols: its value as a source for Local Historians', *The Local Historian* 25. 3 (August 1995) pp. 130-141 and Julian Pooley, 'The Diary of Mary Anne Nichols, 1823-1834, a publisher's daughter in Hammersmith' *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* 44 (1993) [1996], pp. 171-197.

<sup>37</sup> Royal Society of Arts *Transactions* 1823-1824, 1828-1831, 1833 and 1838; *The Art Union* 1 August 1847, 301. I am grateful to Dr. John Wilson of Yarnton, Oxfordshire, for this information.



and described both historic and contemporary buildings in her diaries. The last of her pocket diaries (1834) refers the reader to longer descriptions of buildings in her 'journal' and, when William Matthews saw four of these journals in 1948 in the course of preparing his list of British manuscript diaries he remarked on their value as a source for architectural and topographical history.<sup>38</sup> At that time they were owned by Norman Stanley Angus of Sheffield but, by 1976, when John Stuart Batts revised Matthews' work, he was unable to trace their location.<sup>39</sup> Supposing that Mr Angus may have died by the time I was following this lead in 1991, I found his will at Somerset House and wrote to the solicitors who had drawn it up. They put me in touch with his widow, then living in Melton Mowbray, who still treasured the volumes that she and her husband had bought together in a bookshop 'before the war'. She allowed me to borrow them to transcribe and index them in the same way I had done the pocket diaries. Shortly before her death in 1994 Mrs Angus presented them to me. They provide a detailed account of Miss Nichols' architectural tours in England and Europe (illustration 4).<sup>40</sup> After making hurried notes in cold churches and country houses she later enlarged them using her father's enormous topographical library of reference works, county maps, brass rubbings and illustrations. The value of her work was recognised by her brother, John Gough Nichols, who kept similar journals of his own travels but cross referenced them to those of his sister because he considered them to be more detailed.<sup>41</sup>

In the course of researching the diaries and travel journals of Mary Nichols, I used Nichols papers held in the major public collections to learn more about the family and place Miss Nichols and her writings in context. In 1996, however, the course of my work was changed dramatically by the appearance at Bonham's of eight large volumes of Nichols letters and papers and, through following up a number of leads, my own discovery in a number of private collections of seven more volumes of Nichols papers and Mary Nichols' own large collection of autograph letters.<sup>42</sup> I had been looking for further volumes of Miss Nichols' travel journals but found thousands of her family's papers instead. This has led me to look more closely at the history of the Nichols archive itself because the new material, through not being disturbed by sales and the attentions of scholars, contains important clues to the original arrangement of the papers.

### 'Family Records'

Clues to the original order of the archive can be found in the format of the volumes and the annotation of the documents they contain. Seven of the eight volumes that

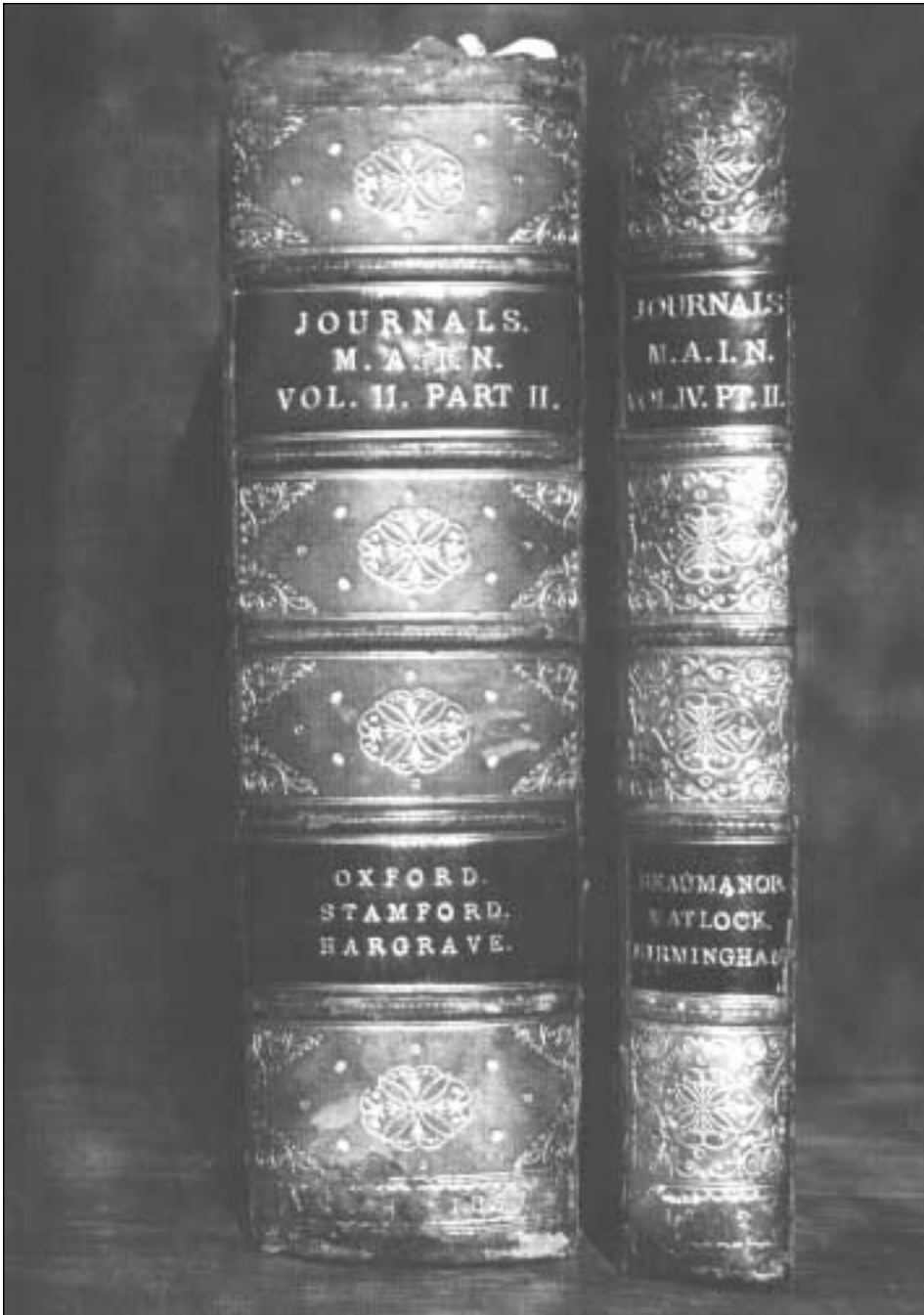
<sup>38</sup> William Matthews, *British Diaries. An Historical Bibliography of British Diaries Written Between 1442 and 1942* (London, 1948).

<sup>39</sup> John S. Batts, *British Manuscript Diaries of the Nineteenth Century* (Fontwell, 1976).

<sup>40</sup> The volume of pocket diaries and four volumes of travel journals in my possession are available for consultation at Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, GU21 1ND, by prior appointment. For further details, see Private Collection 9 in Appendix 1.

<sup>41</sup> Private Collection 6, PC6/1/1 p.97. [NAD1511], John Gough Nichols, 'Journal of a Tour to Durham, Scotland, Leicestershire and Oxford, 1830'. For a discussion of the interest of this volume for Leicestershire historians, see below, pp. 86-8

<sup>42</sup> The volumes were purchased from Bonhams by Questor Rare Books but have since been acquired by the Bodleian Library and are held as MSS. Eng. b. 2071-7, c.6165. For further comments upon the contents of these volumes see 'Notable Accessions', *The Bodleian Library Record* 16.4 (October 1998), pp. 352-354. For a summary of the Private Collections, see Appendix 1.



4. Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols. Two volumes of her 'Journals of Various Excursions'.  
*Private Collection 9.*

were sold by Bonhams and six of those I have found in private hands clearly form part of a larger series. The words 'Family Records' are tooled upon their spines together with a volume number and the covering dates of the contents (illustration 5). Each volume contains roughly two hundred items including family letters, financial accounts, journals of antiquarian tours, drafts of articles, obituaries and portraits of persons known to the Nichols family, all filed chronologically. These volumes also contain printed ephemera concerning their dealings with printers, members of learned societies, charities and professional bodies. Most of the items in these volumes are annotated by John Bowyer Nichols and affixed directly to the blank pages of the volumes. They are strikingly similar to the papers now held by the Butler Library at the University of Columbia, New York and, as is demonstrated in Appendix 3, form part of the same series.

Some idea of the range of topics covered in these papers may be gained from the following example in 'Family Records' VIII. It is a calendar that I have made of a letter written by John Nichols to his son on 17 September 1808, when Nichols was staying in Ramsgate.<sup>43</sup> It shows that Nichols, though having withdrawn from business in 1803, was still very involved in its affairs and mindful of its many printing contracts in the difficult months after the fire.

'Nichols sent back a sheet of Leicester yesterday and now returns all that he had received, including Burnet, which came an hour ago and with which he is much pleased, [...] It is very cleverly composed and he wishes the remainder of it to be set up against his return. The Property Tax papers he sends back: John Bowyer's own may be delivered to Mr Cluter. [...] Has John Bowyer enquired what is done about the Returns of Journeymen? He should ask Mr Bensley, Mr Baldwin or Mr Hansard.<sup>44</sup> Has Figgins done the Pica Greek?<sup>45</sup> John Bowyer says nothing of No 9 but it may go to press.<sup>46</sup> Has he got the blank sheet of Ryder back? Or the first sheet composed? How goes on the 'Greek Testament'?<sup>47</sup> His answers by a single letter on Tuesday evening will suffice without sending any more proofs in any way later than tomorrow's parcel. 3pm. Since writing on the other side he has been at both the libraries, the warm bath and for a country walk. They are all agog for the particulars of the news from Portugal and impatient to see the 'General Evening Post' tomorrow morning. He hopes to receive a parcel tomorrow. [...] If Mr Chalmers<sup>48</sup> sent any review [for the *Gentleman's Magazine*] it may be used in preference to any other that is not yet set. [...]'<sup>49</sup>

<sup>43</sup> For details of the database that I am using to prepare a guide to the Nichols archive, see below, p. 96. Calendars, rather than full transcripts of the letters are added to the database. They summarise the contents of the letters and include all personal and place names and titles of books. Most of the following examples are taken from the database.

<sup>44</sup> For Thomas Bensley (d.1833), printer, see DNB. The Baldwin family were prominent London booksellers throughout the eighteenth century. Luke Hansard (1752-1858) was a printer and a close friend of John Nichols. See DNB and Robin Myers, (ed) *The Auto-Biography of Luke Hansard, Printer the the House 1752-1828* London: The Printing Historical Society, 1991.

<sup>45</sup> For Vincent Figgins (c.1767-1844) a letter founder who supplied John Nichols with printing types, see John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes* II, 1812, p. 361.

<sup>46</sup> 'No 9' may relate to a particular packet of proofs that Nichols had checked.

<sup>47</sup> This may have been the fourth edition by John Nichols of William Bowyer's *Conjectures on the New Testament* 1812.

<sup>48</sup> Alexander Chalmers (1759-1834). Miscellaneous writer.

<sup>49</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VIII, PC4/1/f46 [NAD2097], John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 17 September 1808.



5. Nichols 'Family Records' volumes VIII, 1808-1810, and XI 1816-1817. Private Collections.  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the owners.*

His letters from Leicestershire are equally informative on local matters and the progress of his research. On 14-15 August 1800 he wrote to John Bowyer Nichols from Beaumanor,

'Thursday  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7. The weather is glorious and the harvest plentiful. Yesterday, after a pedestrian visit to Woodhouse School and Mr Watkinson, Nichols went with the elder Mr Herrick in his chaise to Loughborough. Mr Farnham has called and paid Nichols £13.2.6. At Dr Hardy's they had a most comfortable Gentleman's Dinner. The party of seven included the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, Mr Noon and the Rev Mr Hunt of Walton. At nine today Nichols and John Herrick are to go to Langley and Bredon church to meet Lord Ferrers. Then they dine at Staunton. Friday  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 7. Nichols reports his visit with John Herrick to Loughborough, Hathern, Long Watton and Langley where they had a dejeuner of sandwiches, wine and Langley water which is impregnated, like Kedleston and Harrogate, with rotten egg flavour. Then to Bredon, where they toiled up an immense hill (ask Mr Pridden).<sup>50</sup> They dined well on pike and chicken at Staunton and returned home at 1.30 and, by hammering at the door, were in bed by two. John Bowyer's letter reached him at Staunton and the papers at Loughborough. Today Nichols will leave at ten for Donington Park, Bredon, Worthington and Ashby; perhaps even Hartshorn.'<sup>51</sup>

Nichols wrote home so frequently that his letters provide us with an almost continuous narrative of what he did and whom he met, enabling the construction of a very detailed itinerary of his movements and interests. Unlike some antiquaries, who preferred anonymity on their field trips, Nichols enjoyed company.<sup>52</sup> Richard Gough and John Pridden were regular companions but, in August 1802, we find him visiting Leicestershire churches in younger company,

'Yesterday I made an Excursion; and took with me my Two Nephews, neither of whom had ever before been more than 2 miles from Hinckley. I showed them *Stapleton, Cadeby, Osbaston, Bosworth, Nailstone, Ibstock, Hether* [sic], *Normanton, Packington, Measham, Snarstone and Swebstone* and, after treating them to a *Duke Humphreys Dinner*, returned soon after six in the Afternoon.'<sup>53</sup>

But local historical research was not without its risks. The letters and journals of the Nicholes are full of accounts of accidents they met with in the course of travelling. On one occasion, Nichols reported that he had

'reached Lutterworth safely by twelve but not without a little peril, the fumes of the Gumley ale having stupefied their driver, whose horse was left to his own guidance

<sup>50</sup> For John Pridden (1758-1825), antiquary, artist, architect and philanthropist, see DNB and John Bowyer Nichols (ed) *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* VIII 1858, pp. 676-677. Pridden married Anne Nichols, daughter of John Nichols and Anne Cradock, and contributed sketches of churches and other communications for his father-in-law's county history.

<sup>51</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VI, PC4/2/f27 [NAD3597], John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 14-15 August 1800.

<sup>52</sup> Nichols later remarked that Andrew Coltee Ducarel (1713-1785) and Samuel Gale (1682-1754) travelled incognito on their antiquarian tours, attended only by the former's coachman and Gale's footman. It was their rule not to depart from their route to see any of their acquaintances. J Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes* VI, 1812 p. 402. Quoted by Robin Myers, 'Dr Andrew Coltee Ducarel (1713-1785) pioneer of Anglo-Norman Studies', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris, (eds), *Antiquaries, Book Collectors and the Circles of Learning*, Winchester: 1996, pp. 45-71.

<sup>53</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' VI, PC2/3/f116, John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 19 August 1802.



while he slept. They awoke him at the turnpike gate and chose to walk into Lutterworth.<sup>54</sup>

The personal letters of John Nichols show that he was often forced to mix his research interests with family commitments. One letter, written from Hinckley, betrays his irritation at repeated interruptions by his family and their friends,

'Nichols has worked all morning but been interrupted by George Iliffe, Tom Green, John Bowyer's grandmother, and, at this moment, he is visited by his son's friend, the rat-catcher, to whom he is bawling while scribbling. Yesterday he walked to the Navigation which would be very clever if it had less dust and more water.'<sup>55</sup>

There are several letters in these volumes from Nichols' Leicestershire relations seeking his help in times of hardship. In March 1817 he received a letter from Martha Green of Hinckley, a relation of his by his second marriage, hoping he

'will excuse the liberty she takes in addressing him but having been out of employ for some time she hopes he may be able to recommend her to a place of service. She has been apprentice to a dressmaker but the trade in Hinckley has been so bad as to leave her without employ. She regrets that her constitution is not strong and she would not be able to do hard work. She would, however, be able to wait on a lady or children and happy to spend her spare time in sewing. She would not mind where in England it might be providing it is not in Hinckley for having been respectable it would be hurtful to her mind to be in service there. She will be ever thankful.'<sup>56</sup>

The volumes of 'Family Records' are rich in materials of local interest. Volume VI contains sale particulars of a house, other buildings and a stocking-maker's shop in Hinckley, possibly the property of Nichols' relation, Joseph Iliffe, dated 30 June 1801, (illustration 6)<sup>57</sup> and further details of properties in Hinckley are found in a letter of John Green to Nichols of 7 Nov 1802, reporting that

'There is a false rumour there that he has injured his frames and to disprove this he will take them all at the old valuation without deduction if they are not put up by auction. He is unsure of their true value [...] He hears Blakesley wishes to buy all the land but will not give as much as Nichols asks. When Nichols replies about the frames he hopes he will tell him the lowest price he will accept for the two barn closes of the Lammas Close so that Green can 'sound' him.'<sup>58</sup>

In September 1810 Nichols described an incident at the marriage Mr Pilgrim and Miss Craven of Hinckley

'which was disrupted by an escaped cow running up Castle Street, to the great diversion of the boys and alarm of everyone else. It took refuge in the entrance to

<sup>54</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VIII, PC4/1/f96 [NAD2184], John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 15 June 1809.

<sup>55</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VI, PC4/2/f29 [NAD3599], John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 18 August 1800.

<sup>56</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/2/f161 [NAD1920], Martha Green to John Nichols, 20 March 1817.

<sup>57</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VI, PC4/2/f79 [NAD3704], printed sale particulars of a house and land in Castle Street, Hinckley, occupied by Mr Green, nd.

<sup>58</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VI, PC4/2/f6/1 [NAD3364], John Green to John Nichols, 7 November 1802. *The Universal British Directory*, 1798, lists John Green and Joseph Iliffe as a hosiers of Hinckley and James Blakesley as a mercer of Hinckley. I am grateful to Dr A G Hann of the University of Leicester for this information.

Colonel Green's and, finding the front door open, ran furiously through the house into the garden and back into the public road.<sup>59</sup>

Samuel Bentley, nephew of John Nichols and a partner in the firm, wrote to John Bowyer Nichols at Worthing in 1816 on a number of business matters and mentioned that

'A gentleman related to Mr Power of Hinckley called to inform John Nichols that some workmen in grounds of his have damaged an earthenware vessel and found it to contain sundry silver pieces of Edward VI, Elizabeth, James and Charles. He wished for advice as to how best to dispose of them, whether singly to any person who chose to buy or in the lump. They are in perfect preservation. "One cannot help pitying his deplorable want of Taste, who can think of disposing of them to the highest bidder. I should have thought by this time every man in the county had imbibed the spirit of Antiquarianism"'.<sup>60</sup>

Leicestershire booksellers feature regularly in the letters. In October 1816 Nichols asked his son to secure *The Dunciad* and Weston's *Botanical Works* from the catalogue of Mr Combe of Leicester, and there are also letters from Nichols to his Leicestershire friends. A copy of his letter to John Newdigate Ludford of Anstey Hall, made by John Bowyer Nichols and pasted in 'Family Records' XI, dated 6 February 1817, contains much information on Ludford's reading interests and Nichols' recent ill-health,

'[...] Now for books. Dart's 'Westminster' is scarce and sold especially at auction for between ten and fourteen guineas, sometimes more. The best Bible for a good Christian like Ludford, with pictures, is that published by the SPCK with notes by the archbishop's chaplains and nearly seventy plates. [...] Nichols has four copies of it for his own family. For the Tyburn Chronicle he returns ignoramus. [...] He is at present far from well. The last two years have been beyond the eye of man and have quite unhinged him. The summer of 1815 was passed in severe illness, the November of it clouded by the death of Mrs Pridden as was the April of 1816 by that of his daughter, Martha; June, July and August were clouded by his own illness, as were September and October which he spent at the sea side and at Tunbridge Wells. In December he was shocked by the loss of his and his daughters' most valuable friend, Mrs Cradock, who though at a good old age was very sudden. [Recently] Nichols suffered a severe attack of vertigo which required the skill of both physician and apothecary and he has been cupped, leeches, blistered and physicked and thanks God he is now somewhat convalescent. He fears, however, he will never more be able to enjoy the comforts of Anstey Hall, comforts he will never forget.'<sup>61</sup>

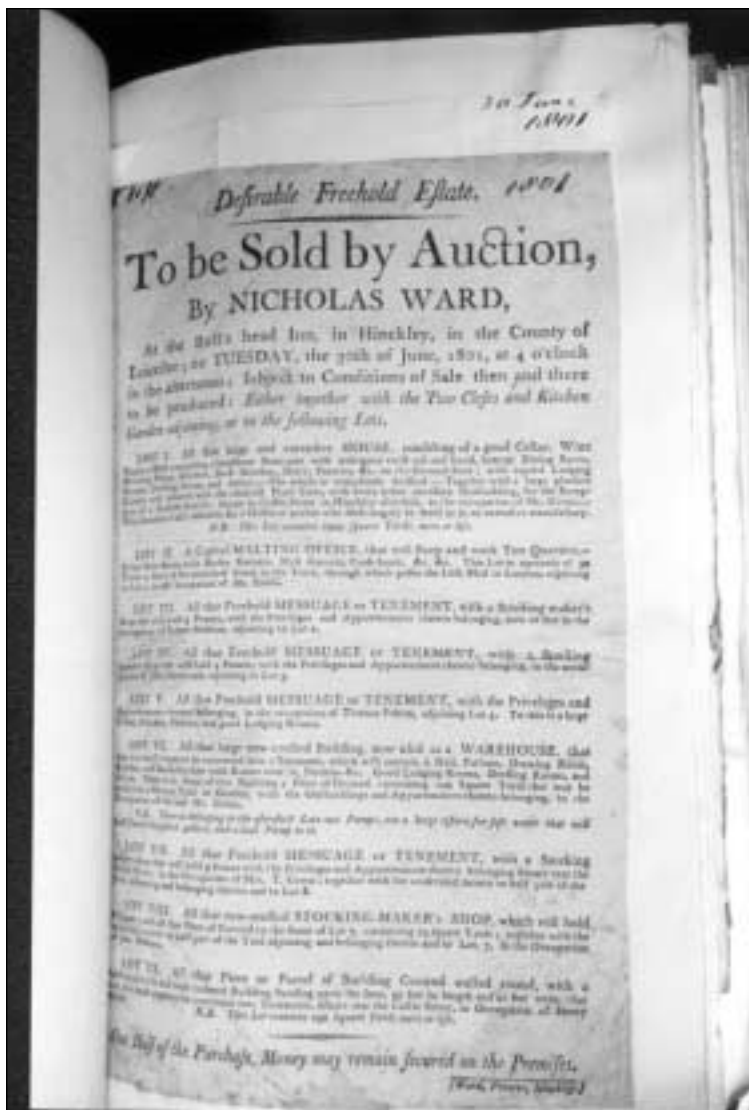
The close friendship of the Nicholsons with particular Leicestershire families, such as the Herricks of Beaumanor and Joseph Cradock of Gumley is a recurring theme in the 'Family Records' and other series of papers arranged by John Bowyer Nichols. News from London would have been eagerly read by Nichols' Leicestershire friends and the Herricks were no exception. In 1806 Nichols informed John Herrick that

'Since I wrote last I have been very taken up with Lord Nelson's funeral [...] I was one of the Deputation who rode in the Procession; and had afterwards a Seat in the Choir,

<sup>59</sup> Private Collection 4, 'Family Records' VIII, PC4/1/f163 [NAD2362], John Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 13 September 1810.

<sup>60</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records XI, PC2/2/f45 [NAD1597], Samuel Bentley to John Bowyer Nichols, 1 June 1816.

<sup>61</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/2/f142 [NAD1900], John Nichols to John Newdigate Ludford, 6 February 1817.



6. Sale particulars of a 'Desirable Freehold Estate' in Castle Street, Hinckley, 1801, pasted into Nichols 'Family Records', VI, PC4/2/f79 [NAD3704]. Private Collection.  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*

exactly facing the Prince of Wales and Dukes of York and Clarence; and afterwards had a seat near the Grave, *under the Dome*. [...] We have since lost an incomparable Statesman in the illustrious *Pitt*, who will be buried at the National Expense, in *Westminster Abbey*. Lord Grenville succeeds him as Premier, and Mr Fox will be Secretary of State.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York, Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, 1713-1874, John Nichols to John Herrick, 29 January 1806, Bodl. MS Film 1529/2.

The Herricks saw Nichols' county history as their 'family textbook'<sup>63</sup> and, on the death of John Herrick in May 1819, his family asked Nichols to compose an epitaph for him in Woodhouse church.<sup>64</sup> Nichols' letter to William Herrick, dated 19 May, shows that, to some degree, he had also been John Herrick's banker,

'A £50 note was sent to him on March 29 and John Bowyer Nichols now has in his hands a balance of £130, the particulars of which he will communicate when Herrick comes to town. They also have some annuity bonds, more of which Herrick will find at Beaumanor.'<sup>65</sup>

Nichols' affection for Joseph Cradock (1742-1826) of Gumley owed as much to their kinship through Nichols' marriage to Anne Cradock as it did to their mutual love of literature and friendship with Samuel Johnson. Cradock was an author, playwright and anecdotist who divided his time between the London theatre and his estate in Leicestershire. The Nicholes visited him annually, admiring his landscape gardening at Gumley and meeting there many prominent figures in Leicestershire society. On 16 September 1819 Anne Susannah Nichols described a particularly lavish party at Gumley in her letter to her sister, Isabella,

'Mr Cradock and the servants rose very early and prepared a very elegant table, large enough to seat fifty, so the forty guests had plenty of room. It was very elegant. They had all sorts of cold meats, chicken, ham, tongue, venison pasty and pigeons a la capote, which were in a savory jelly. Prawns and crayfish came from London, and oysters in silver shells. The prettiest part was the fruit, with four pines, grapes, peaches, nectarines, American apples, pastry, curd and sweetmeats. The party comprised Sir Henry and Lady Halford,<sup>66</sup> Mr and the two Miss Coventrys, Mr, Mrs and Susan Apthorpe, the Beresfords<sup>67</sup> and Mrs Parsons their sister (whose husband is a broker and lives in Russell Square), the Grahams, Beckwiths, Belgraves, Thorpes, Mr Holditch, Mr Colman and the Goughs from Misterton. Anne Green may know Mr Goodman the clergyman from Kibworth. Mr Marriott, the son of the medical man, was there and Mr Humphreys. After the meal yesterday she walked by the lake for an hour, with the swans. [...] Mr Cradock entertained them with anecdotes till ten. They felt a little poorly dressed in the company. Mr Cradock had intimated that dinner dresses would be the thing but ladies arrived in bonnets and spencers.'<sup>68</sup>

## Volumes of Letters

Alongside these volumes of 'Family Records', John Bowyer Nichols collected together and bound into separate volumes letters from a particular person or on a given subject. One of these, now in Private Collection 2, contains over 350 letters between Joseph

<sup>63</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/3/f92r [NAD2976], William Herrick to John Nichols, 21 March 1820.

<sup>64</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/3/f94v [NAD2981], William Herrick to John Nichols, May 1819.

<sup>65</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/3/f90/2 [NAD2974], John Nichols to William Herrick, 19 May 1819.

<sup>66</sup> *DNB* Sir Henry Halford (1766-1844), physician.

<sup>67</sup> *DNB* James Beresford (1764-1840), miscellaneous writer. Rector of Kibworth Beauchamp, Leicestershire 1818, and author of *Miseries of Human Life; or the Last Groans of Timothy Testy and Samuel Sensitive* 1806-7.

<sup>68</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Family Records' XI, PC2/3/f115 [NAD3017], Anne Susannah Nichols to Isabella Nichols, 16 September 1819.

Cradock and John Nichols written between 1791 and 1826. Cradock delighted in county gossip and parochial intrigue and these letters are a wonderful source for the history of Leicestershire. They also provide a glimpse of the preparation of the county history. In January 1791 Cradock reminded Nichols that,

'when he first engaged upon the 'History of Leicestershire' Cradock called upon him to enquire whether he wished for an engraving of Bow Bridge. He does not approve of the manner in which the engraving was executed in Mr Throsby's 'Views': the stonework is not apparent and the covering looks more like human hair than ivy. The sketch for Dr Farmer's book was more characteristic and wants only to be well executed and extended to the scale required. If Nichols still wants it he is to let Cradock know the cost.'<sup>69</sup>

On 13 January Cradock enquired about the cost of the engraving and provided Nichols with further contacts in the county who might be able to assist his research,

'Bow Bridge awaits Nichols' directions to be well engraved and if the expense runs to five pounds Cradock will not object. If there must be ornament he hopes it will be the first navigation barge upon the river itself as Bow Bridge is only on a backwater. Mr Russell was with Cradock when he received Nichols' letter. Russell is a "very deep antiquary". Nichols probably knows his younger brother who works at the Duchy Office and is counsellor to the Board of Control. Cradock has asked him to help Nichols and urges Nichols to write to him at Bruntingthorpe near Lutterworth to enquire about his livings there and at Seddington. Russell would be grateful if Nichols could supply him with the *Scriptores Normanci*. Cradock asks Nichols to let him know when he hopes to visit Gumley. The house is unfinished, but there are some very good books.'<sup>70</sup>

The ill-fated bridge was destroyed the following year. Cradock reported the loss to Nichols in his letter of 26 November 1792,

'Having been absent from the neighbourhood a short time Cradock has only today learned of the total destruction of Bow Bridge. Mr Ludlam has told him that the whole disappeared in an instant during recent flood.<sup>71</sup> During the summer Cradock had paid for some repairs and the bridge seemed as firm as ever. He hopes Nichols will insert an account of the damage in two or three papers at his expense.'<sup>72</sup>

Cradock was delighted with the resulting plate of the bridge. On 18 December 1794 he wrote to Nichols to say that he thought it was admirably executed and that he much regretted the loss of the artist responsible, Jacob Schnebbelie,

'The bridge seems to have been ominous of [Schnebbelie's] fate. Cradock hopes Nichols will use him as a base when he tackles his particular Hundred. [...] A spring at Gumley has been analysed by Dr Morris of Parliament Street at ten guineas expense. Cradock has kept the memorandum for Nichols to publish.'<sup>73</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/f6 [NAD625], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 9 January 1791.

<sup>70</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/f7 [NAD626], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 13 January 1791.

<sup>71</sup> William Ludlam (d.1813), surgeon of Leicester, was related to Joseph Cradock. John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, 1814, VIII, pp. 461-2. See also *DNB*: William Ludlam (1717-1788) and Thomas Ludlam (1775-1810).

<sup>72</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters' PC2/1/f8 [NAD627], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 26 November 1792.

<sup>73</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff9-19 [NAD632], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 18 December 1794.

Nichols' annual 'season of visitation' was eagerly anticipated by the Cradocks, even though they seem to have seen little of him when he was there. In February 1797 Cradock teased Nichols that they would rely on seizing his daughters as hostages,

'[...] and now and then catching a glimpse of you through a Church window. I congratulate you on your victory over Vanity and Absurdity. "Hic labor, hoc opus est;- You shall have every thing but a *Mausoleum* erected in honour of you."'74

It is clear from Cradock's letters that he was a popular man in Leicestershire society. Nichols' suggestion in 1798, therefore, that the volume containing the hundred of Gartree be dedicated to him seems to have given Cradock considerable cause for concern,

'Since he wrote yesterday Cradock has considered Nichols' kind letter and thinks he means nothing less than to inscribe the hundred of Gartree to him. Such a distinction to an untitled individual in a neighbourhood where so many are his superiors would, he is sure, give great offence. He urges Nichols to consider what vanity would be imputed to him and how hurt he would be by being placed in such a position. In the course of the work Nichols has said everything that Cradock would have wished and he begs him to inform him by return of post that he has complied with his request. After the Duke of R[utland], Lord Harborough or any of the great of the hundred of Gartree, has not the Society of Antiquaries a particular claim? Could he not dedicate it to the Members of the County?'75

Cradock's reports of local squabbles in his letters must have been as fascinating for Nichols as they are for local historians today. He was greatly interested in county elections and, in a letter to Nichols of c.1806 in this volume, writes

'with news of Leicestershire 'wars' which he knows Nichols will find interesting. He has been busy canvassing for Sir EC Hartopp and thinks he stands clear.<sup>76</sup> He has received letters from Lord Rutland and Mr Babington but political and religious bickerings continue. [...] He adds in confidence that the very violent anticipate another Dissolution. Mrs Otway and her son have taken lodgings in Leicester in readiness. Sir H[enry] H[alford] dampened this report but Cradock fears the future of the county will not be calm.'<sup>77</sup>

Nichols, who had served as the elected deputy on the Common Council for the ward of Farringdon Without in the City of London between 1784 and 1811, clearly relished these reports. In 1818 he observed to Cradock that,

<sup>74</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters' PC2/1/ff13-14 [NAD634], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 12 February 1797.

<sup>75</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff20-21 [NAD644], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 1798.

<sup>76</sup> Sir Edmund Cradock Hartopp (1749-1833) was the son of Joseph Bunney of Leicester and Mary Cradock of Knytton, Leicestershire, who was sister and heir of Joseph Cradock. R G Thorne (ed), *The House of Commons 1790-1820, III, Members A-F*, London: Secker and Warburg for the History of Parliament Trust, 1986, p.520. For further details of this election, see R G Thorne (ed), *The House of Commons 1790-1820, II, Consituencies*, London: Secker and Warburg for the History of Parliament Trust, 1986, p.241.

<sup>77</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff42-43 [NAD697], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, nd [c.1806]. I am grateful to Rosemary Sweet for her help in dating this letter.

<sup>78</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff91-42 [NAD847], John Nichols to Joseph Cradock, 1818. For further details of Leicester county and city politics in the early nineteenth century, see Thorne 1986, as n. 76, volume II, pp. 240-243. For George Anthony Legh Keck (1774-1860) of Stoughton Grange, Leicestershire, see R G Thorne (ed), *The House of Commons 1790-1820, IV, Members G-P*, London: Secker and Warburg for the History of Parliament Trust, 1986, pp.405-6.

'The people of Leicester seem to be less than content with the old fashioned Whigs and Tories but have now 1) the patrician and aristocratic Lord Robert and his Loughborough friends, 2) the Blues or old yeomanry in the form of the Kecks and Nichols' Hinckley friends and 3) the democracy or levellers in the shape of Phillips to the great grief of some of Nichols' friends who are divided between old private friendships with the father and the dereliction of the son. Thus, Nichols fears, are laid the seeds of a long and sharp contest.'<sup>78</sup>

At times it is hard to distinguish Cradock's love of political gossip from his ebullient enthusiasm for hunting. In 1820 he sent Nichols,

'an account of the "Wars, and rumours of Wars" in his native county. Lord R[utland] and Keck were chaired on Tuesday. All passed well. Too much had been said of giving Plumpers to Keck and but for some violent efforts Lord R[u]t[land] would have been received at Harborough by both parties, including Dissenters, as amicably as Hungerford had been. Worse disturbance surrounded Osbaldeston who wished to promote Keck to battle and fifteen gentlemen discharged him their coverts. This, between themselves, caused Cradock to write a confidential letter to Lord R[u]t[land] who sent Sir F. Fowke over to meet him. Osbaldeston has now, it seems, apologised and yesterday brought his hounds to the Duke's coverts at Aystone. He congratulates Nichols on the conclusion of his City wars but fears they will soon be renewed if 'hot folks' truly anticipate the dangers of a dropsy. Sir William Manners was applied to for a candidate for the Borough and he recommended a rich Scot called Pringle who was only a gardener and never arrived. Mr Price issued hand bills. Cradock's frequent correspondent, the 'Emperor Paul' has published concerning the Chancery and he hopes that if Nichols has the opportunity to review it in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' he will approve of it.'<sup>79</sup>

Cradock's letters also report of crime and other incidents in Leicestershire. In 1823 he reported that,

'There has been a most daring robbery at Kilby in the middle of the village near Sir Henry's. Three men in disguise, one masked, robbed with fire arms an old man and a woman of some fifteen pounds. Cradock's neighbour at Kibworth, Mr R Humfrey, has had his stable broken into and lost his best hunting saddles. Their own magistrate is going from York to the Lakes with his wife and some recent prosecutions have been so very expensive that they have only increased the loss. Even the 'Great Master' had to pay some hundred after the loss of his horse. Sir Henry [Halford] wished for some Bow Street Officers but Cradock has just heard that strong suspicion alights on two people.'<sup>80</sup>

Although cynical of the merits of Bow Street Officers, Cradock was equally scathing of the 'local Felon Association' which he believed had 'sunk into an eating match. It is in the treasurer's interest to have no prosecutions' (illustration 7).<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff117-118 [NAD860], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 16 March 1820. For Sir William Manners (1766-1833) see Thorne 1986, as n.78, pp. 534-5. The reference to the 'Emperor Paul' is to Francis Paul Stratford whose anonymous 'Letter to Sir John Newport MP' concerning the duties and salaries of officers of the courts of justice was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* 91. i (1821), 326-7. I am grateful to Professor Emily Lorraine de Montluzin of the University of Virginia for this information.

<sup>80</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/f189 [NAD939], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, October 1823.

<sup>81</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/ff179-180 [NAD932], Joseph Cradock to John Bowyer Nichols, October 1823.

My dear Friend Wed. morn: 1823 179  
 I began a negotiation, but it is not yet terminated; - the Parties are most of them now in Town, so that I can neither state when I shall be at liberty to take my journey to London, or write any particulars. your particularity to any thing that comes from hence induces me to offer an unworthy remembrance. Mr. Combe informed me that he should see you in Town, and Mr. Gardiner has been here, concerning a new Vol. of his Melodies, Lord Hastings presented him to his M<sup>y</sup>, and he was graciously received; - Mr. Nichols will recollect that when Dr. J. was writing his Lives of the Poets, I procured for him from Lord Harbri, a valuable Manuscript Vol. of Poems, one I recollect was in the hand writing of K. J.; thinking a perusal of that Vol. in Tol. (perhaps entitled Tackville's Poems) for I have only a confused remembrance, might be useful I have through a Friend attempted again to borrow it, for your use. The answer is that the present Lord H. is inaccessible, that he lives chiefly in London under the care of a chere amie; - that he never sleeps at Stapleford, as he apprehends the house is haunted, that his fat Deer are neither sold nor given away, &c. Dr. Johnson died when I was at Marseille, I write to Dr. J. Reynolds, and his answer was that he found it in the identical spot I had pointed out, and it was immediately returned (through the Harbri's) to Stapleford. the chief talk here is about Robberies.

7. This letter of Joseph Cradock to John Bowyer Nichols, October 1823, shows the range of subjects covered by a single letter. PC2/1/ff179-180 [NAD932]. Private Collection.

Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.



Murders, such as that by Hannah Reed who drowned her husband at Gumley in 1825, and violent assaults, like that of Sir Willoughby Dixie on the Rev. Wright of Bosworth the same year are also covered in these letters. In 1825 Cradock wrote to Nichols in a state of excitement to report that,

'[...] Kibworth Church fell down. Part had been underbuilt for the new gallery and organ. Sir Willoughby Dixie has been sent to Leicester gaol for firing at the Rev Mr Wright of Bosworth when passing through the Park. He is wounded in the arm. [...] Three people have died from heat near Gumley. The bells at Kibworth were all destroyed by the fall. Mr Keck and Mr Ord are ill from depression. Cradock has heard from the Master [Stratford] who is wrathful about Kibworth church. [...] Cradock held the School Meeting in it and then with Sir H[enry] H[alford] and others had lights to examine the records under part of it. [...] Mr Parson of Leicester is architect for the gallery.'<sup>82</sup>

Although Cradock's financial embarrassment forced him to sell Gumley in 1823 and move to lodgings in the Strand, his proximity to Nichols only served to increase their correspondence. When he died, in 1826, John Bowyer Nichols noted in the obituary that he prepared for the *Gentleman's Magazine* that, 'On Mr Cradock's settling in London the intercourse became incessant and we doubt not that the daily correspondence which took place between them contributed to cheer the latter days of these two veterans of literature'.<sup>83</sup>

This volume of letters between Joseph Cradock and John Nichols is only one of many similar volumes of letters that were collected together and bound by John Bowyer Nichols during his custody of the Nichols family archive. I have identified sixty similar volumes in the Nichols sale catalogues of 1929 and 1951 and many more are listed in the catalogues of Nichols sales at the end of the nineteenth century; but the archive continued to grow long after the death of John Nichols in 1826. Other members of the Nichols family, notably John Gough Nichols and Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols, assisted their father in arranging the papers but also accumulated and collected many of their own, and it is their collections that will be examined in the remainder of this paper.

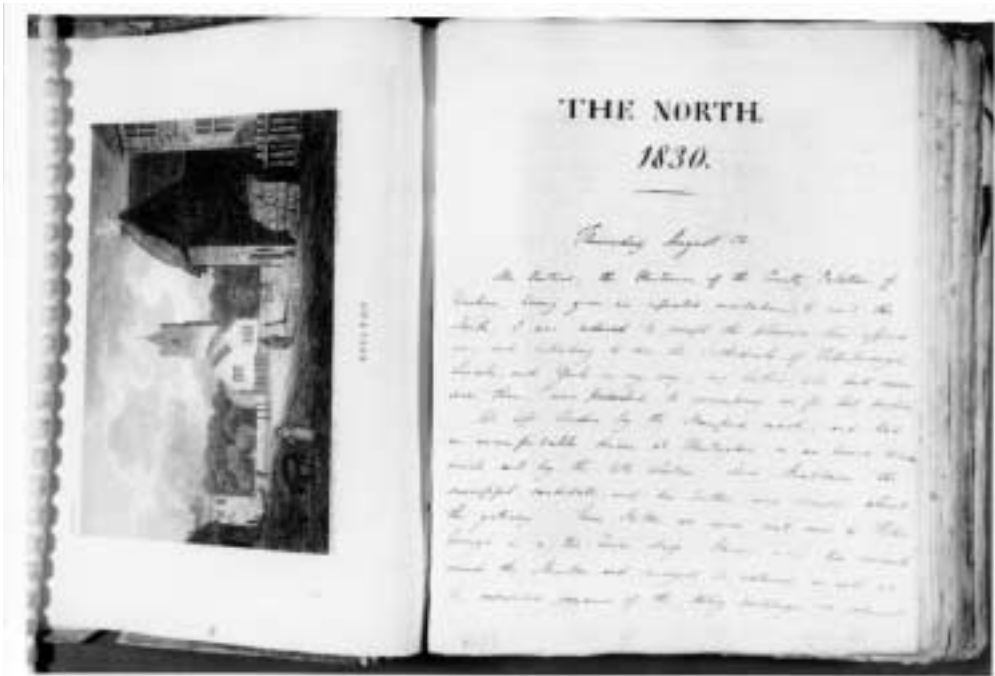
### John Gough Nichols

The diaries and travel journals of the Nichols family contain detailed accounts of their visits to many parts of England, Scotland, and the Continent throughout the nineteenth century. They were, of course, not unique in keeping such records; travelling was an adventure and many literate people recorded their experiences for the pleasure of their families and friends. The antiquarian interests of the Nichols family, however, give their writings an especial appeal to local historians. Those kept by John Gough Nichols in the early 1830s survive in a private collection and contain many references to Leicestershire (illustration 8). On 28 September 1830 he was staying with the Herricks at Beaumanor on his way back to London from visiting Robert Surtees (1779-1834), the historian of Durham. He noted in his diary how, at Leicester,

'In a cellar at the bottom of the street called Jury Wall I saw a Roman pavement found within a fortnight, at a house belonging I think to a grocer named Robins; it was about

<sup>82</sup> Private Collection 2, 'Cradock Letters', PC2/1/236v-r [NAD998], Joseph Cradock to John Nichols, 1825. 'Mr Parson' may be William Parsons (1796-1857), Leicestershire County Surveyor.

<sup>83</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine* 1827 i pp. 17-24. John Bowyer Nichols later reprinted these brief memoirs of Cradock in his completion of Joseph Cradock's *Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs* 1828.



8. The first page of John Gough Nichols, travel to 'The North 1830'. Nichols visited Leicestershire on his homeward journey. PC6/1/1 p. 1. Private Collection. *Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*

18 feet square, and was formed of a combination of beautiful patterns, but no figures (see a short account of it which I wrote for the *Gent. Mag* of October).<sup>84</sup> I also saw the Pavement at Mr Worthington's opposite the Town Goal, representing a man and stag, which has been discovered 130 years, and several times engraved. The chancel of St Mary's church is a memorably fine specimen of early Norman architecture.<sup>85</sup>

The same volume includes the journal that Nichols kept in September 1833 when he stayed in Leicester with John Stockdale Hardy (1793-1849). Their friendship and mutual research interests later led Nichols to edit and publish Hardy's *Literary Remains* in 1852.<sup>86</sup> Hardy introduced him to owners of notable houses or antiquities in the city and also took him on tours of the surrounding area. On 3 September 1833 they went to the top of the Newarke gate together, which Nichols tells us had

'been used for the last century & a half as the Magazine for the arms & clothing of the County Trainbands & Militia. [...] We also went into the ancient beadhouse called Trinity Hospital, & in the little chapel, found a fine female effigy, which I have no doubt is the "marble tomb" mentioned by Leland, of the Countess of Derby, the mother of King Henry V. [...] I also espied on the altar floor (although nearly

<sup>84</sup> I have been unable to find this article in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October between 1830 and 1833.

<sup>85</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey To The North' 12 August – 11 October 1830, PC6/1/pp. 72-73 [NAD1511].

<sup>86</sup> John Gough Nichols, (ed.) *The Literary Remains of J S Hardy* FSA Westminster: 1852.

concealed by ruddle [sic] ) several curious figured tiles of armorial shields, & a dimidiated fool & leopard.<sup>87</sup>

The diary also testifies to Hardy's preservation of the records and ancient monuments of Leicestershire,

'I should not have omitted that Mr Hardy took me to both his record offices – one a small fire-proof building in the garden behind the house in Friar Lane, contains the whole of the county wills the other, built by his great-great-uncle & predecessor in 1716, is a good sized room near the Gate of the Castle-yard. The adjoining gateway between the Castle and the Newark, was condemned to be pulled down, but Mr Hardy succeeded in preserv[ing] a considerable portion of it as a ruin: it had been used as a private theatre, I believe in connection with the tea gardens [...]'<sup>88</sup>

On Thursday 5 September,

'Mr Hardy went to hold a probate court at Loughborough, & I accompanied him. We saw on our way the church & cross of Rothley. I also looked thoroughly at Loughborough church inside & out (the clerk son-in-law to Webster, who was clerk for many years, & took the epitaphs of many churches for my Grandfather).'<sup>89</sup>

On 6 September they travelled by postchaise to picnic at the Roman camp at Burrow Hill with Mrs Hardy and visited Mr Hardy's summer-house at Long Newton.

'Towards dusk we began to ride homewards; but took in our way the fine old Elizabethan mansion of Quenby, which looked magnificent in the twilight. It is of three floors high, & I think old Beaumanor must have nearly resembled it. The roof is flat & leaded, forming a noble terrace. The housekeeper was excessively obliging in showing us the entire building including the garrets & large cellars, with a candle in each hand. The library (formed by the late Mrs Ashby, wife of Letham esq FSA) is particularly rich in topography, & I espied some valuable books of pedigrees, particularly a folio of Norfolk families, by le Neve. The children of Mr Story to whom the house was let a year or two ago, were permitted to injure some old family portraits in the upper room, particularly one old gentleman, whose eyes they put out! Under a table here I saw some very rich plaster casts of arms & mottoes of the Tudor era, lately brought from some distant place, the housekeeper did not know where. On the whole, this mansion is exceedingly worth seeing: it only wants some American creepers &c. to be allowed to clothe partially its great brick walls.'<sup>90</sup>

Nichols' appreciation of gardens and their ornaments can also be seen in these journals. On 10 September 1833 he and Hardy called on Mr Burbridge, owner of a large house on the south side of St Martin's church,

<sup>87</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 3 [NAD3222].

<sup>88</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 4 [NAD3222].

<sup>89</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 5 [NAD3222].

<sup>90</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/pp. 8-9 [NAD3222]. For a view of the west front of Quenby Hall, engraved by Walker after a drawing by John Throsby and taken from John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of Leicestershire* see Sweet 2000, as n. 5, p. 19 and Adrian Green and R T Schadla-Hall, 'The Building of Quenby Hall, Leicestershire – A Reassessment' in *Transactions of The Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* 74 (2000), pp. 21-36.

'The garden is beautifully laid out, & at the end is the best contrived grotto I ever saw formed of Matlock petrifications & stalactites. Divided within by open partitions or screens of the same material, with several mirrors, which reflect the rustic windows glazed with party-coloured frames in rustic work, & convey the idea of great-extent. It is said to have cost him £500. He was so obliging as to accompany us to the Town Hall, in order to show me the Town records: & I took moulds of two seals of Henry Earl of Huntingdon, who entertained King James I at his house in the High Street, Leicester.'<sup>91</sup>

Hardy introduced Nichols to many of his Leicester friends. On 4 September they

'went to the house of a man named Jones, who is by trade a mop-maker, but deals also in coins. He has a valuable gold ring found some years ago at Enderby. Mr Combes the bookseller & Mr Smith, head clerk of Mr Phillipp's bank, dined with us.'<sup>92</sup>

On 12 September, after spending another morning moulding seals at the Town Hall, they met with the Herricks at the race meeting and,

'By the invitation of Mr Jackson, who is Clerk of the Course, we afterwards dined at the Race Ordinary, where were present the Duke of Rutland, Lord Robert Manners & Mr Dawson two of the County Members, Earl Howe, & his two boys, Lord Curzon & [...] Mr Mansfield the High Sheriff, Sir Geo Beaumont, Mr Herrick &c &c. Mr Moore, of Appleby, was in the chair as Steward; & Mr Greene, of Rolleston, was drank to as Steward for next year. [...] It is a very unusual feature of a public dinner that characterises this – that the ladies join it: Lady Adeliza Manners, Lady Beaumont (daughter of the Archbp of Canterbury) several of Mr Mansfield's family &c &c were present.'<sup>93</sup>

The following day, after visiting more churches, Nichols tells us that, 'Mr William Gardiner, author of the *Music of Nature*, an agreeable man, but singularly enthusiastic on music & a great radical dined with Mr Hardy.'<sup>94</sup>

On 13 September Nichols left Hardy and travelled to Beaumanor to visit the Herricks, noting that,

'Mr Herrick has done a good deal around the house, particularly in draining the site of the moat, which was filled up 47 years ago, without any drain. Old Callis, still living, remembers that performance.'<sup>95</sup>

His involvement with the family was to be significant. Three years after this visit he began the Herculean task of examining and sorting the Herrick family archive. This is vividly recorded in his letters to his father, which came to light at the Bonham's sale in 1996 and are now at the Bodleian Library.<sup>96</sup> On 4 and 7 August 1836 he reported how

<sup>91</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 11 [NAD3222].

<sup>92</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 5 [NAD3222].

<sup>93</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/pp. 13-14 [NAD3222]. For Lord Robert William Manners (1781-1835), see Thorne 1986 as n. 78, pp. 533-4.

<sup>94</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 15 [NAD3222]. Nichols later subscribed to Gardner's memoirs, *Music and Friends; or Pleasant Recollections of a Dilettante*, London, 1853.

<sup>95</sup> Private Collection 6, John Gough Nichols, 'Journey to Leicester' 2-21 September 1833, PC6/1/4/p. 17 [NAD3222].

<sup>96</sup> They were bound into a volume of letters addressed to John Bowyer Nichols, c.1816-c.1840, now disbound into fascicules and held as Bodl. MS Eng. c. 6165-6.

he and Mr Herrick had been examining boxes of charters, old papers and letters. Mr Herrick's weak eyes had prevented him reading the old writing for long and so he was glad to have Nichols as his deputy. They were coming across many letters that John Nichols had used in his county history.<sup>97</sup> Between 1843 and 1862 John Gough Nichols arranged and bound into sixteen volumes over 2300 Privy Council and Treasury papers of the early seventeenth century that he found in the Herrick archive.<sup>98</sup> In the course of this work he found letters that John Nichols had written to the Herricks, which he copied for his father to paste into the volumes of 'Family Records'.

### Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols

Finally, we return to Mary Nichols, whose travel journals record her own visits to Leicestershire and whose impressive collection of autograph letters survives, largely intact, in private hands. Miss Nichols visited Leicestershire with her father, John Bowyer Nichols, in 1846 and the travel journal that she prepared between 1848 and 1859 from notes taken at the time now forms part 2 of volume 4 of her 'Journals of Various Excursions'.<sup>99</sup> It is clear that she also had access to the Herrick archive, for she includes anecdotes of the early history of the family by William Herrick (d.1705), written in 1688, that she had found in the family papers.<sup>100</sup> She also provides a wonderful description of the rebuilding and landscaping of Beaumanor Park that she witnessed during this visit,

'Immediately after breakfast Mr & Miss Herrick showed my father & I over the new house. It is built in the Elizabethan style, from the designs of Mr Railton, very nearly upon the same foundations as the house built by Sir William Heyrick, who lived in the reigns of Elizabeth & James; high in their confidence the first possessor of Beaumanor.<sup>101</sup> Of this House Mr Herrick has an old drawing which is framed. In digging the foundations for this house, the workmen discovered those of three former mansions, [...] The entrance to the present house is on the E. side, that of the last having been to the S. The exterior is now finished, except that the windows of the principal rooms are not glazed yet. Along the S. side of the house is a beautiful suite of rooms, consisting of Drawing Room, Morning Room & Library. The Drawing Room & Library are about 36 feet long by 30 & 16 high. The stairs are not yet built, & the plan of them is not quite settled: the space for them is very large. The house was begun about years ago. Mr Railton now says it is to be finished by Michaelmas 1847, but Miss Herrick hardly expects it to be before 1848 as Mr Railton has already put it off from time to time. The carpenters & plasterers are now at work in it to the number of 67, every day. A wide terrace, bordered with stone surrounds the house & to the S. on the site of the old garden, is a pretty flower garden & bowling green the turf of which is now being laid down. Mr Herrick has been taking away a great many hedges which formerly defaced the Park. [...] We then went to see the new Kitchen Garden, which is on the opposite side of the road, nearly opposite the pretty lodge. The green houses & hot houses are only just begun, much to Miss Herrick's annoyance, too late to be useful for this winter. When we returned to the House, we went to see the Stables which are

<sup>97</sup> Bodl. MS 6165/4/f384-5, John Gough Nichols to John Bowyer Nichols, 4 and 7 August 1836.

<sup>98</sup> He described this work in *The Athenaeum* 27 August 1870, pp. 274-5. For further information on these papers and his work with them see the Sotheby sale catalogue of Herrick papers, 15 December 1988.

<sup>99</sup> For further details of these journals, see the description of Private Collection 9 in Appendix 1.

<sup>100</sup> Private Collection 9, Mary Anne Nichols, 'Journals of Various Excursions' IV ii, 'Journal of a Visit to Beaumanor, Matlock, Birmingham', 16-26 October 1846, PC9/3/1, p. 28 [NAD3236].

<sup>101</sup> *DNB*: William Railton (c.1801-1877).

the only part of the old house left. In the coachhouse we saw a curious Oak Chair of immense size made from a tree grown in the Park: cut down in 1690. We also saw the curious old carriage built in London for W. Herrick Esq in 1740. The body is small and covered with leather ornamented with brass nails, the doors & other parts are nicely carved in ash the lining was of crimson cloth, but when the carriage was neglected some years ago it was abstracted by the villagers. The carriage part is remarkably large & strong, and the wheels very large. [...] Miss Herrick afterwards shewed us the Coachmaker's bill: it was built by H. E. Harlow: the cost of the various items of the carriage altogether amounts to £73.10 & of Harness for four horses £12, the whole bill £92.5'<sup>102</sup>

Miss Nichols also describes in some detail the new churches at Woodhouse Eaves, Copt Oaks and Anstey, where she approved of the decorated style and use of 'low pews',

'While we were in the church the architect who was but a common stone mason when he first put up the monument to Latimer at Thurcaston, was measuring his work in order to make his bill. He told Mr Herrick Mr. Waterfield had been most Liberal, he had made no contract as to price, but had desired all should be done in the best manner. This is the greatest instance of liberality I think I have ever heard of, and could only have been evinced by a man without a family.'<sup>103</sup>

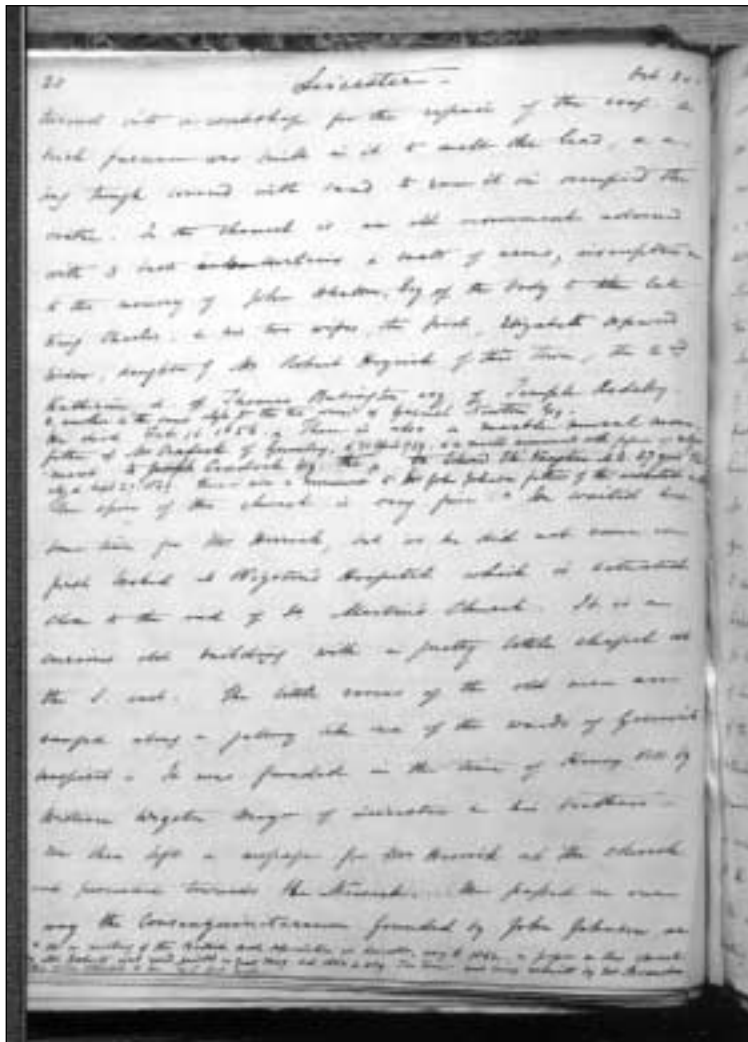
The architectural details in Miss Nichols' journals will be of considerable value to students of ecclesiastical rebuilding in the nineteenth century. Throughout the country she visited churches at the height of their 'restoration', clambering through piles of masonry and through shaky scaffolding to inspect the improvements. Later, when she worked up her brief notes for her journal she referred her readers to the latest architectural textbooks for further details of the works she had witnessed and pasted articles and reviews from the *Gentleman's Magazine*, *Illustrated London News* and other periodicals into the volume to supplement her own account. Her travel journals can be as 'dry' as Pevsner but they provide the modern 'architectural pilgrim' with an equally fascinating handbook (illustration 9).

On 20 October she and her father were in Leicester and, after calling in at Crossley's bookshop to see 'some nice books beautifully bound that had belonged to Mr Ord' she tells us that,

'Papa and I then went to St Martin's Church. It is a very large building, with Nave & Aisles, Chancel & Aisles & Central Tower, supported on Norman Arches. The S. aisle of the Nave is double. There is a good oak to the whole church, they are repairing that of the S. aisle. The Nave opens to the aisles by 5 pointed arches supported by clustered columns. The fine large windows throughout the church have all been spoiled, that at the W. end of the S. aisle & the most westerly S. window of that aisle have been lately nicely restored. In the S. wall of the chancel are three Sedilia, and against the E. end of the S. wall of the S. aisle are also 3 Sedilia under trefoiled arches and an ambrey. Against the E wall of this aisle is a curious picture of King Charles I kneeling with his crown & worldly goods in a bundle at his feet, and a ray of light from his eye to a heavenly crown. [...]

<sup>102</sup> Private Collection 9, Mary Anne Nichols, 'Journals of Various Excursions' IV ii, 'Journal of a Visit to Beaumanor, Matlock, Birmingham', 16-26 October 1846, PC9/3/1, pp. 6-8 [NAD3236].

<sup>103</sup> Private Collection 9, Mary Anne Nichols, 'Journals of Various Excursions' IV ii, 'Journal of a Visit to Beaumanor, Matlock, Birmingham', 16-26 October 1846, PC9/3/1, p13 [NAD3236]. The Rev. R Waterfield's generosity is also noticed by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, revised by Elizabeth Williamson with Geoffrey K Brandwood *The Buildings of England: Leicestershire and Rutland*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1989, p. 73.



9. Description of repairs at St. Martin's, Leicester, in Mary Nichols' journal of her visit to the county, October 1846. Private Collection 9, PC9/3/1 p. 20.

[...] The N aisle of the chancel is filled with the monuments of the Herrick family, but none of them are remarkable. They are chiefly inscriptions cut on slabs of slate & placed upright: they were in a sad state owing to the N. chancel being turned into a workshop for the repair of the roof. A brick furnace was built in it to melt the lead, & a long trough covered with sand to run it in occupied the centre. [...] There is also a marble mural monument to Joseph Cradock Esq, the father of Mr. Cradock of Gumley; d 20 April 1759.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Private Collection 9, Mary Anne Nichols, 'Journals of Various Excursions' IV ii, 'Journal of a Visit to Beaumanor, Matlock, Birmingham', 16-26 October 1846, PC9/3/1, p. 19 [NAD3236].

As John Bowyer Nichols' eldest and unmarried daughter, Mary stayed at home to look after him after her mother's death in 1846. From the 1850s, as her father's sight began to fail, she served as his amanuensis, helping to arrange the family archive. Her influence on the archive was significant. Like her aunt, Anne Susannah Nichols, she was a keen collector of autograph letters and formed the core of her collection from the literary treasures already in the family's hands. She augmented it by purchasing items at the sales of collectors like William Upcott and Dawson Turner and, by the time of her death in 1870, it had grown to comprise

'12 or more quarto cases mounted with portraits and others in large cases mounted but without portraits and a third series in other cases not mounted some in drawers of an Indian Cabinet and some in nest[s] of drawers wherever they may turn up'<sup>105</sup>

She bequeathed the collection to her nephew, John Bowyer Buchanan Nichols, son of her brother, Francis Morgan Nichols. One hundred and twenty-six years later I found it in an attic, in the same boxes and arrangement as described in her will. Unlike many collectors, who often discarded a letter after cutting out the signature, Mary treasured the documents she collected, mounting them to enable the address side or annotations on the reverse to be seen. She also mounted portraits and brief biographies of the writers with the letters and clearly saw herself as following a family tradition. On 25 January 1852 her aunt Anne Susannah presented her with a copy of the letter John Nichols had written to her in 1822 concerning autograph collecting that is cited earlier in this paper and enclosed her own letter of encouragement to her niece:

'My dear Mary Anne  
I have copied the above at your request, and wish that you may derive as much pleasure in your collection, as I have in mine; the interest my Father took in my pursuit, added greatly to the delight I had in it; you have also, a dear good Father, who will from his rich stores, increase yours.'<sup>106</sup>

Miss Nichols' autograph collection is a microcosm of the Nichols archive, providing clues to the ways in which it was accumulated and used by the family throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Letters to William Bowyer that John Nichols inherited in 1777 are found alongside letters to Richard Gough that, as Gough's literary executor in 1809 Nichols kept back for his own use rather than passing them to the Bodleian Library with the rest of his friend's papers. In 1826 these passed to John Bowyer Nichols who selected some examples for the autograph collections of firstly, his sister, Anne Susannah Nichols in 1826 and, during the 1850s, that of his daughter, Mary, but made copies of them to bind into the main sequences of letters. This is shown clearly by the copy that he made of Richard Gough's letter to Owen Manning (1721-1801), dated 6 February 1771, bound into a volume of their correspondence acquired by the Bodleian Library in 1947. It is annotated 'Copied from the original by J B Nichols Sept 26 1826 in order to give the original as an autograph to a Daughter & Legatee'.<sup>107</sup> Extensive editorial marking-up on many of the letters also shows that the collection includes letters previously used by her grandfather and father in both the

<sup>105</sup> Principal Registry of the Family Division, (Probate), 42-49, High Holborn, London, WC1V 6EA. Codicil to the will of Mary Anne Nichols, made 8 January 1870, proved 28 February 1870.

<sup>106</sup> Stationers' Company Records, London, Q5, fol. 10v. Anne Susannah Nichols to Mary Nichols, 25 January 1852.

<sup>107</sup> Bodl. MS Gough Gen. Top. 43 fos 18-19, copy by John Bowyer Nichols of Richard Gough's letter to Owen Manning, 6 February 1771.



Bishop of Ely (Mawson) To Richd Gough Esq  
 of Windsor Windsor Windsor Windsor

yr. Ely Sept 7<sup>th</sup> 1769

I recd lately y<sup>e</sup> Ordeal you  
 was so kind as to send me ~~lately~~ by  
 Mr. Mashers. And you must not es-  
 teem it flattery, when I say it is  
 an useful & entertaining book, & that  
 as far as I have gone in it, I have  
 read it with Satisfaction & Pleasure  
 And I doubt not but y<sup>e</sup> perusal of  
 it, will give y<sup>e</sup> same Pleasure to all  
 y<sup>e</sup> Lovers of Antiquity it has done  
 to myself. I thank you for it, & am  
 yr  
 Oblig<sup>d</sup> Hum<sup>b</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
 Matt<sup>r</sup> etc

10. Mattias Mawson (1683-1770), Bishop of Ely, to Richard Gough, thanking him for the first edition of his *Anecdotes of British Topography*. Annotated by both John and John Bowyer Nichols, printed in his *Literary Illustrations* III, 1818, p. 555 and now in the autograph collection of Mary Nichols. PC1/13/31, [NAD1393]. Private Collection. *Reproduced by kind permission of the owner.*

*Gentleman's Magazine* and other of their literary works. This is helping to identify anonymous or pseudonymous contributors to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, highlighting both the Nicholsons' editorial methods and the different uses that they often made of a single document (illustration 10). Many letters relate to Leicestershire. Box eight of the collection includes the original letter written by Joseph Ritson (1752-1803) to John Nichols concerning the value of State Papers for his county history,

'If Nichols will visit the Duchy Office and is granted access by Mr Russell, Mr Villiers or Lord Hawkesbury, he will find an immense quantity of important matter concerning Leicestershire of which it is probable no use has yet been made. Besides the Great Cowcher of the Duchy, which has an alphabetical table of the names of places, there is a very good index to the Inquisitions Post Mortem, an index to the Duchy registers compiled by Mr Topham, indexes of grants, leases, equity causes and revenue proceedings, together with some useful miscellaneous collections called Great and Little Ayloff. The Close and Patent Rolls from the erection of the Duchy down to Edward IV's time have unfortunately neither been calendared or indexed, but richly deserve one. If Ritson went there more often he would give Nichols every assistance he could.'<sup>108</sup>

The collection also contains letters to Joseph Cradock that John Bowyer Nichols, as Cradock's literary executor, did not bind into the volume now held in Private Collection 2. Other groups of letters on particular topics show the involvement of the Nicholsons in charitable bodies and learned societies. At least five relate to the Royal Literary Fund, of which both John Nichols and John Bowyer Nichols were registrar. Miss Nichols' autograph collection is particularly rich in letters from printers, writers and antiquaries that testify to her family's friendship with many of their clients. There are several letters from Maria Hackett (1783-1874), the formidable historian of cathedral schools and campaigner for the preservation of historic buildings.<sup>109</sup> She could be merciless in criticising their proofs of her works but clearly valued their friendship. In November 1826 she wrote to thank John Bowyer Nichols for sending her the first volume of Joseph Cradock's *Literary and Miscellaneous Memoirs*,

'[...] There is a delightful spirit of kindness and good humour which pervades the whole and she likes his easy colloquial style. She is sure Cradock must be a charming companion. Her mother and Mrs Capper are still more interested in his anecdotes than she can be, because he treats of times and persons more familiar to them. She will petition Cradock for a copy of some music which he speaks of with admiration. She has just returned from the Convocation of the Lords Spiritual at their metropolitan cathedral and grieves to see how little reverence is paid to these ecclesiastical ceremonies. The archbishop of Canterbury and bishops of London and Llandaff were the only number of the Upper House and the lower clergy were similarly represented. Most of the choir were absent. Half the music was omitted by accident and the other half miserably performed. Had it been a military assemblage it would have been different. The Latin Litany was beautifully read by the Dean of St Pauls.'<sup>110</sup>

Miss Nichols' role in arranging the archive is shown by her annotations throughout both her autograph collection and the volumes of 'Family Records'. Sometimes, if a

<sup>108</sup> Private Collection 1, 'Mary Nichols' Autographs', PC1/8/11 [NAD633], Joseph Ritson to John Nichols, nd. Printed in John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes* 1814, VIII, p. 134.

<sup>109</sup> Maria Hackett's *Regestrum Eleemosynariae S. Pauli Londiniensis* Privately published, 1817 and *A Brief Account of Cathedral and Collegiate Schools* Privately published, 1824 and 1827 are two of several works printed for her by the Nicholsons.

<sup>110</sup> Private Collection 1, 'Mary Nichols' Autographs', PC1/16/182 [NAD2504], Maria Hackett to John Bowyer Nichols, 15 November 1826.

hand was particularly difficult, she transcribed the entire letter. It is clear that her autograph collection, though augmented by purchase, requests and exchange in the same way as that of her aunt Anne, is still an integral part of the wider Nichols archive.

### The Nichols Archive Database

The Nichols Archive Project aims to produce an analytical guide to both the public and private collections of Nichols papers and, through a database, make them accessible to scholars working on the Nicholises, their literary and antiquarian friends, or particular aspects of their careers and interests. The guide will consist of a calendar of unpublished correspondence of the family, brief details of printed documents and a descriptive list of other documents accumulated by them. The initial aim of the Project is to calendar the letters in private hands in order not only to record their contents but, equally importantly, to preserve their original arrangement. In time it is hoped to add to the database details of the vast numbers of Nichols papers held in repositories around the world. For a typical record from the database, showing the fields used and a calendared letter, see Fig. 2

The database now contains details of nearly 4,200 letters and is already proving a useful research tool. One letter, perhaps written to the Nicholises as editors of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, may contain the germ of an idea for a book, while later letters from the same author allow us to trace the stages of production from the research and writing of the text, correction of proofs, commissioning of plates, distribution to booksellers. When sorted chronologically on the database the value and personal interest of these letters becomes quite clear, even though the original documents are dispersed in a variety of repositories and private collections. The value of the archive for archaeologists and local historians lies as much in the wealth of local detail contained in individual letters as in the evidence they provide for the central place of the Nichols press in the development of historical disciplines through the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The database indexes the documents by creator, recipient, date, location and series and permits 'free-text' searches to be made for a particular name, book or topic across the database as a whole. Indexes to the Nicholises' correspondents allow us to trace their contacts within the printing community and the worlds of local history and genealogical research and enable the letters of their correspondents themselves to be studied in chronological sequence. This is illustrated by Fig. 3 which is part of the index to letters on the database from Maria Hackett to John Gough Nichols. The database also contains biographies of principal members of the Nichols family with links to full transcripts of longer documents created by them, such as diaries and travel journals. There is also a link to a 'Chronology' which allows us to follow the domestic, business and research interests of the Nichols family, the itineraries of their travels and the productions of their press between 1745 and 1873. In these and other ways the Nichols Archive Project will enable scholars to discern the original contents and arrangement of a huge book trade and antiquarian archive now scattered by successive sales among repositories around the world. Eventually, it is hoped to use these materials to prepare a comprehensive biography of the Nicholises and their press; in the meantime I welcome enquiries, comments and criticism.

Julian Pooley  
Kingston, 31 January 2001

*Personal Details*

Julian Pooley is an archivist at the Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey, GU21 1ND. He has a degree in History from the University of London and a Diploma in Archive Administration. He has published a range of articles relating to the Nichols family and their links with the book trade and the antiquarian network. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in March 2001.

## APPENDIX 1

## SUMMARY OF PRIVATE COLLECTIONS OF NICHOLS PAPERS

- Private Collection 1*      *John Nichols*  
Catalogue of the library of John Nichols, c.1827, PC1/26/1
- Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols*  
Autograph Collection, including letters correspondence of the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* c.1778-c.1856, correspondence of the Nichols family, c.1778-c.1870 and letters from the collections of Richard Gough, Andrew Coltee Ducarel and Cadell and Davies, PC1/1-57
- Nichols Family*  
Volume of printed memoirs of John Nichols and copies of letters of condolence received by the family after his death, c.1830, PC1/24
- Private Collection 2*      *Nichols Family*  
Volume of correspondence between Joseph Cradock and the Nichols family, 1792-1826, PC2/1/-;  
'Family Records' volume XI, 1816-1817, PC2/2/-;  
'Family Records' volume XII, 1818-1820, PC2/3/- 'Family Records' volume XIII, 1821-1823, PC2/4/-.
- Private Collection 3*      *John Bowyer Nichols*  
Volume of pocket diaries and financial accounts, 1795-1805, PC3/1/1-10 [NAD1388-1430]
- John Gough Nichols*  
Letter from Francis Wrangham, nd [NAD2825]
- Private Collection 4*      *Nichols Family*  
'Family Records' volume VI, 1800-1803, PC4/2/- 'Family Records' volume VIII, 1808-1812, PC4/1/- ;  
'Family Records' volume X, 1813-1815, PC4/3/-.
- Private Collection 5*      *Nichols Family*  
Album of photographs of members of the Nichols and Rivington families, 19th cent., PC5/1/-;  
Photograph of Nichols and Morgan families, c.1865, PC5/2/-

- Private Collection 6*      *John Gough Nichols*  
Volume of travel journals comprising Nichols' journeys to Durham and the north in 1830; Cheltenham in 1832 and Oxford and Leicester in 1833, PC6/1/1-4 [NAD1511-1513 and 3222]
- Private Collection 7*      *Nichols Family*  
Photographs of the family at Holmwood Park, 19th cent. PC6/1/-.
- Private Collection 8*      *Nichols Family*  
Photograph of the family at Holmwood Park in 1870, PC8/1.
- Private Collection 9*      *Mary Anne Iliffe Nichols*  
Pocket diaries, 1823-1834, PC9/1/1-9 [NAD3223-3231]  
Travel journal vol II pt ii: Oxford, 1844, 1846 and 1848; Stamford, (Lincs.) and Hargrave, (Northants.), 1853. PC9/2/1-4; [NAD3232-3235]  
Travel journal vol IV pt ii. Beaumanor, (Leics.), Matlock, (Derbys.) and Birmingham, 1846, PC9/3/1, [NAD3236];  
Travel Journal vol X: Salisbury and Wilton, (Wilts.) 1854, PC9/4/1, [NAD3237];  
Travel journal vol XVIII pt 1: Paris, northern France and Belgium, 1853,  
Aix la Chapelle, and Dover, 1864,  
The Rhine, Germany, Switzerland and France, 1865-1866, PC9/5/1-3, [NAD3238-3240]
- Private Collection 10*      *John Bowyer Nichols*  
Correspondence, 1823-1837  
*John Gough Nichols*  
Correspondence, 1833-1857

APPENDIX TWO  
PRINCIPAL SALES BY SOTHEBY OF NICHOLS BOOKS AND PAPERS,  
1828-1951

- 16 Apr 1828      The Unreserved Portion of the Topographical and Miscellaneous Library of the late John Nichols [...] To which is added a Portion of the Library of another Gentleman.
- 5 May 1828      The Choice Theological and Miscellaneous Library of the Late Rev Dr Willis, Prebendary of Rochester, Rector of Bloomsbury and Vicar of Wateringham, Kent, to which is added the Remaining Portion of the Topographical Library of the Late John Nichols.
- 10 Feb 1843      A Choice and Valuable Selection of Topographical, Antiquarian and Historical Works from the Valuable Libraries of John Bowyer Nichols and a well-known Collector.
- 11 July 1856      A Valuable Portion of the Topographical Library of John Bowyer Nichols, containing [...] publications illustrating the History and Antiquities of almost every county in England and Wales, Antiquarian and Bibliographical Brochures.
- 24 May 1864      The First Portion of the Very Important, Extensive and Valuable Library of the Late John Bowyer Nichols, removed from Hanger Hill, comprising [...] many [...] distinguished books of County History [...] and some most valuable illustrations of the English Counties, occupying ninety-two large folio volumes, enriched with upwards of 6600 original water colour drawings by Fisher, Buckler, Coney, Shepherd, Capon and other Celebrated Artists; and a most extensive assemblage of engravings of the remarkable features of the Respective Counties, and other matter of much value to the Antiquary, Man of Taste, and future Historian; numerous privately printed books and many important works in archæology, heraldry, genealogy, history and other branches of antiquarian literature.
- 19 Dec 1864      The Concluding Portion of the Library of the late John Bowyer Nichols, comprising County Histories, with additional material and Manuscript Papers and other Important works in County History, Topography and General Literature, also some valuable books in quires.
- 4 Dec 1874      The Extensive and Valuable Library of the Late John Gough Nichols, comprising valuable Topographical Works and Illustrations of various Counties, Heraldry and Family History, Pedigrees, Seals, Monumental Rubbings, Antiquarian works and Antiquities; Collections of Autograph Letters on Literary Subjects, Curious Deeds with seals, Miscellaneous Rolls.
- 5 Apr 1879      Catalogue of Engravings, Books, Manuscripts And Autograph Letters, being the Remainder of the Collection of the Late John Gough Nichols, comprising Valuable Topographical Collections and Prints, Pedigrees, Antiquarian communications, Letters of

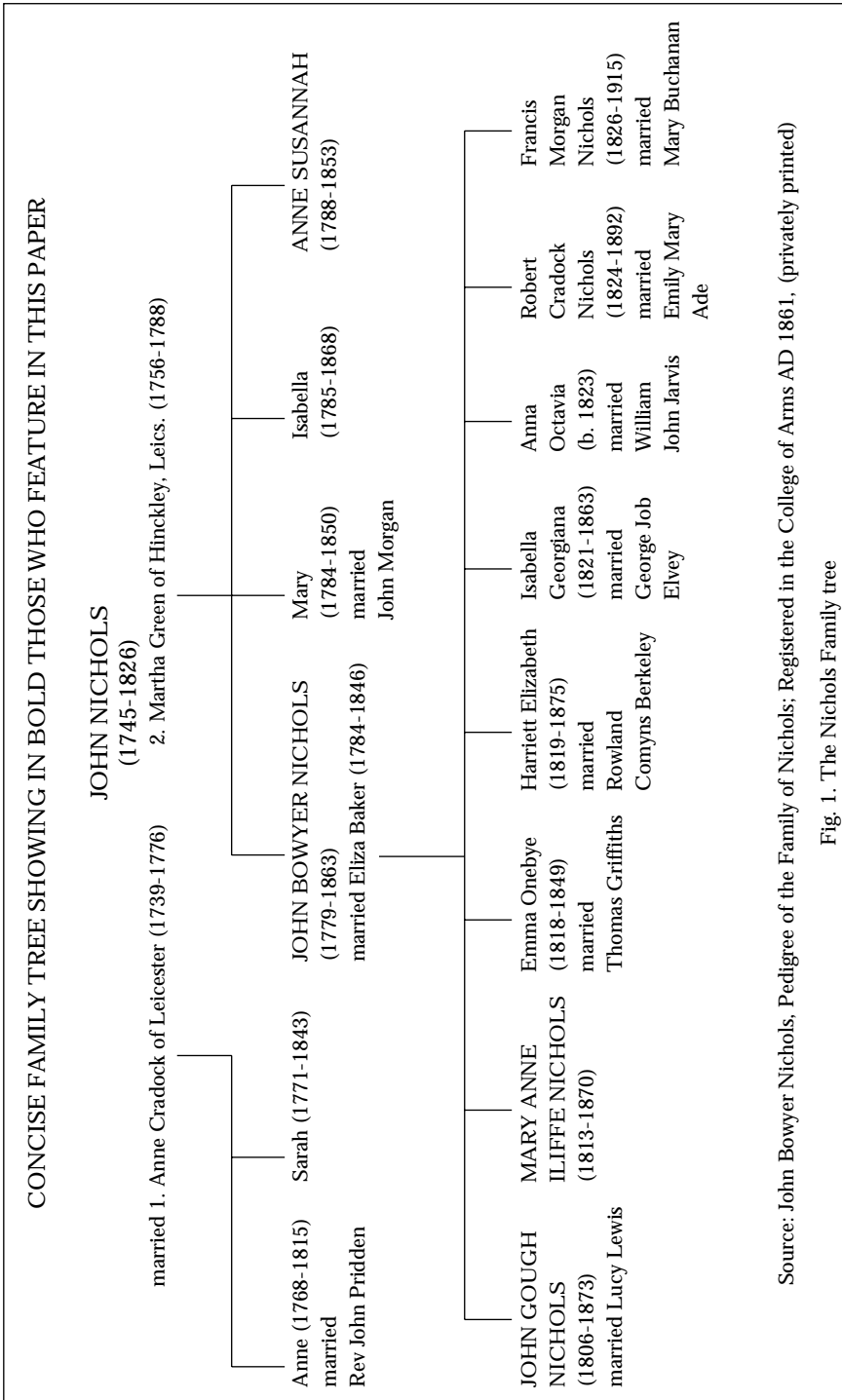
- Eminent Literary Men and miscellaneous documents, chiefly on landed property and legal matters.
- 25 July 1892 Catalogue of the Library of the late G W Galloway of Richmond [...] also English Topographical Engravings, Drawings and Portraits, collected by the late John Gough Nichols.
- 11 Jul 1929 John Bruce Nichols of Holmwood Park, Dorking. Sale Of Furniture And Pictures By Christies
- 18 Nov 1929 John Gough Nichols. 'Catalogue of Valuable Autograph Letters and Manuscripts, and Printed Books from the Collection of the late John Gough Nichols of Holmwood Park, Surrey.
- 5 Nov 1951 Catalogue of Valuable Printed Books, Important Literary Letters and Manuscripts including the Second Portion Of The Nichols Papers

APPENDIX 3  
NICHOLS 'FAMILY RECORDS' IN VOLUME ORDER

Family Records I-V	unknown -1799	Disbound and held as Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York
Family Records VI	1800-1803	PC4/2/ff1-169
Family Records VII	c.1804-1807	Disbound and held as Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York
Family Records VIII	1808-1810	PC4/1/ff1-176
Family Records IX	1811-1812	Disbound and held as Nichols Family Correspondence and Papers, Butler Library, University of Columbia, New York
Family Records X	1813-1815	Private Collection 4 but not yet examined
Family Records XI	1816-1817	PC2/2/ff1-206
Family Records XII	1818-1820	PC2/3/ff1-208
Family Records XIII	1821-1823	Private Collection 2 but not yet examined
Family Records XIV	1824-1829	
Contents dated 1795-c.1847		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2071
Family Records XV	1830-1834	
Contents dated 1795-c.1852		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2072
Family Records XVI	1835-1837	
Contents dated 1795-1851		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2073
Family Records XVII	1838-1840	
Contents dated 1795-1840		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2074
Family Records XVIII	1841-1843	
Contents dated 1785-1843		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2075
Family Records XIX	1844-1848	
Contents dated 1798-1848		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2076
Family Records XX	1849-1854	
further volumes not known		Bodleian Library MS. Eng. b. 2077



# THE NICHOLS FAMILY



**NICHOLS ARCHIVE DATABASE***06-Jun-01*

**NAD:** 856 **Original seen?:** Yes

**Date:** 12 **Month:** 08 **Year:** 1819 **Date Range:**

**Date Given:**

**Sender:** Cradock, Joseph **Recipient:** Nichols, John  
 (1742-1826). Author (1745-1826). Printer and author.

**Address from:** Not given **Address to:** Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street

**Additional Sender:** **Additional recipient:**

**Sent c/o:**

**Description:** 2pp ALS

**Contents:** After various difficulties Cradock has called a meeting for Kibworth School at Kibworth church in his own name for a week Monday. Sir H[enry] H[alford] cannot attend sooner, Sir G Noel seems to have forgot he was head of the Trust; the two other trustees are Mr Morpsett of Langton and Mr Marriot. Cradock means to name Sir H[enry] H[alford], Mr Palmer, Mr Haynes, Mr Ord, Mr Humfrey of K[ibworth], Mr Beresford and Mr Apthorp and nominate a friend to the schoolmaster Mr Goodman. Is he correct in stating that lands at Carlton Curlieu were given as early as the reign of Henry VII; that Sir Richard Halford and Sir Gilbert Pickering, ancestor of Mr Ord, were trustees; that old Lord Wentworth acted for the Noels and that the connection with the school arose from an intermarriage of that family with the Edwards". Can Nichols add anything to the account in the 'History of Leicestershire? Old Hanbury claimed as perpetual visitor, which is not the case, 'unless as self-appointed in his Ultra-comprehensive Scheme of Charity'? Neither is the rector of Kibworth a trustee as a matter of course. In a postscript he adds that, as Mr Fox is going to London soon, he will visit Nichols to receive his answer.

**Location:** Private Collection 2 **Reference no:** PC2/1/ff111-112

**Language:** English **Published:**

**Annotation:** Date added to top of fl11r in ink

**Annotated by:** Nichols, John Bowyer **Series:** Cradock Letters

**Remarks:**

865

Fig. 2. A calendared letter showing all the fields on the Nichols Archive Database.

NICHOLS ARCHIVE DATABASE: INDEX TO LETTERS					
Sender:	Recipient:	Date:	Location:		
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	15 11 1828	Private Collection 1		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		PC/16/182		
			4pp ALS		
			Series: Autographs		
			NAD: 2504		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	27 03 1829	St Paul's Cathedral Library		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		38.F.27		
			1p al		
			Series:		
			NAD: 819		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	8 04 1829	Yale University Library		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		Osborne Shelves Nichols box B		
			3 ALS		
			Series:		
			NAD: 391		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	27 04 1885	Guildhall Library		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		MS19027/3		
			ALS		
			Series:		
			NAD: 914		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	12 08 1886	Guildhall Library		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		MS10168/B		
			ALS		
			Series:		
			NAD: 910		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	12 02 1889	Guildhall Library		
(1783-1874). Writer and conservationist	(1806-1873). Printer and antiquary. Son of John Bowyer Nichols.		MS19027/3		
			ALS		
			Series:		
			NAD: 915		
<a href="#">See Full Details</a>					
Hackett, Maria	Nichols, John Gough	28 02 18	Private Collection 1		

Fig. 3. The result of a search on the Nichols Archive Database for letters from Maria Hackett to John Gough Nichols now stored in more than one archive, sorted chronologically.