

ON THE MARGINS OF SCHOLARSHIP: THE LETTERS OF ELIZABETH ELSTOB TO GEORGE BALLARD, 1735-1753¹

DAWN HOLLIS

Abstract

The letters of Elizabeth Elstob to George Ballard, here edited for the first time, provide valuable insights into the nature and function of scholarly friendship in eighteenth-century England. Elstob and Ballard, one an impoverished schoolmistress, the other a chandler and milliner, relied on one another in their early correspondence for both scholarly conversation and resources. During the course of their correspondence both experienced a change in fortunes, and later letters demonstrate the aid that Elstob provided Ballard in securing subscriptions for the publication of his 1752 *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*. Elstob's status as a woman scholar has received much attention. The introduction to this edition – which sets the letters in the context of Elstob's earlier published writings and overviews previous scholarship regarding her life and work – suggests that this emphasis detracts from Elstob's achievement as a scholar in her own right, and overshadows the potential of more nuanced discussions regarding the role that gender played in her intellectual pursuits. The introduction also proposes that the changing fortunes of both Elstob and Ballard demonstrate that social status and income could be as much of a barrier as gender to the supported pursuit of scholarly activities, and of access to formal intellectual communities.

Key words: Elizabeth Elstob – George Ballard – Anglo-Saxon – correspondence – gender.

Introduction

The letters of Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756) contained in Bodleian MS Ballard 43, and here edited for the first time, illuminate the later life and thought of a highly intelligent scholar.² Insights into her correspondent, George Ballard

¹ This edition began life as an undergraduate thesis in History at the University of Oxford: thanks are therefore due to Dr Lyndal Roper, for prompting the project; Dr Sarah Apetrei, for her generous and conscientious supervision; to Dr Simon Skinner, for his help and advice; and to the two examiners for their anonymous and helpful comments. I am extremely grateful also to the peer reviewers for *Lias* who provided detailed and constructive advice which has, I hope, led to a significant improvement in the final piece. Finally, thanks to Dr Kelsey Jackson Williams, for tireless proofreading, many fruitful discussions, and continued support.

² The letters here edited include all of Elstob's letters to Ballard, plus ancillary materials attached to them (such as Elstob's biography of her brother, William). They do not include four



Fig. 1: A historiated initial, said to contain a likeness of Elizabeth Elstob, printed in both her *English-Saxon Homily* and her *Grammar*.

(1706-1755) can be gained from her letters by inference, but as his missives to her do not survive, the focus of this edition is inevitably Elstob; scholar, Saxonist, editor, translator, teacher, pauper, school-teacher, and governess. To this end this introduction is largely devoted to an overview of Elstob's life and works. Firstly, a brief biography of Elstob, followed by a critique of previous academic writings on her life and works, will serve to set both the letters and the edition as a whole in their wider contexts. A detailed discussion of Elstob's earlier works – particularly her prefaces, which will receive focus as particularly strong examples of Elstob's early authorial voice and scholarly thinking – all published long before her correspondence with Ballard, will enable the reader to trace the underlying concerns and interests common to both. Finally, this introduction will set the epistolary exchange within the context of the changing fortunes experienced by both Elstob and Ballard during its almost twenty-year course. This introduction proposes that, taken as a whole, Elstob's earlier published works and her later manuscript writings as found in MS Ballard 43 reveal a scholar of great capability, nuance, and diversity of ideas.

letters from Elstob to Thomas Rawlins, also contained in Bodleian MS Ballard 43, for which, see n. 162, letter 11, this edition. Only two other letters written by Elstob are known to have survived: a letter of 7 February 1710 to the antiquary and topographer Ralph Thoresby (Bodleian MS Eng. letters d.219, fol.1) and, possibly, a letter from Elstob to Mary Pendarves, apparently given by the latter to the Duchess of Portland, Elstob's patron (Nottingham University Library, Pw E 8). For Pendarves see n. 179, letter 21, this edition.

Elizabeth Elstob – A Biographical Overview³

Elizabeth Elstob was born on 29 September 1683, the youngest of eight children. Both her parents died before she reached the age of ten.⁴ She then entered the household of her paternal uncle, Charles Elstob, whom she later termed ‘no Friend to Womens learning’.⁵ Nevertheless, she successfully learnt French under his roof, and in 1702 moved to live with her brother, William Elstob. During the thirteen years that she spent with William, a clergyman and Anglo-Saxon scholar, her intellectual pursuits flowered. Elizabeth wrote that her brother ‘assisted’ her in her endeavours and he was undoubtedly a successful scholar, publishing, among other things, an edition of the letters of Roger Ascham, the sixteenth-century educational reformer.⁶ However, Elizabeth was an impressive philologist in her own right, and any assistance was by no means one way, for she aided him in his editions of the Anglo-Saxon laws and Orosius.⁷

Doors opened easily for the young Elizabeth Elstob, living under her brother’s roof and moving in his scholarly circles. She became part of a network which included such individuals as Humfrey Wanley, Arthur Charlett, and – most significantly in terms of her intellectual development – George Hickes.⁸ Such access did she receive to the resources of the University of Oxford, of which her brother was a member, that she herself became known as ‘a female student in *The Univ*’.⁹ Ralph Thoresby, visiting the Elstobs in London in 1709, recorded a scene of intellectual collaboration within their domestic space: not only did the two work together and support each other in their different projects, they had even taught their ten-year-old serving boy to copy Anglo-Saxon manuscripts.¹⁰

³ A comprehensive biography of Elstob has been written, but never published: S. Huff, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, PhD thesis, Indiana University, 1970. Melanie Bigold, at Cardiff University, is currently preparing a joint biography of Elstob and Ballard.

⁴ M. Gretsche, ‘Elstob, Elizabeth (1683-1757)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8761>, accessed 8 June 2015.

⁵ Letter 25, this edition (all references to Elstob letters in Ballard 43 will be given using the number assigned to them in this edition).

⁶ [E. Elstob], *An essay upon glory. Written originally in French by the celebrated Mademoiselle de Scudery. Done into English by a person of the same sex*, London: printed for J. Morphew, 1708, sigs A2^r-A2^v, and M. Clunies Ross, ‘Elstob, William (1674?-1715)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8762>, accessed 18 May 2015.

⁷ M. Gretsche, ‘Elizabeth Elstob: A Scholar’s Fight for Anglo-Saxon Studies’, *Anglia*, vol. 117, 1999, p. 174.

⁸ K. Sutherland, ‘Elizabeth Elstob’, in H. Damico, ed., *Medieval scholarship: biographical studies on the formation of a discipline*, vol. 2, New York, 1998, pp. 60-61. See letter 4, this edition, for Elstob on Wanley.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

Elizabeth's life of scholarly productivity was cut short by William's death in 1715. Her subsequent movements up to her correspondence with Ballard in 1735 are unknown, though it has been suggested that she fled to escape imprisonment for debt, as William's death left her with no income and many obligations.¹¹ Her correspondence with Ballard is the most comprehensive source for her later years, from 1735 onwards. At the start of it she was 'getting her Bread' teaching in a village school in Evesham.¹² Her openness with Ballard makes it a relatively easy matter to piece together her life story from then on. During their early correspondence the author Sarah Chapone tried, and failed, to make Elstob mistress of Lady Elizabeth Hastings' charity school.¹³ However, in 1739, after visiting Bath, she was invited to become tutor to the children of the Duchess of Portland. Margaret Bentinck, who put together what was at the time the largest natural history collection in the country, was the granddaughter of Robert Harley, first earl of Oxford, and associated with members of the early Bluestocking circle, including its so-called 'queen', Elizabeth Montagu.¹⁴ Elstob seemed satisfied, after years of penury, to be living in comfort, teaching the Portland children and assisting Ballard in getting subscriptions for his *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (1752). She remained with the Portland family until her death on 30 May 1756.

Understandings of Elstob in modern scholarship

Elizabeth Elstob attracted attention and commentary more or less from the moment she began to establish herself in her chosen field. In 1715, the antiquary Ralph Thoresby declared her, in print, to be 'the justly celebrated Saxon Nymph', a sobriquet by which she had been known for some time.¹⁵ In later years, during her correspondence with Ballard, Elstob was the subject of frequent and fascinated inquiries from another acquaintance of his, William Brome, who asked after her health and – in a more antiquarian mindset – pressed that she should

¹¹ Huff, *Biography* (as in n. 3), p.190.

¹² Letters 1 and 25.

¹³ Thomas Keymer, 'Chapone [Capon; née Kirkham], Sarah (1699-1764)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39723>, accessed 18 May 2015.

¹⁴ James Fitzmaurice, 'Cavendish [née Lucas], Margaret, duchess of Newcastle upon Tyne (1623?-1673)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4940>, accessed 18 May 2015.

¹⁵ Ralph Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodiensis: Or, the Topography of the Town and Parish of Leedes*, London: M. Atkins, 1715, p.129. In a letter of April 1709 William Nicholson, Bishop of Carlisle, wrote to Thoresby that he had delivered a missive from the latter to 'our Saxon nymph'. *Letters of Eminent Men, Addressed to Ralph Thoresby*, London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1832, vol. 2, p.160.

write an account of her own life.¹⁶ Such interest has occurred and re-occurred in a variety of forms and contexts throughout the two and a half centuries following Elstob's death.

Both Elstob and her brother were the subject of discussion in John Nichol's *Literary Anecdotes* of 1812, and in 1868 'the Saxonist' found herself in somewhat eclectic company between the pages of *The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music & Romance*.¹⁷ In 1925 Elstob became the subject of a not entirely complimentary article by Margaret Ashdown, which, as the first essay about Elstob published in a modern academic journal, is cited to this day.¹⁸ More positive interest was shown by a reprint of the preface to her *Rudiments of Grammar* in 1956, which highlighted Elstob's knowledgeable, 'bold and aggressive defence' against Jonathan Swift's inflammatory indictment of Old English in his 1712 *Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue*.¹⁹

With the upsurge of interest in women's history in the late twentieth century, Elstob enjoyed a further and greater renaissance. Apart from a (sadly never-published) PhD thesis completed in 1970, more recent scholarship focussed on Elstob has taken the form of articles or essays, rather than book-length works.²⁰ Articles on Elstob written up to the first decade of the twenty-first century can largely be divided into two categories, sometimes overlapping: those which consider Elstob in the context of her sex, or those which consider her in the context of her discipline. Those in the first category range from the excellent to the

¹⁶ Brome wrote to Ballard regarding Elstob in at least seven instances which survive in MS Ballard 41: on 18 November 1737 (fol. 41); 3 February 1737/8 (fol. 42); 8 April 1738 (in which he wishes that Elstob would write her own life, fol. 44); 7 July 1738 (fol. 46); 20 August 1738 (fol. 49); 3 March 1738/9 (fol. 53); 25 February 1743 (fol. 73). See also nn. 165 and 166, in the body of this edition.

¹⁷ J. Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 2, London, 1812, pp. 114-140; and Mrs Caroline A. White, 'Elizabeth Elstob, the Saxonist: Outlines of the Life of a Learned Lady, in the (so-called) Augustan Age of English Literature', *The Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music & Romance*, vol. 33, second series, 1868, pp. 180-190. The latter represented only the first two chapters of White's (incredibly detailed) account of Elstob's life, which concluded in *The Ladies' Companion, and Monthly Magazine* [which had amalgamated with *The Cabinet* in 1870], vol. 37, second series, 1870, pp. 251-253. It was also published in *Sharpe's London magazine of entertainment and instruction for general reading* between 1869 and 1870.

¹⁸ Ashdown opened her article by reflecting that 'Elizabeth Elstob produced no work of the first importance, collected around her no brilliant circle, and left no fragrance of personal charm...' – claims which, at least in part, this edition may challenge. M. Ashdown, 'Elizabeth Elstob, the Learned Saxonist', *The Modern Language Review*, vol. 20:2, 1925, pp. 125-146.

¹⁹ E. Elstob, *An Apology for the Study of Northern Antiquities* (1715), Augustan Reprint Society, vol. 61, 1956, quote from the introduction by Charles Peake, pp. iv-v.

²⁰ S. Huff, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, PhD thesis, Indiana University, 1970.

problematic.²¹ Their very titles are telling. Margaret Ashdown asserted that Elstob's main, or even sole, claim to the attention of modern historians was her status as 'first woman student of Anglo-Saxon', and the emphasis on this nexus of sex and primacy is repeated in Norma Clarke's more recent work which identifies her as 'England's first professional woman historian'.²² Richard Morton, instead, focussed on the gendered nature of Elstob's apparent intended audience with his account of 'Germanic Philology for Women'. Morton's article is mixed in its assessment of Elstob: it concludes that she 'continues to merit respect as a philologist, a populariser, a polemicist, and a feminist scholar', but for all this her grammar is described as 'remarkably derivative', and her rhetorical activities range from 'gross flattery' and 'bravura' displays to a propensity towards 'dishonesty'. Elstob's supposed self-portrait (see figure 1, above on p. 168) is noted for its depiction of her 'frilly *décolletage*', and the 'sidelong squint' of the eyes deemed to be the result of 'incompetent drafting' by the sitter herself.²³

It is notable that articles in the second category, those which place Elstob within the context of the field of Anglo-Saxon studies, tend towards more detailed and more positive assessment of her scholarly achievements. Mechtild Gretsich (herself an Anglo-Saxonist) writes firmly of 'A Scholar's Fight for Anglo-Saxon Studies', and concludes a highly detailed analysis of Elstob's work and its intellectual contexts with the assessment that Elstob 'was a fine scholar in her own right, doing research of the highest standing then attainable in the field'.²⁴ Other works have firmly located Elstob (sometimes together with her brother) as a key figure in the formation of Anglo-Saxon and medieval studies as a formal historical and philological discipline.²⁵

²¹ In order of publication: M.E. Green, 'Elizabeth Elstob: "The Saxon nymph" (1683-1756)', in J. Brink, ed., *Female scholars: a tradition of learned women before 1800*, Montreal, 1980, pp. 137-160; R. Morton, 'Elizabeth Elstob's *Rudiments of Grammar* (1715): Germanic Philology for Women', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 20, 1991, pp. 267-287; N. Clarke, 'Elizabeth Elstob (1674-1752): England's first professional woman historian?', *Gender and History*, vol. 17, 2005, pp. 210-220. Note that the dates given for Elstob in the title of the Clarke article are incorrect; she was born in 1683 and died in 1756.

²² Ashdown, 'Learned Saxonist' (as in n. 18), p. 126; Clark, 'England's First Professional Woman Historian?' (as in n. 21).

²³ Morton, 'Germanic Philology for Women' (as in n. 21), p. 285, p. 276, p. 270, p. 275, p. 282, and p. 276.

²⁴ Gretsich's detailed analysis of Elstob's scholarship appeared in two parts. M. Gretsich, 'A Scholar's Fight' (as in n. 7), no. 2, pp. 163-200, and no.4, pp. 481-524. Quote from p. 523.

²⁵ See M. Murphy, 'The Elstobs, Scholars of Old English and Anglican Apologists', *Durham University Journal*, vol. 55, 1966, pp. 131-138; S. Collins, 'The Elstobs and the end of the Saxon revival', in: C. Berkhout and M. McGatch, eds, *Anglo-Saxon Scholarship: the first three centuries*, Boston, 1982, pp. 107-118; and K. Sutherland, 'Elizabeth Elstob', in: H. Damico, ed., *Medi-*

More recently, over the past two decades, the scholarly contexts in which Elstob has appeared – and the purposes to which she has been put – have become even more diverse. Her writings and experiences have become the subject of more nuanced gender analysis, for example in Shaun Hughes' consideration of the extent and limits of women's agency in eighteenth-century England, and in Melanie Bigold's analysis of Elstob's use of rhetorics of both femininity and masculinity in her polemical writings.²⁶ A focus on Elstob's role in the Oxford-based network of Anglo-Saxon scholars, of which she and her brother were both members, has been joined by discussion of her contacts amongst the early Bluestockings and other eighteenth-century female scholars.²⁷ The manuscript of which Elstob's letters to Ballard makes up a significant portion has been made the subject of a careful examination of the potential of epistolary networks for enabling individuals generally excluded from centres of learning to participate in collaborative intellectual work.²⁸ Elstob has been used to illuminate issues affecting the modern world of medieval scholarship, and has even inspired moving verses of poetry.²⁹ The name Elizabeth Elstob has become a byword for women's intellectual achievements in the eighteenth century, appearing everywhere from a book on women Latin poets (of which Elstob was not, in fact, one) to an account of the *seventeenth-century* 'republic of women'.³⁰

All this is to say that Elstob as a figure has been put to multivalent scholarly and polemical ends throughout the years. Her ubiquity, however, as a famous female writer has perhaps not always done her justice. Discussions of the apparently first woman scholar of Anglo-Saxon have at times strayed into gendered

eval scholarship: biographical studies on the formation of a discipline, vol. 2, New York, 1998, p. 59-73.

²⁶ See S. Hughes, 'Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756) and the Limits of Women's Agency in Early Eighteenth-Century England', in: J. Chance, ed., *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, Madison, 2005, pp. 5-21, and M. Bigold, 'Letters and Learning', in: R. Ballaster, ed., *The History of British Women's Writing, 1690-1750*, London, 2010, pp.177-178.

²⁷ See C. Pal, *Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge, 2012, pp. 268-272.

²⁸ L. Hannan, 'Collaborative Scholarship on the Margins: An Epistolary Network', *Women's Writing*, vol. 21:3, 2014, pp. 290-315. The similarity between the titles of Hannan's article and this edition is entirely coincidental, but certainly emphasises the impression that economic status, as well as sex, could result in the (sometimes) marginal status of both Elstob and Ballard at different points in their lives.

²⁹ A. Smol, 'Pleasure, Progress, and the Profession: Elizabeth Elstob and Contemporary Anglo-Saxon Studies', *Studies in Medievalism*, vol. 9, 1997, pp. 80-97, and B. Gould Gibson, ed., 'Daeg-Weorc (Day Work)', *Feminist Studies*, vol. 27:2, 2001, pp. 419-422.

³⁰ See J. Stevenson, *Women Latin Poets: Language, Gender, and Authority, from Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 2005, p.386; and Pal, *Republic of Women* (as in n. 27).

rhetorics of their own: one might take with a pinch of salt Margaret Ashdown's disapproving, early twentieth-century assessment of Elstob's advocacy for women's learning as 'aggressive', and one might wonder whether some of the language used in Morton's otherwise in-depth analysis would have been applied to a male contemporary of Elstob.³¹ More subtle biases may also have been at work. Carol Pal, in her study of seventeenth-century female citizens of the Republic of Letters, noted that whilst gender was a 'practical, instrumental' concern which scholars such as Anna Maria van Schurman had to navigate, it was by no means their 'primary consideration' – that space, of course, was inhabited by the subjects which they studied and how they might best intellectually approach them.³² Taking the past three hundred years of fascination and scholarship as a whole, Elstob's sex has all too often been seen as the most important fact about her, which has led to a relative lack of discussion (with a few honourable exceptions, including the work of Mechtild Gretsch) of her status as a highly skilled scholar in her own right.

That said, Elstob obviously *was* a well-known woman scholar at a time when this was a rarity. However, there are more complex stories to be told about Elstob, a female intellectual, and her gender, as suggested in the work of cutting-edge gender scholars such as Pal. How did Elstob navigate and indeed publicly construct her gender? When and how was her scholarship informed by her gender and when was it quite explicitly not? A case study of Elstob and Ballard together also provides opportunities to problematise a straightforward narrative of female exclusion from intellectual pursuits, as it would seem that both Elstob's and Ballard's financial circumstances were far more significant factors in their academic endeavours than their sex. The example of Elstob therefore raises questions of the intersectional nature of an eighteenth-century individual's ability to participate in scholarly activities. As has been highlighted above, recent work on and relating to Elstob has already begun to tell some of these stories and confront some of these questions – a pattern which, to do justice to the complexity of Elstob's circumstances, and to the value of her achievements, must continue into the future. With that in mind, the subsequent analysis of Elstob's works will aim to provide a balanced overview which acknowledges her deliberately gendered rhetoric whilst also emphasising the wider nature of some of her polemical concerns, and highlighting her attainments as a scholar regardless of her sex.

³¹ Ashdown, 'The Learned Saxonist', p. 9.

³² Pal, *Republic of Women*, pp. 9-10.

Elstob's Scholarship

Between 1708 and 1715 Elstob published four works, three of them in the realm of Anglo-Saxon studies, had proofs in hand for a fifth volume, and contributed to an abbreviated edition of Hicckes' *Thesaurus*. A consideration of these reveal the breadth of Elstob's interests and philological abilities. Where relevant, analysis in particular of the prefaces to her longer works provide insights into the range of Elstob's polemical arguments, defending her sex, the virtue of learning, and the value of Anglo-Saxon scholarship itself.

The Athanasian Creed (1708)

This, the first Old English text edited by Elizabeth Elstob, has largely been overlooked by biographers, perhaps because it was printed as part of a larger work.³³ It is a mark of the esteem in which the young Elstob was held that she was invited to contribute to William Wotton's *Conspectus Brevis*, a breviate version of George Hicckes' *Thesaurus* (1703-1705), intended to increase sales of that monumental work, which had proved commercially unsuccessful.³⁴ Elstob's contribution was a transcript of the manuscript Salisbury Cathedral 150, which Wotton deemed to be a notably early copy of an important text for understanding the early Saxon church.³⁵ For a first foray into the field of Anglo-Saxon studies, a contribution to a work associated with the renowned George Hicckes, the *Creed* was an auspicious beginning, and evidence of the contemporary recognition of Elstob's considerable abilities.

An Essay Upon Glory (1708)

This translated edition of Madeleine de Scudéry's (1607-1701) French Academy prize essay is a relatively slim pamphlet, and was published anonymously, with Elstob identifying herself as only 'a Person of the same Sex [as de Scudéry]'.³⁶ She dedicates the translation of the *Essay* to 'Mrs. Elstob, at *Canterbury*' – the wife Charles Elstob, her uncle.³⁷ She thanks her aunt for 'much kind Instruction and Incouragement', as well as for the 'Tenderness and Kindness' that she gave to her as an orphan, and explains that she dedicated the translation to her because

³³ Gretsck, 'A Scholar's Fight', pp. 174-5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 187-186.

³⁵ William Wotton, *Linguarum Vett. Septentrionalium Thesauri Grammatico-Critici, & Archaeologici, Auctore Georgio Hicckesio, conspectus brevis*, London: W. Bowyer, 1708, pp. 74-84.

³⁶ Elstob, *An Essay Upon Glory* (as in n. 6), title page.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, sig. A2r.

French, the language in which it was originally written, was one she learnt in her home.³⁸

In the preface Elstob summarises and criticises her chosen text. In spite of her praise for de Scudéry's 'Art and Eloquence', Elstob argues that her work would have been more truthful had it been written for the English Queen Anne, as opposed to the French King Louis XIV. Elstob then claims that 'the Sound of English Victories is now universally heard... since the blessed Succession of our most Glorious female Monarch...', envisaging her as a direct successor to Elizabeth I, and declaring that the two queens surpassed any English kings. Elstob's assessment is that the reader could greatly improve de Scudéry's *Essay* by mentally replacing any instances of 'Lewis' with 'ANNE'.³⁹ The pamphlet also contains a translation of an *Ode* written in praise of it, a short response from de Scudéry to the *Ode*, and selected passages from Cicero concerning glory. She dedicates the last to a friend, Mary Randolph, recalling 'the many happy Hours I spent with you... sigh[ing] out our Wishes... for a Liberty of being admitted to partake of the *Greek* and *Latin* Stores.'⁴⁰

These paratexts represent Elstob's most irrepressible statements regarding women's capacities, accompanied by highly patriotic ideas. In her later writing Elstob's concerns shifted, with focus also given to her arguments for universal access to learning and for raising the status of Anglo-Saxon studies. In her preface – and her choice of texts – in this first work, she wrote not in praise of a scholarly field, or in praise of the virtues of learning, but in praise of women – from the Queen of England to a learned female friend of her youth.

An English-Saxon Homily on the Birthday of St Gregory (1709)

Elstob dedicated this edition to Queen Anne, emphasising the role of queens in affirming and reforming religion by drawing parallels between her and the 'First English Christian Queen *Bertha*', the wife of Æthelbert of Kent, one of the first Anglo-Saxon kings to convert.⁴¹ The sixty-page preface is a masterful work of prose. Elstob's first argument, in favour of women's learning, is witty and incisive, targeting men who criticised female learning (commenting that their envy was 'unbecom[ing] [to] that greatness of Soul, which is said to dignify their Sex'),

³⁸ *Ibid.*, sigs A2^r-A2^v.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, sigs A3^r-A3^v and A4^v.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, sigs A1^r-A2^v.

⁴¹ E. Elstob, *An English-Saxon Homily on the Birth-Day of St. Gregory*, London: W. Bowyer, 1709, sig. A^r-A^v (dedicatory epistle). See Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, 1:25.

and expressing disdain for the ‘Diversions’ which were preferred for women, such as ‘tedious Dressings, and visiting Days’.⁴²

Her next argument defends her choice of subject. Although she addresses a female reader (musing that she may well ask ‘What is this Saxon? what has she to do with this barbarous antiquated stuff’), her argument that people should not be ignorant of the faith, customs and language of their ancestors applied to men as well as women.⁴³ Her explanation of her translation style belies her educational priorities, for she writes that she translated not with ‘Elegance’ but with a view to enabling the reader to ‘know the one by the other’; she intended her edition to be a learning tool for the Anglo-Saxon language.⁴⁴ That said, Elstob’s denial of the elegance of her translation should be read in the light of rhetorical modesty: Mechtild Gretsche, answering a perceived neglect of modern scholarly consideration of Elstob’s translation techniques, asserted that her translations displayed a high quality of both ‘accuracy and style’.⁴⁵

Much of the preface is occupied with theological discussion. Elstob has to defend her choice of text; St Gregory was a Roman pope, and Elstob was writing in a period of endemic anti-Catholicism. She achieves this by arguing that the historic Saxon church was closer to the Reformed church than it was to the contemporary, corrupted (at least in Elstob’s view) Roman Catholic church, and traces the lineage of the Saxon Church from St Augustine through St Gregory and back to St Peter.⁴⁶ She then gives a summary of Augustine’s mission to Britain, before presenting a selection of Anglo-Saxon prayers and creeds with a parallel English translation in order to demonstrate that the early Saxon church was ‘pure, and orthodox’.⁴⁷ In spite of taking a relatively new line by favouring Gregory so heavily, Elstob was working within a well-established tradition (begun in 1566 by Matthew Parker’s *A Testimonie of Antiquity*) by drawing connections between modern Anglicanism and the Saxon church in order to justify both.⁴⁸

This is followed by a summary of her sources and acknowledgements. She was clearly sensitive to the implications that could be made about her working in her brother’s field; ‘I have been askt... more than once, whether this Performance was all my own?... I have a kind Brother, who is always ready to assist

⁴² Elstob, *An English-Saxon Homily* (as in n. 41), pp. i-v.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. v-viii.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. vii-xiv.

⁴⁵ Gretsche, ‘A Scholar’s Fight’, pp. 494-497.

⁴⁶ Elstob, *An English-Saxon Homily*, pp. xiv-xv.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. xxix-xxxv.

⁴⁸ Murphy, ‘The Elstobs’ (as in n. 25), pp. 133-134; and Gretsche, ‘A Scholar’s Fight’, p. 169.

and encourage me in my Studies.’ Nevertheless, she also states that she felt it ‘no shame... to take any Advice where it may be so easily obtain’d’.⁴⁹ The issue of the overlap between Elizabeth and William’s work continues to problematise understandings of her achievements. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* entry on William Elstob cites as one of his ‘publications’ his Latin translation of the *Homily*, ‘edited and translated into modern English by his sister Elizabeth’.⁵⁰ Whilst it is true that William provided a Latin translation of the *Homily* which appears in the published edition, to infer that the work was mainly William’s is an overstatement. The Latin translation is not as integral a part of the text as the preface and notes written by Elizabeth, and to give undue credit to William for the *Homily* would be akin to claiming that Elizabeth should be credited for William’s edition of Orosius’ *Historiarum adversum paganos libri VII* (specimen published 1699), with which she helped. The *ODNB* implies that Elizabeth’s role in the *Homily* was secondary to William’s, when the very opposite was true.⁵¹

The *Homily* itself is in Old English with parallel English translation and copious notes. This is followed by the Latin translation, introduced by William, dedicating it to his ‘most beloved’ sister.⁵² There follows an appendix ‘Containing several Epistles of St. Gregory, and Notes, That Illustrate the foregoing *Homily*’, in both Latin and English.⁵³ As a physical object the *Homily* possesses a certain air of prestige; its printer, William Bowyer, was well known for his lavish scholarly editions, whilst Elstob engaged a prominent engraver to produce engravings throughout the text.⁵⁴ Although it has received mixed reception in twentieth-century scholarship – Margaret Ashdown, hinted that ‘pompous’ was a reasonable epithet to apply to it – Mechtild Gretsch has identified it as an attempt to produce a ‘comprehensive Gregory dossier, which would satisfy the needs of both the specialist and the general reader’.⁵⁵ She has also argued that Elstob, in spite of her claims to translating with simplicity rather than elegance

⁴⁹ Elstob, *English-Saxon Homily*, p. lviii.

⁵⁰ M. Clunies Ross, ‘Elstob, William (1674?-1715)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*,

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8762>, accessed 18 May 2015. Murphy notes that for all that William Elstob is relatively well-remembered, in terms of his contemporaneous performances his sister ‘certainly eclipse[d] him’. Murphy, ‘The Elstobs’, p. 137.

⁵¹ See addendum to letter 5 in this edition.

⁵² Elstob, *English-Saxon Homily*, sig. G4^r.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, third pagination, starting on p. 1.

⁵⁴ Hughes, ‘Women’s Agency’ (as in n. 26), p. 8.

⁵⁵ Ashdown, ‘Learned Saxonist’, p. 131 and Gretsch, ‘A Scholar’s Fight’, p. 505.

in mind, produced a remarkably eloquent and accurate translation.⁵⁶ It should be noted that in translating into Modern English, Elstob was not deliberately making Old English texts accessible to women (as has previously been claimed), but was rather following a scholarly tradition which, if not universally followed, dated back to Matthew Parker.⁵⁷ For a first major work, Elstob's edition of the *Homily* was an impressive achievement, and its contents reveal her laying out her scholarly and methodological priorities, whilst also beginning to negotiate the role of a 'learned lady' publishing in the masculine realm of philological scholarship.

Some Testimonies of Learned Men (1713)

This pamphlet was printed in support of Elstob's planned edition of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, and provides an insight into the intellectual networks in which she worked and her vision for her never-published edition. It takes the form of a letter written to Charles Elstob. Elstob writes that she hopes her letter might be an 'inducement, to many Ingenious Persons' to subscribe to the work.⁵⁸ The 'testimonies' which she relates largely focus on the intellectual and religious value of the works of Ælfric, although Elstob also promotes her own abilities by pointing out that both Oxford and Cambridge had subscribed for copies, and that Oxford had even cast a new Anglo-Saxon fount for the printing of her edition.⁵⁹

'Learned men' quoted by Elstob include the Anglo-Saxonist George Hickes, who argued that the homilies 'taught the Faith pure and intire', the patristic scholar William Cave, who wrote that Ælfric was 'learned above the common sort', and the non-juring bishop, Jeremy Collier, who termed Ælfric's homilies 'the Doctrine of the Church of England'.⁶⁰ Having given these testimonies in favour of the value of the homilies themselves, Elstob goes on to tackle potential objections to her proposal as a whole. She disarms any objection to the inaccessibility of the language by explaining that she will give a full translation in English. She also justifies her intention to include the Anglo-Saxon text by pointing out that 'there are some of that Curiosity which wou'd make them equally desirous to see the Original', though one might detect the unwritten statement that as far as Elstob was concerned, not

⁵⁶ Gretsche, 'A Scholar's Fight', pp. 495-496 and pp. 497-498.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 497-498.

⁵⁸ E. Elstob, *Some Testimonies of Learned Men, In Favour of the Intended Edition of the Saxon Homilies*, London: W. Bowyer, 1713, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁹ Elstob, *Testimonies* (as in n. 58), pp. 4-5.

⁶⁰ Elstob, *Testimonies*, quoting Hickes, p.7; quoting Cave, p.10; quoting Collier, p. 12.

including a translation would make her text inaccessible, whilst omitting the original would render it unscholarly.⁶¹

Elstob also hints at the form the edition would have taken. In her series of potential objections she notes that the ‘Beautifulness of the Edition’ might be ‘complain’d of’. Her defence of this is somewhat strained, arguing that just as a woman’s garb affected the esteem in which she was held, so too the ‘Elegance and Ornament’ of her edition would add to the ‘Honour of a Nation’.⁶² Elstob may have genuinely believed that the finery of her edition could add to the status of Anglo-Saxon studies (and thus of England itself), but she notes that the work is to be published ‘at the sole Charge of the Editor’.⁶³ Possibly, the honour with which Elstob was concerned was not national but personal – for what greater marker of her ascendancy as a scholar than a finely printed edition of a series of homilies which, as she demonstrated in her *Testimonies*, were vital for an understanding of the true English church?

The Rudiments of Grammar for the English-Saxon Tongue (1715)

Elstob’s last published work, as the first Anglo-Saxon grammar to be written in English rather than Latin, was ground-breaking. A formidable linguist herself, Elstob was dedicated, in both her publications and her teaching, to accessibility. In a letter to Ballard over twenty years after her *Rudiments*, she informed him that, in spite of the apparent ‘Meanness’ of Lady Hasting’s charity school, she ‘shou’d think it as Glorious an Employment, to Instruct those Poor Children, as... the Children of the Greatest Monarch’.⁶⁴

Where the preface to the *Homily* defended the subject matter, here Elstob defends the language itself. She addresses the preface to Hickeys, and writes that she was inspired to produce the grammar in English by a female friend who had wanted to learn the language, but whom Elstob could not help personally due to distance; she thus produced the *Grammar* so that ‘others of my own Sex’ could learn Anglo-Saxon. This is not, however, her only concern, for she rapidly moves to counter various criticisms of the language itself; that it was ‘barbarous’ and ungrammatical, or monosyllabic and unpleasant to the ear.⁶⁵ She argues that a national language is an ‘Ornament’, that Anglo-Saxon was not barbarous, but

⁶¹ Elstob, *Testimonies*, pp. 15-16.

⁶² Elstob, *Testimonies*, p. 16.

⁶³ Elstob, *Testimonies*, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁴ Letter 6.

⁶⁵ E. Elstob, *The Rudiments of Grammar for the English-Saxon Tongue, First Given in English: With an Apology For the Study of Northern Antiquities*, London: W. Bowyer, 1715, p. iv and xi.

strong in its hard consonants – ‘So that the worst that can be said... of our Forefathers is, that they spoke as they fought, like Men.’⁶⁶ Her argument is largely posed against the criticisms of Jonathan Swift (not named in the preface, but explicit in context) against Old English, and she concludes her defence of the monosyllabic nature of Old English with a series of crushing quotations of verses from noted English poets written in monosyllables, including an example from Swift’s own pen.⁶⁷ Years later, George Ballard concluded that he thought her argument so conclusive that it should have ‘deterred all others from... venturing in this affair’.⁶⁸

The form of the *Grammar* has in recent years been deplored as ‘remarkably derivative’.⁶⁹ However, Gretsche has pointed out that Elstob’s achievement was in synthesising the work of Hickes and Edward Thwaites with Ælfric’s Latin grammar written in Old English, and in using Latin grammatical terminology translated into Old English to organise her grammar and to give it a necessary air of classical vindication.⁷⁰ It should be noted that Richard Morton criticised this move whilst also, in the very same paragraph, admitting that a modern ‘authoritative analysis of the Old English syntax’ took a similar approach, because the author could think of none more serviceable.⁷¹ Thus, in spite of the criticism meted out against it, Elstob’s *Grammar* was a significant achievement, and its preface demonstrates her at her most fiery – in defence of her chosen discipline.

The English-Saxon Homilies of Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury

Partial proofs of this work unpublished work, along with Elizabeth’s working papers, do survive.⁷² In spite of their limited nature, the proofs are revealing.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. v-xi. Previous works of modern-day scholarship have discussed Elstob’s use of ideas of femininity in her preface to the *Grammar* (for example in her emphasis on Anglo-Saxon as a ‘mother’ tongue), but this passage reveals that she also utilised a rhetoric of masculinity in favour of her language of study. See Bigold, ‘Letters and Learning’ (as in n. 26), pp. 177-178.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. xvi-xxviii. Swift is quoted on p. xxvii (‘Then since you now have done your worst, / Pray leave me where you found me first’).

⁶⁸ E. Elstob, *Northern Antiquities* (as in n. 19), pp. iv-v.

⁶⁹ Morton, ‘Philology for Women’, pp. 276-7.

⁷⁰ Gretsche, ‘A Scholar’s Fight’, pp. 507-509 and pp. 511-512.

⁷¹ Morton, ‘Philology for Women’, p. 283. For further analysis of the relationship between Elstob’s *Grammar* and that of Hickes and Thwaites, see S. Hughes, ‘The Anglo-Saxon Grammars of George Hickes and Elizabeth Elstob’, in: Berkhout and McGatch, eds, *Anglo-Saxon Scholarship* (as in n. 25), pp. 119-147.

⁷² E. Elstob, *The English-Saxon Homilies of Ælfric, Arch-Bishop of Canterbury*, incomplete (1715?). Transcriptions in Elizabeth and William’s hands can be found at the British Library in Lansdowne MS 370-374, Egerton MS 838, and Stowe 985.

Elstob's interest in Ælfric is perhaps explained by his own preface, in which he declared that he wrote in 'Plain English' (Anglo-Saxon) for the 'edification of the ignorant' – much like Elstob did.⁷³ Bearing out her predictions regarding the physical aspect of the edition in her *Testimonies*, the proofs suggest that the book would have been a small folio and would likely have been over three hundred pages in length. They are printed in both red and black ink, with parallel-text Anglo-Saxon and English translation, and spaces left for the insertion of engraved capitals. Elstob's prescience in translating and editing Ælfric has not been widely imitated; the *Early English Text Society* edition does not translate the Anglo-Saxon, and the only edition to do so – compiled in the mid-nineteenth century – is far more stilted in its translation.⁷⁴ In spite of her claim in the *English-Saxon Homily* that her main priority when translating was accuracy, not elegance, her performance in these proofs demonstrates that she was a linguist and wordsmith of no mean skill, providing translations that were both clear and readable. Given the lack, even today, of an edition of Ælfric's sermons that combines both a detailed critical apparatus with a good English translation, there is every chance that Elstob's final work would have long been the definitive edition, had it but reached completion.

Elstob's achievements

This overview of Elstob's works demonstrates her to be a scholar of wide interests and considerable abilities. She was not shy of using her work to make political points – *An Essay Upon Glory* being an overt example of this – but she was also dedicated to producing high-quality editions of key texts which could open up the field of Anglo-Saxons studies to a wider audience. Elstob was not just a polemicist, but a diligent and talented scholar, as evidenced by the assessments of modern Anglo-Saxonists such as Mechtild Gretsch. In assessing her works, care should be taken not to reduce Elstob to the status of a 'woman scholar' who was remarkable only for being a female in the academic sphere. Elizabeth Elstob may have been an incredible woman, but she was also an important and successful scholar, regardless of her sex.

George Ballard – A Biographical Overview

George Ballard was baptised on 14 February 1706 at Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire, the eldest son of a chandler and a midwife.⁷⁵ He was raised

⁷³ Elstob, *The English-Saxon Homilies of Ælfric* (as in n. 72), p.1.

⁷⁴ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series Text*, P. Clemos, ed., EETS, OUP, 1997. B. Thorpe, ed. and trans., *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church*, 2 vols, London, 1844, 1846.

⁷⁵ D. Vaisey, 'Ballard, George (1705/6-1755)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1235>, accessed 8 June 2015.

by and lived for most of his life with his mother, and trained as a tailor of women's clothing.⁷⁶ His sister brought him 'little historical twelve penny' books as a young boy, and introduced him to numismatics.⁷⁷ His mentor in antiquarianism, Richard Graves, introduced him to Thomas Hearne, second keeper of the Bodleian, and Ballard slowly gained access to a scholarly network centring on Oxford.⁷⁸ At twenty-one he aspired to enter the University, but was encouraged by Hearne, via Graves, to remain as a tailor with a steady income.⁷⁹ The contrast between the limitations placed on Ballard, with his humble roots, and the freedom with which the young and relatively genteel Elizabeth Elstob accessed the learned circles of Oxford would suggest that the barriers around the eighteenth-century scholarly world made as much if not more reference to an individual's socio-economic standing than it did to their sex.⁸⁰ During his adult years, in addition to corresponding with a wide range of scholars and antiquaries including William Broome, and, of course, Elstob, Ballard also made the acquaintance of Sarah Chapone.⁸¹ His life before finally coming to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1750 – thanks to an annuity offered by Lord Chedworth – seems to have been a relatively quiet one.⁸² His *Memoirs of Several Ladies* was his only published work.⁸³ He died on 24 June 1755 from gallstones – though Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes* ascribed his death to 'too intense application to his studies'.⁸⁴

A significant consideration in treating the correspondence between Elstob, a great female scholar, and Ballard, a champion of women's learning, is the issue of whether Ballard was influenced by her in producing his *Memoirs*. In the

⁷⁶ See letter 5 of January 13th 1736 and letter 29 of January 26th 1740 in this edition.

⁷⁷ G. Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: Who have been celebrated for their writings of skill in the learned languages, arts and sciences*, R. Perry, ed., Detroit, 1985, introduction, pp. 14-15.

⁷⁸ Perry, ed., *Memoirs* (as in n. 77), pp. 16-17.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁸⁰ Cf. Hughes, 'Women's Agency', p. 7.

⁸¹ See MS Ballard 41, fols 19-20 for an example of his correspondence with Broome. For Chapone, see Perry, *Memoirs*, p. 21, and MS Ballard 43, fols 134, 136 and 159 for letters from her to Ballard.

⁸² John Thynne Howe, second baron Chedworth (1714-1762) is said to have originally offered Ballard an annuity of £100, but Ballard responded that £60 would be more than sufficient for his needs. Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, pp. 18-19 and pp. 39-40; Vaisey, 'Ballard, George' (as in n. 75); and G. Cockayne *et. al.*, *The Complete Peerage*, vol. iii, London, 1936, p. 157.

⁸³ For a discussion of recent criticism of Ballard, and an analysis of the rhetoric and methods behind the *Memoirs*, see Melanie Bigold, "'Bookmaking Out of the Remains of the Dead": George Ballard's *Memoirs of Several Ladies* (1752)', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 38:2, 2014, pp. 28-46.

⁸⁴ See Vaisey, 'Ballard, George', and Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes* (as in n. 17), p. 470.

introduction to a fine modern edition of his only publication, Ballard is overshadowed by Elstob: Ruth Perry states that Elstob was ‘the woman to whom we ultimately owe this book, for the idea of a volume of biographical sketches of learned women originated with her’, and she was responsible for ‘literally suggesting the idea to him’.⁸⁵ Although there is evidence in Elstob’s letters to Ballard that she aided him in some aspects of research for the *Memoirs* – for example in procuring a copy of *Lady Packington’s Prayers* for him – it is not evident that she suggested his basic subject-matter.⁸⁶ The subject may have been mooted when they met and spoke in person, but any proof of this is irrecoverable.

The only potential literary evidence that Elstob directly inspired the *Memoirs* is MS Ballard 64.⁸⁷ This notebook contains brief notes by Elstob on thirty-nine notable women, supplemented by additions and corrections in Ballard’s hand. At first glance, the similarities between Elstob’s notes and Ballard’s *Memoirs*, and the fact that Ballard annotated the notebook, would seem to imply that Ballard used the notebook for the foundation of his work. However, notes on the inner paste-down indicate that Elstob procured the book on 12 August 1709, whilst Ballard purchased it from a Gloucestershire bookseller in June 1747 (it was evidently one of the many books and manuscripts which Elstob lost on her brother’s death).⁸⁸ As early as 1738 Ballard had asked Elstob for an account of Mary Astell, a later subject of the *Memoirs*, and by 1750 was seeking her help in procuring subscriptions.⁸⁹ Work had likely commenced on the *Memoirs* long before Ballard purchased Elstob’s notebook. Moreover, given the warm friendship revealed in the letters, it seems unlikely that Ballard would fail to acknowledge Elstob in his preface had he owed its inception to her – as it is she receives one small footnote explaining that the “ingenious Mrs Elstob” informed him that Arabella Seymour’s papers survived in the Harleian and Longleat libraries.⁹⁰ Finally, whilst there is overlap between Ballard 64 and the *Memoirs*, the notebook is immensely cursory – not much more

⁸⁵ Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 21 and p. 24.

⁸⁶ Letter 40 in this edition.

⁸⁷ Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 25.

⁸⁸ Bodleian MS Ballard 64. The notebook also contains a series of recipes, in a third hand. Possible, Elstob bought the notebook used, or the recipes were added after Elstob parted with the notebook, but before Ballard purchased it. Ballard does not seem to mention to Elstob that he bought her notebook, although it is intriguing that his acquisition of it took place during what may be a deliberate ‘gap’ in the correspondence preserved in MS Ballard 43. See n. 151, letter 8, and n. 201, letter 31, this edition. For Elstob’s loss of her books and manuscripts, see letter 31.

⁸⁹ Letters 23 and 32.

⁹⁰ G. Ballard, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain: Who have been celebrated for their writings or skill in the learned languages, arts and sciences*, Oxford: W. Jackson, 1752, p. 249, and Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 241.

than a list – and there are many women in the *Memoirs* absent from it. Elstob and Ballard were interested in similar issues, finding more than enough to discuss over two decades' of correspondence. Elstob advised Ballard, procured sources for him, and finally helped to make the *Memoirs* a printed reality by seeking subscribers, and she may have inspired him in the sense of demonstrating through her own example what a learned lady could achieve. Nevertheless, Ballard's *Memoirs* were his own work, and to imply otherwise seems as problematic for Elstob's legacy as any underestimation of her achievements elsewhere.

The Lives Around the Letters

The title of this edition accurately depicts the mutual status of Elstob and Ballard when they first corresponded in 1735. In her twenties Elstob had been at the height of her success, but by the time Ballard first wrote to her, she was almost fifty-two, living in poverty and obscurity, and earning her keep teaching the local children of Evesham. Ballard would later become a published writer and end his days at Magdalen College, but in 1735 could claim little standing in the scholarly world, as merely a tailor and milliner with antiquarian interests and a circle of intellectual correspondents. Existing on the 'margins of scholarship', these two individuals made contact at crucial points in both their lives – when Elstob was at her lowest ebb and whilst Ballard was still struggling to earn recognition.

During the course of their correspondence both their lives would turn around for the better. By 1740 Elstob deemed herself 'the happiest creature in the world' with the Portlands,⁹¹ whilst Ballard could finally have letters sent to a prestigious 'Oxon' address after 1750.⁹² From an emotive point of view, the earlier letters are the more compelling – Elstob, starved of learned conversation, was clearly as much in need of Ballard's society as he was of her approval and friendship.⁹³ Initially they are anxious correspondents – Elstob deprecating herself as a 'poor little contemptible old maid' whilst bestowing on Ballard the great compliment that he reminded her of her late brother, and Ballard sending his new friend numerous gifts, to which Elstob refers cryptically, but may have included a sealing-stamp and a hat of his own making.⁹⁴ Elstob was sometimes jealous of Ballard's friendship, writing that she was 'not a little angry that you wou'd not

⁹¹ Letters 26 and 29 in this edition.

⁹² Letter 37 in this edition.

⁹³ Letter 3 in this edition.

⁹⁴ Letters 2 and 5 in this edition. See also fig. 3a.

oblige me so far as to breakfast with me' when he visited Evesham to see another friend.⁹⁵ By the time she was employed by the Portlands, Elstob was more confident both in Ballard's friendship and her own security, and the letters decreased in intensity. The later letters – particularly those dealing with the subscriptions collected by Elstob and her friends for the *Memoirs* – are illuminating of the ways in which social networks could enable scholarly publications, and also of the composition and publication of Ballard's *Memoirs*.

In spite of Elstob's claim that she had not had 'for near twenty years the Conversation of one Antiquary, I won't say of one Learned Man, but... of them... very few', the impression taken from the letters is of an extended scholarly correspondence network, and though it was mainly funnelled through Ballard, it sometimes focussed on Elstob.⁹⁶ Through Ballard, scholars such as Richard Rawlinson and William Brome gained news of Elstob. Brome in particular was greatly interested in her, sending her 'a Present of three Guineas' and beseeching Ballard for samples of her work.⁹⁷ Elstob and Ballard shared a common friend in the form of Sarah Chapone, and sent each other books and antiquarian curiosities.⁹⁸ Although for the bulk of their correspondence neither were at the centre of the academic world, they were nevertheless both keyed into the 'Republic of Letters' and their contacts and interests, adding one more layer of interest to the source here edited.

Wider Relevance

The letters of Elizabeth Elstob to George Ballard are relevant to a wide range of current historical sub-fields, as well as vital to a full understanding of Elstob as a figure in and of herself. It is hoped that a full and reliable modern edition will enable more historians to access Elstob in her own words, and to utilise her correspondence with Ballard to further illuminate topics as wide ranging as gender studies to the structure, makeup, and possibilities of the eighteenth-century 'Republic of Letters'. The below will therefore suggest some of the questions that the letters here edited may be utilised to answer, and the areas of history to which they are especially relevant.

⁹⁵ Letter 9 in this edition.

⁹⁶ Letter 3 in this edition.

⁹⁷ Letter 13 and Bodleian MSS Ballard 41, fols 19-21, 23 and 36.

⁹⁸ Ballard sent Elstob a report on the Cottonian Library fire, whilst Elstob sent him coins; letter 4, this edition. More personal gifts are hinted at; it is possible that a gift mentioned in letter 2 refers to a sealing-stamp which Elstob uses throughout their correspondence, and that in letter 5, 'too rich an Ornament upon a head which do's not deserve it', bestowed by Ballard refers to a hat, possibly one that he himself made.

Firstly, previous scholarship on Elstob, as discussed above, has made it clear that she was a significant figure in nascent Anglo-Saxon studies, particularly of a philological bent. It is perhaps to this field that the letters are of less direct relevance: Elstob's engagement with Anglo-Saxon studies was not as active at the time of their composition as in her youth, perhaps because her network of fellow septentrional scholars had largely passed on. However, the letters do serve to round out her biography, and also provide evidence of her continued, if somewhat curtailed, studies. Moreover, they demonstrate – somewhat intriguingly – that by the 1730s and within certain circles, Elizabeth and William Elstob's membership of an earlier, groundbreaking group of Anglo-Saxon scholars conferred on them a status of almost antiquarian fame. The fascination that individuals such as Ballard and Brome held the Elstob siblings in, particularly evidenced in the earlier letters, would suggest that in spite of the long-held victory of 'the Moderns' over such dusty scholarship, interest in the pursuit of the Anglo-Saxon past continued into the eighteenth century.

Elstob's letters to Ballard, in partnership with other sources for her life and thoughts, are highly relevant in the context of studies of female scholars and how they navigated a wider, largely masculine scholarly world. Elstob's writings are open to even further nuanced gender analysis than they have already received. Moving beyond the sheer fact that Elstob was a successful female scholar, further questions present themselves: how did Elstob navigate her sex? to what extent did she consciously construct a gendered identity through her writings, and to what ends? These letters, including as they do Elstob's reflections on herself as a 'poor little contemptible old maid', and on the domestic duties of women, provide an intriguing counterpoint to her published assertions regarding the intellectual potential of her sex.⁹⁹

Elstob and Ballard, taken as a dual case-study, also provide potential insights into the intersectional nature of barriers and routes of access into scholarship. Biographies of Elstob suggest that as a young woman, financially secure and living in the home of a supportive brother, had relatively little difficulty in entering the scholarly world, and gaining the support and indeed collegiality of such figures as George Hickes and Edward Harley, the Earl of Oxford. It was her

⁹⁹ Letters 2 and 6a in this edition. Dena Goodman has argued that in eighteenth-century France letter-writing became a 'regendered' pursuit, seen as a form of writing innately suitable to women and utilised as a space to construct the self, a reflection which may be relevant to Elstob's letter-writing. That said, her correspondence with Ballard also maps on to a typical scholarly exchange with its swapping of texts and intellectual conversation. See D. Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters*, Ithaca, NY, 2009, pp. 1-5.

brother's untimely death and her ensuing penury that cut her off from the resources and networks that had previously enabled her to become a successfully published scholar in a rarefied, largely male field. George Ballard, on the other hand, had the supposed benefit of being a man, but also had to overcome his social status and financial dependence on manual work in order to gain formal admittance to the academic community of Oxford. Before – and indeed after – he breached these barriers Elizabeth Elstob, a woman living in obscurity, was a valuable contact and intellectual support for him.

The topic of scholarly support and academic communities leads to the final area of historical discussion to which these letters ought to prove illuminating. Recent and excellent scholarship has agreed on one thing: that 'the Republic of Letters' is a problematic term to precisely define.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, it has been defined as an egalitarian community, although it has also been suggested that the ideal of an open and accessible world of scholarly discourse was slowly replaced in the eighteenth century and beyond with an increasing emphasis on institutionalised spaces of learning (to the disadvantage of women).¹⁰¹ It could certainly be argued that Elstob, Ballard, and their fellow correspondents who appear in the pages of the letters below were engaging in the older traditions of an inclusive Republic of Letters. The correspondence between the two provides a compelling snapshot of the activities and indeed agency of epistolary networks operating 'on the margins of scholarship'. Over the course of the letters, the historian finds Elstob's network of friends – some scholars, some not – mobilising around her to 'rescue' her from her penury. Later, Ballard utilises an overlapping network, once again including Elstob and reaching beyond the scholarly world, to publish his *Memoirs*. Questions could be asked of what Elstob's role was in all of this. Did individuals such as Ballard and Brome perhaps see her (consciously or unconsciously) as a mascot for those on the margins of the institutionalised scholarly world – or indeed as a link to the older, by-then vanished networks of turn-of-the-century Anglo-Saxon studies, in which they had such antiquarian interest? More generally, what conclusions can be drawn from the evidence in this correspondence for

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, D. Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment*, Ithaca, NY, 1994, pp. 1-2; A. Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduction and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680-1750*, New Haven, CT, and London, 1995, pp. 2-8; and Pal, *Republic of Women*, pp. 1-2 and pp. 10-16.

¹⁰¹ Goldgar, *Impolite Learning* (as in n. 100), p. 3; Pal, *Republic of Women*, pp. 6-7 and pp. 266-276. Londa Schiebinger also discusses the institutionalisation of learning and its impact on women scholars, albeit in the context of science: L. Schiebinger, 'The Philosopher's Beard: Women and Gender in Science', in: *The Cambridge History of Science Vol 4: Eighteenth-Century Science*, R. Porter, ed., Cambridge, 2003, pp. 184-210.

a republic of letters – in the egalitarian sense as defined by Pal – reaching beyond itself into a wider, non-intellectual world?

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is impossible to place these letters – just like their author – into any single category. Therefore it must be emphasised that whilst they hold potential for a wide range of historical inquiries, they are also more straightforwardly part of the story of Elizabeth Elstob. Like any academic of the twenty-first century, Elstob pursued and enjoyed a number of different intellectual passions, and her priorities developed and shifted as her life passed and changed. She is arguably most famous for her remarks concerning women's learning, but she was also a firm defender of her chosen discipline, and advocated for a higher level of learning for all, male or female. She was fulfilled in composing an Anglo-Saxon grammar but she seems to have taken equal pride in acting as tutor to the children of a Duchess or even teaching letters to the children of farm labourers in the small village of Evesham. In both her published works and in her letters Elstob displays an interest and knowledge of a wide variety of subjects – from the state of the Anglican church to the dating of old coins. The prefaces of her youth simmer with confidence, whilst her letters to Ballard communicate a sense of insecurity which, with time, faded only to a modesty verging on self-parody. The letters presented here provide us with a fully-rounded vision of Elstob as a complex and vulnerable human being; though a scholarly correspondence, their contents are at times remarkably personal.

On the one hand, the story charted in these letters is thus a humble and domestic one – the story of an old lady, lonely and poor, seeking and eventually finding warm friends and a stable home. On the other, the letters are a glimpse into the still keen mind of an ever-engaged scholar, and the sparks created when her long-secluded mind met with the sympathy and kinship of George Ballard, the chandler's son. They therefore further our understanding of the scholar who helped to make Anglo-Saxon studies in the eighteenth century more accessible. They also show quite how much two dedicated scholars could gain, both intellectually and personally, from discourse with one another, even whilst both existing on 'the margins of scholarship'.

* * *

MANUSCRIPT AND EDITORIAL CONVENTIONS

Elstob's letters are contained within Bodleian Library MS Ballard 43, a folio volume of three inches thickness, quarter bound in vellum with a red leather spine. Elstob's letters make up around half the volume, which also contains letters from other women, including Sarah Chapone.

The manuscript is in a fragile condition. All manuscripts in the Ballard collection are usually only available for consultation via microfilm, produced in the 1980s. Extracts from the letters have been reproduced since the eighteenth century, and summaries of them can be found in the Bodleian card catalogue (now digitised), but the collection has never previously been edited in its entirety.¹⁰²

The letters below have largely been edited in the order in which they were bound, apart from where (elucidated in the textual notes) the manuscript was so poorly ordered that not re-arranging them into a chronological series would cause confusion. Each letter is here headed with the name of the sender and the addressee, the place of composition and of receipt, and the date according to the Gregorian calendar. Where the place of sending or receipt is not indicated on the letter or the envelope is not extant, the inferred location has been given in {curved brackets}.

Historical notes to further elucidate the content and context of the letters are given as footnotes and indicated by Arabic numerals. Textual notes (given as endnotes and indicated *a, b, c...*) have been employed to provide further information about the physical condition of the letters, details of the information contained on the wrappers, and to elucidate any contemporary emendations or changes in handwriting (towards the end of their correspondence Elstob dictated some of her letters). In transcribing the letters efforts have been made to represent the spacing and layout of the manuscript originals. [Square brackets] are used to indicate either instances of editorial clarification or assumptions made in case of manuscript damage which has obscured the original text.

Ballard's will indicates that he organised and bound his volumes of correspondence himself with a view to posterity before leaving them to the Bodleian Library.¹⁰³ It would certainly seem to be the case that in Ballard MS 43 he went further, and in addition to binding the letters he carried out a variety of different editorial interventions – censoring certain words, or conversely giving names

¹⁰² For eighteenth-century extracts see, e.g., Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, iv, pp. 114-140. For the Bodleian card catalogue, see entries for Elizabeth Elstob and MS Ballard 43 at *Early Modern Letters Online*: <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>.

¹⁰³ Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/817, 333v.

where Elstob referred only allusively to individuals. It is also possible that he deliberately left out letters that may have pertained to matters that Elstob preferred to keep private.¹⁰⁴ It seems likely that more minor changes, for example corrections to misspellings that appear in a darker ink, may also have been from his hand. He also added foliation numbers in pen (although the foliation given in the textual notes to this edition refers to a more recent, numeration in pencil). There is some suggestion that the construction of his manuscript collection was a conscious autobiographical effort.¹⁰⁵ Ballard was concerned with ensuring the lucidity of the letters he donated to the Bodleian, even to the extent of correcting misspellings, but he was also not averse to limiting or controlling any private information they may have contained.

* * *

dljw@st-andrews.ac.uk
University of St Andrews

¹⁰⁴ There is a ten-year gap in the Elstob letters in MS Ballard 43, during which it seems unlikely Ballard and Elstob did not correspond. See n. 201 to letter 31, this edition.

¹⁰⁵ Perry, 'George Ballard's Biographies', p. 96.

THE LETTERS

1. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, August 17th 1735^a

Elstob thanks Ballard for his letter of introduction, and politely declines his proposal that she serve Lady Northampton.

S^r

The Favour of your most obliging Letter had been much sooner acknowledg'd, if I had not been prevented by a severe illness. Which I hope will be accepted as a just Appology for not returning my thanks before.

I cannot S^r forbear expressing my Surprize and satisfaction, in meeting with so much Candour and Friendship from a Gentleman unknown. In an Age when even old acquaintance are too often neglected and forgot, and assure you that as long as my memory shall continue with me, will very often be in my thoughts.

Nothing in this world you may believe me S^r. wou'd be a greater pleasure to me, than to be in a Capacity to serve the Noble and Ingenious Lady^b you mention, being never more highly gratifi'd than when I hear of any of my sex, who employ themselves in Laudable undertakings.¹⁰⁶ Had your Proposal come some time ago, I had been at liberty to accept it. But at present, after seven years patience, and endeavours for a school, I have obtain'd such a one as I desir'd; and as such an indifferent constitution, will suffer me to undertake: and having ^{met} with a great deal of Friendship and Generosity from the Good Ladies in this Place. I shou'd think it the Greatest peice of ingratitude, to neglect the Dear little ones committed to my Care. But that which is my greatest concern is, the unhappy Circumstances I have labour'd under for several years, which depriv'd me of Leisure to follow those Studies, which were my only delight and employment when I had nothing else to do. This long

Letter 1

^a Fols 3-4. Paper lightly scuffed at edges; possibly roughly cut originally. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard at Campden Car^{re} pd' in Elstob's hand, with the remains of a red wax seal.

^b Marginalia in Ballard's hand, reading 'Lady Northampton'.

¹⁰⁶ Ballard's marginalia identifies the 'Ingenious Lady' as 'Lady Northampton', i.e. Elizabeth Compton, née Shirley, Countess of Northampton (1694-1741). See G. Cockayne *et. al.*, *The Complete Peerage*, ix, London, 1936, p. 684.

interruption gives me a just apprehension of my incapacity to serve the Lady,
and is no small affliction to

S^r

Your most obliged and hum^{ble} serva^t
Elizabeth Elstob

Evesham Aug.st 17th. 1735

2. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, August 29th 1735^a

Elstob agrees to help 'the Lady' (Northampton), in translating some pieces of Anglo-Saxon. Tells Ballard he reminds her of her brother. Thanks him for invitation to visit but has to decline due to school duties. Thanks him for a gift and sends specimens of Old English and 'Runick'. Invites him to visit her at Evesham.

S^r

Notwithstanding I am still very ill and hardly able to write, I cannot defer returning my thanks for y^{our} second most obliging Letter. You may be assur'd of my readiness to serve and oblige the Lady, as far as my health and business will permit. But I must S^r acquaint you that I have no time to do any thing till six at night when I have done the Duty of the day and am then frequently so fatigu'd that I am oblig'd to lye down for an hour or two to rest my self and recover my Spirits[.]^b I am very much concern'd to find the Language of our Ancestors so much neglected and doubt I shall find it difficult to meet with such Books as perhaps it may be necessary sometimes for me to consult in the Translating the Peices you mention.¹⁰⁷ Particularly M^r Somners Dictionary.¹⁰⁸ Antiquaries in these parts are so scarce that I cannot hear of one of whom I can borrow it unless you have it yourself.

Letter 2

^a Fol. 5 (enclosed specimen of Anglo-Saxon at fol. 6). Handwriting, in black ink, is less firm than in previous letter. Addressed 'To M^r George Ballard at Campden'.

^b Edge of page scuffed so this assumed.

¹⁰⁷ '...and doubt I shall find it difficult...' Here Elstob presumably means that *no* doubt she will find it difficult.

¹⁰⁸ William Somner (bap. 1598, d. 1669) antiquary and Anglo-Saxon scholar, who produced the *Dictionarium Saxonico-Latino-Anglicum* (1659), a key moment in Anglo-Saxon studies as it meant, at last, that both a dictionary and a grammar (Ælfric's) were available. Elstob was probably

The modest and humble account you are pleas'd to give of yourself, raises my esteem for you much higher than it was before there being very few to be found who will undervalue themselves. I am intirely of opinion, by the Polite Letters I have receiv'd from you that let your employment be what it will you must be a Person of good Birth good Education and an Excellent Genius. When you mention'd your early affection for the Study of Antiquities. You put me in mind of my Dearest Brother and Tutor, who was so delighted when a Child with that Study that at Eleven years [^][of age] he was call'd the little Cambden^c 109

It is impossible for me to express my Gratitude to you Good S^r for your concern for my health and kind invitation to Campden which I wou'd gladly accept purely to pay my respects to so good a Friend But the confinement of a School is such that were I to be absent from it one week I should be as long a getting a School again as I was before.¹¹⁰ My acknowledgements are likewise due and I hope will be accepted for your valuable Present. I assure you it shall always be esteem'd not only for the Stamp it bears of my Royal Benefactress^d but for the sake of the Genteel Giver.¹¹¹ I [^]am very sorry I am not able to make a return

^c A darker black ink here has corrected her 'p' for a 'b', just as it seems to have inserted '[' before her correction 'of age'.

^d Annotation, possibly Ballard's: 'Q. ANNE.'

familiar with the 1701 edition published as the *Vocabularium Anglo-Saxonicum*. See P. Sherlock, 'Somner, William (*bap.* 1598, *d.* 1669)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26030>, accessed 9 June 2015.

¹⁰⁹ William Camden (1551-1623), antiquarian and historian best known for his *Britannia* (1587; subsequent editions to 1607), a chorographical study of Britain focusing on its Roman past, but also containing the first nationwide survey of medieval remains. The *Britannia* became the standard textbook for subsequent early modern antiquarians See G. Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century*, Oxford, 1995, chapter 1.

¹¹⁰ '...kind invitation to Campden...' Where Ballard lived, just under ten miles south-east of Evesham.

¹¹¹ Although someone, most likely Ballard, has added the annotation 'Q. Anne.' (to whom Elstob dedicated her 1709 *English-Saxon Homily*) in the margins here, it is also possible that the 'Royal Benefactress' refers to Caroline of Ansbach (1683-1737), queen of Great Britain and wife of George II. Sarah Chapone (see letter 6a) had previously sought to raise a subscription to ease Elstob's penury, and in 1733 Queen Caroline put forward a pension of £100, to be repeated every five years, with the assurance that Elstob 'need never fear a necessitous old age' as long as the Queen lived – which, sadly, was less than five years more. It is possible that the 'stamp' to which Elstob refers is a deliberate play on words; later letters which still feature an intact wax seal almost all show the bust of a woman in profile, arguably a flattering portrait of either of the two queens, meaning that she may have sealed her letters to Ballard with a gift from his hand. (See textual notes for letters 20 and 32 for exceptions, the latter of which was almost certainly due to the letter being dictated by Elstob, and thus presumably sealed by her scribe, and fig. 3a for an example of

as agreeable to you. I can only as ^{know[ing]} ^e you to be a Lover of Antiquity, beg your Acceptance of a small Transcript from the Saxon, written I believe by the first Woman that has Studied that Language since it was spoke.¹¹² I have added a Specimen of Runick, and Gothick shou'd not have been wanting, cou'd ^{^l} have^f procur'd it.

I have one Favour more to beg of you S^r which is, that if your affairs bring you to Evesham, you will oblige me with a Visit. You will see a poor little contemptible old maid generally Vapour'd up to the ears, but very chearfull, when she meets with an agreeable conversation. I fear this long Epistle will give you an ill opinion of my talkativeness, so that I may save my credit till you are so good as to come and see me, I must beg leave to conclude with the highest sense of Gratitude.

Evesham Augst 29^g. 1735 Good S^r

Your most obliged and hum^{ble}
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

^e '[' added in a later hand.

^f Superscript 'I' in a later hand.

^g Or 19; either a 1 has been written over a 2 or the other way round; it is no longer clear.

the seal). For Queen Caroline's pension to Elstob, see B. Hill, *Women Alone: Spinsters in England, 1660-1850*, New Haven, CT, 2001, p.90.

¹¹² Only one specimen, the Old English (a translation of Psalm 100), remains – see Fig. 2. See also Bodleian MS Ballard 43, f.6; Perry, 'Ballard's Biographies', p. 106. The 'first woman' is, of course, Elstob herself.

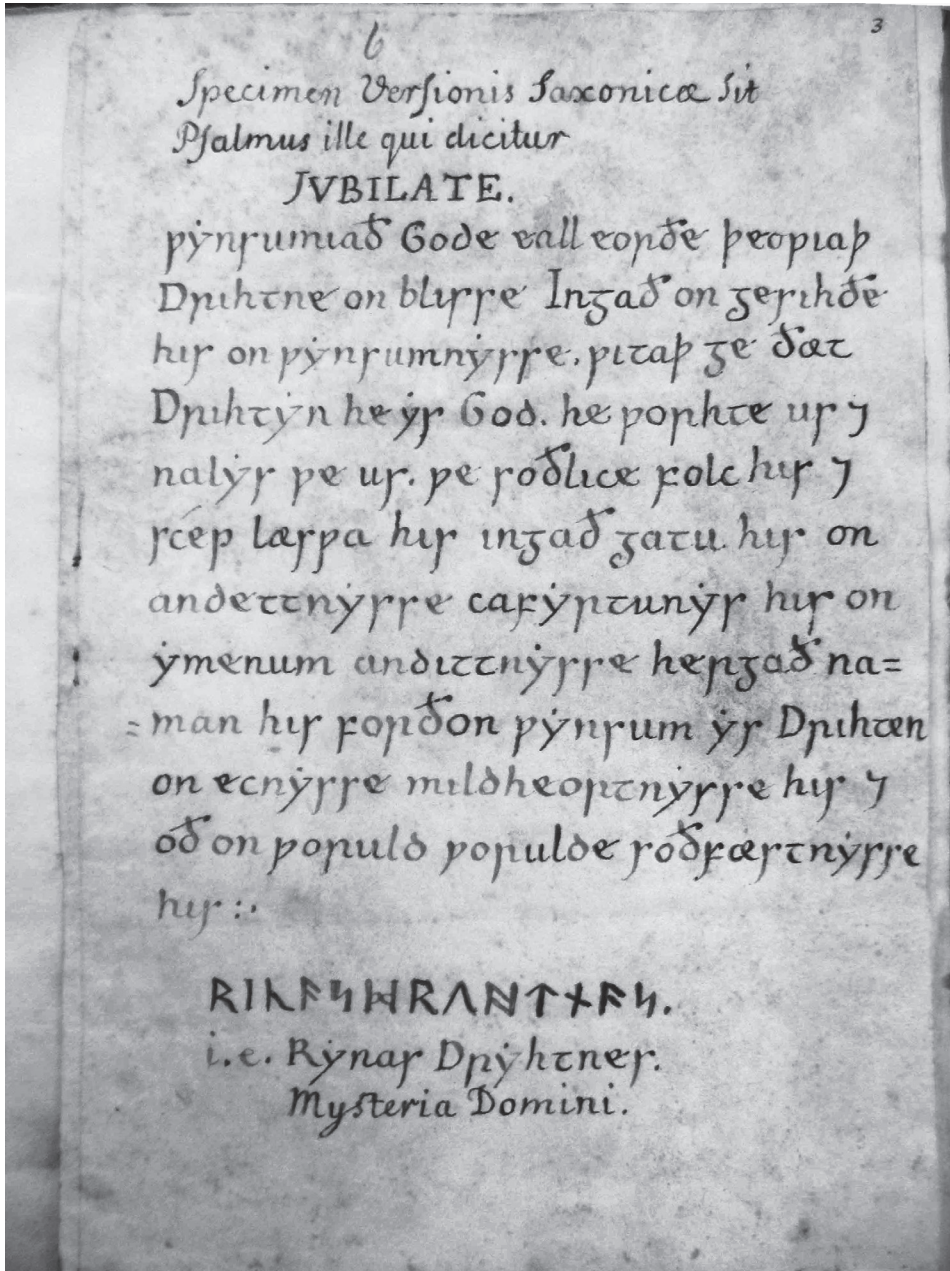


Fig. 2: A specimen of Anglo-Saxon (Psalm 100, 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands... For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations') in Elstob's hand. Bodleian MS Ballard 43, fol. 6.

Image by courtesy of the Bodleian Library.

3. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, October 2nd 1735^a

Expresses her pleasure at his planned visit.

S^r

Not having the Favour of a line from you so long, I began to fear I had lost a very agreeable Correspondant, But was not a little pleas'd with the Favour of yours to day, which acquainted me with your obliging design of a Visit on Saturday. I assure you S^r I propose to my self a great deal of Satisfaction. Not having had for near twenty years the Conversation of one Antiquary, I won't say of one Learned Man, but even of them a very few. The reason of w^{ch} you shall not be ignorant, when you are so good as to Visit¹¹³

Worthy S^r,

Evesham Oct^{ber} 2^d 1735.

Your most obliged and most
hum^{ble} Servant. Eliz: Elstob

4. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, November 16th 1735^a

Elstob thanks Ballard for showing her a report concerning the Cottonian Library Fire. Discusses comments made about Arthur Wanley by Thomas Hearne and thanks Ballard for sending her Mr Graves' Account of Campden. Refers to her friendship with Sarah Chapone. Promises to write an account of her brother's life and encloses some old coins.

Letter 3

^a Fols. 7-8. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Campden', 'Car.pd.'

Letter 4

^a Fols 9-10. Wrapper addressed 'to Mr George Ballard at Campden'.

¹¹³ Perry writes that on his visit, Elstob and Ballard 'discussed what had happened to her... a secret which Ballard kept very close'. Elstob's secrecy regarding the years following her brother's death may have contributed to persistent rumours that she either went to or fled from debtor's prison. See Perry, '*Ballard's Biographies*', p. 107.

S^r

My thanks are due to you, for the sight of the Report concerning the loss the Cottonian Library sustain'd by the late dismal Fire: and th'o the perusal of it; gave me a great deal of affliction, it likewise gave me great satisfaction to find the loss not so great as I imagin'd, or as it might have been.¹¹⁴ I was likewise pleas'd, with that part of the Appendix which gives an Account of the Records, and where they are deposited, being what before I was intirely ignorant of.

Your good Nature S^r in keeping me in ignorance of any thing said to the discredit of the Learned M^r Wanley, commands my acknowledgements; of whose Friendship, and Integrity, I had so long experience, that I must own the reading any thing to the prejudice of his deservedly great Character, wou'd highly raise my indignation, and not a little perhaps confirm me in the opinion, I before had of the Gentleman who writ it.¹¹⁵ Not that I am so prejudic'd, against that great and Learned Man,^b as to be pleas'd to read any thing detrimental to his Character, but as it is allow'd that all have their failings, we ought to think they shou'd not be made publick, and if he has been free with the Character of his Friend which I am sure M^r Wanley once was, it is but just he shou'd meet with a reprisal.

You very much oblig'd me S^r with the sight of the Learned Mr Graves's Account of Campden, I cannot forbear Lamenting my Misfortune, in not being acquainted with that Worthy Gentleman.¹¹⁶ But there is one pleasure I have had

^b Annotation in RH margin in Ballard's hand; M^r. Hearne.

¹¹⁴ The Ashburnham House fire in 1731 in which a quarter of the Cottonian Library was destroyed or damaged. The report to which Elstob refers is *A Report from the Committee Appointed to View the Cottonian Library, &c.* (1732). Among the manuscripts damaged and destroyed were a number of Old English texts, including one of the manuscripts of Ælfric which she used to prepare her *Catholic Homilies*. See Sutherland, 'Elizabeth Elstob', p. 66.

¹¹⁵ Humfrey Wanley (1672-1726), Old English scholar and librarian. Made assistant at the Bodleian in 1695, but departed 'amid much rancour and bitterness' to be succeeded by Thomas Hearne in 1701. The remarks to which Elstob refers are those in which the irascible Hearne called Wanley 'the Master's pimp' – blackening both his name and that of Arthur Charlett, who had attempted to block Hearne's publication of Sir John Spelman's *Life of Aelfred the Great*. See P. Heyworth, 'Wanley, Humfrey (1672-1726)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28664>, accessed 10 June 2015, and *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, 11 vols, Oxford, 1885-1921, vol. i, 1885, p. 212.

¹¹⁶ Richard Graves, antiquary and lord of the manor of Mickleton, Gloucestershire, approximately nine miles from Evesham and three from Campden. Graves had encouraged Ballard in his antiquarian interests as a youth, and was instrumental in introducing him to other key figures such as Thomas Hearne – although, when Ballard first sought to go to Oxford, aged twenty-one, Graves

since I saw you, which I must let you know, it was a short Conversation with the Ingenious and Agreeable M^{rs} Chopon.¹¹⁷ I am much concern'd that the distance there is between us, deprives me of enjoying more of it.

I will endeavour as soon as possibly I can, to oblige you with what you request in a Short Account of my Brothers Life. But you being sensible I have but little time to think or do anything else, will I hope excuse me, if it is not done so soon as you or I cou'd wish.

To let you see that I am using my endeavours to procure you some old Coins, I have sent you two or three.¹¹⁸ The small ones I can make nothing of, and shou'd be glad of your judg^ement, who understand them so well. I at first thought them no older than the time of the Great Rebellion, when many had the Liberty of Coining their own Money as I have been told.¹¹⁹ But observing Crowns on one side I alter'd my opinion, well knowing their aversion to that Regal Ornament, and to the Persons that wore them. The other I believe is a Genuine Roman Coin by the Metal, but not being well acquainted with the Faces of the Cæsars I can say nothing of it. If they are good for any thing or nothing, I only beg you^c acceptance of my intentions and desires to oblige you who am with great respect.

Worthy S^r,

Your most obliged and hum^{ble} servant

Evesham Nov:^{ber} 16: 1735.

Elizabeth Elstob.

^c *Sic*.

and Hearne both discouraged him on the basis that his income as a dressmaker was more financially secure. The account of [Chipping] Campden to which Elstob refers has not been traced; it does not appear to be among the Ballard manuscripts held at the Bodleian Library, nor is it referred to in Ballard's will (which describes individual documents in considerable detail). See G. Goodwin, 'Graves, Richard (1677-1729)', F. Burns, *rev.*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11312>, accessed 10 June 2015; Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, editorial introduction, pp. 16-18; and Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/817, fols 333^v-334^r. A (somewhat patchy) transcript of Ballard's will may be found at <http://paul-ballard.com/archives/wills/george-ballard-oxford-1755.htm>, accessed 10 June 2015.

¹¹⁷ Sarah Chapone, author and mutual correspondent of both Ballard and Elstob. See T. Kaymer, 'Chapone [Capon; *née* Kirkham], Sarah (1699-1764)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39723>, accessed 10 June 2015.

¹¹⁸ Ballard was a collector of coins, among other antiquities. See Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, editorial introduction, p.17.

¹¹⁹ '...the Great Rebellion', i.e. the English Civil War.

5. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, January 13th 1736^a

Elstob apologises to Ballard for a belated reply and thanks him for a gift. Encloses a life of William Elstob as requested. Postscript deals with the development of a friendship with Sarah Chapone and with her suggestion that Elstob serve as mistress for a charity school founded by Lady Elizabeth Hastings.

Good S^r

I am under the greatest apprehension imaginable least my so long silence shou'd bring upon ^{^me} the imputation of ingratitude, that I have not return'd my most hearty thanks for your most generous Present ^{^and} obliging Letter before. I must confess Good S^r you have bestow'd too rich an Ornament upon a head which do's not deserve it, for which you had receiv'd my acknowledgements sooner, but that I was willing to oblige you with the performance ^{^of my Promise} in sending you a short account of my Dear Brothers Life.¹²⁰ I am in hopes your great Candour will incline you ^{to} excuse all the faults you may justly find in it, when you consider it is drawn up by one who has had many things to destroy her memory, and had no assistance to do it by, but that bad memory. I fear several things are forgot worthy of Notice which I cannot forbear lamenting, but cannot redress. You have very highly obliged me, with your Ingenious account of M^r Graves, and the two curious Letters you were so good as to as to^b communicate, I have in return sent for your Perusal the manuscript of the Essay mention'd in the Account.¹²¹ If it is any way entertaining, it will be the greatest

Letter 5

^a Fols 11-13. Address as previous. As can be seen at the end of this letter, Elstob double-dates the year to fit in with the Julian and Gregorian calendars respectively. For the header for each letter, however, I have modernised the dates so that they are consistent with the Gregorian calendar.

^b *Sic*. Repeated over page turn. To provide a 'catchword' does not seem to be Elstob's practice in letters, so this is likely an error.

¹²⁰ If the reference to this present, as in letter 2, is another play on words, then it is possible that Ballard, a milliner as well as a tailor, has sent Elstob a hat of his own making ('too rich an Ornament upon a head'...).

¹²¹ For 'Mr. Graves', see n. 116, above. The essay to which Elstob refers is 'An Essay concerning the Latin Tongue' by William Elstob, Ballard's copy of which is now MS Ballard 63. It is notable that she should retain this manuscript years after his death, when she lost many books and manuscripts after his death, and had to entreat Ballard's help to procure a copy of her own Anglo-Saxon Grammar. (See Letters 8 and 31, this edition).

Asatisfaction to her, who knows not how enough to express her gratitude, for so many favours receiv'd and who is

Worthy S^r

Evesham Jan.^{ry} 13th: 173^{5/6}

Your most obliged and hum^{ble} servant
Elizabeth Elstob

S^r

Since I writ this I have receiv'd almost^c affectionate and ingenious letter, from the Excellent M^{rs} Capon by which I ^{am} convinc'd, how solicitous she has been ever since our first interview, to give me an instance of an intire Friendship. Which she has done, in recommending me to the Favour of a Great and Pious Lady,^d who has founded a Charity School, and is in want of a Misstress.¹²² I am at a loss what answer to return, having given you my Promise to serve Lady Northampton. My good Friend not knowing any thing of this affair, is very pressing for my acceptance of the Proposal, and gives very good reasons for it. I must therefore beg the favour of your advice, by the first opportunity, being obliged to return an Answer on Monday

^c *Sic*.

^d This is marked with a superscript cross, and at the foot of the page, in Ballard's hand, it is elucidated that this is 'Lady Betty Hastings.'

¹²² An annotation from Ballard glossed this as being Lady Elizabeth Hastings. Also known as 'Betty', Lady Hastings was a benefactor of the education of the poor, and founded a school for girls at Ledsham. Elstob's name had been linked to hers before, in 1709, when the *Tatler* published a poem alleging that she was to be a teacher at Mary Astell's Chelsea Charity School, funded by Lady Betty. See S. Hughes, 'Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756) and the Limits of Women's Agency in Early Eighteenth-Century England', in: J. Chance, ed., *Women Medievalists and the Academy*, Madison, 2005, p. 7 and p. 17; and A. Guerrini, 'Hastings, Lady Elizabeth [Betty] (1682-1739)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12564>, accessed 10 June 2015.

Addendum to letter of January 13th, a Life of William Elstob^a

A short Account of the Life of the Reverend M^r William Elstob M.A. and Rector of S^t Swithins and S^t Mary Bothaw. London.¹²³

William Elstob was born January the first Sixteen Hundred and Seventy three; at Newcastle upon Tyne. He was the Son of Ralph Elstob Merchant in that Place. Who was descended from a very Ancient Family at Foxton in the Bishoprick of Durham. As appears not only from their Pedigree in the Heralds Office, but from several writings now in the Family. One of which is a Grant from William de la More Master of the Knights Templars, to Adam de Elnestob, in the year thirteen Hundred and four, on condition of their paying twenty four shillings to their House at Shotton & *faciendo duos æd conventus ad Curiã Suã de Foxdene*.¹²⁴ This Deed has a Fair Seal to it, on the one side where of is the Agnus Dei and this Inscription *Sigillum Templi*, on the other an old Head.¹²⁵

He had the earliest part of his Education at Newcastle, from thence at about eleven years of Age he remov'd to Eaton, where he continued five years, without once feeling the severe Correction generally given in great Schools, he was well belov'd by his Master, and behav'd himself so well, that whenever there were any accusations brought against [^]him, which were not a few, many of his School-fellows now great Men, envying him used to declare, they wou'd willingly undergo a whipping to have Elstob Lash'd.¹²⁶ But they always met with this or such like rebuke from their Master, Your' Accusation is false, I know Elstob to be a sober and good Child.

Addendum to letter 5: Life of William Elstob

^a Fols 14-16.

¹²³ This life of William, written by his sister, is immensely important because it is the only extant source for many biographical details. The original *Dictionary of National Biography* (1885-1901) used as its source for William's life John Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* (1812-1815; vol. iv, pp. 112-125), which is based on the above life by his sister, and was first published in Nichols's *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica*, London, 1780-1790, vol. i, 1780, pp. 10-28. The *Alumni Oxonienses* (1891-1892) is also ultimately dependent upon Elizabeth for its records of William.

¹²⁴ '*...faciendo duos conventus ad Curiã Suã de Foxdene...*' 'Appearing twice at his court of Foxdene'.

¹²⁵ '*...Sigillum Templi...*' 'The seal of the temple'.

¹²⁶ Eaton = Eton.

From Eaton, but not before he was assur'd by his most Learned Friends, for he was very diffident of himself, that he was fit for the University. By the advice of an Uncle who was his Guardian, he was plac'd ^{at} Catherine Hall in Cambridge, in a station below his birth and Fortune.^{127 128} This, and the air not agreeing with his Constitution, which was Consumptive, was the occasion of his removal to Queens College^b ^{at} Oxford under the Tuition of D^r Waugh, where he was a Commoner, and continu'd, till he was elected Fellow of University by the Friendship of D^r Hudson &c.¹²⁹

In seventeen Hundred and two, he was by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Presented to the United Parishes of S^t Swithin and S^t Mary Bothaw in London.¹³⁰ Where after he had discharged the Duty of a Faithfull and Orthodox Pastor; ~~and~~ with great Patience and Resignation, after a long and lingering illness, he exchang'd this Life for a better on Saturday Ma^rch the third Seventeen hundred and fourteen – fifteen.

To his Parents while they lived, he was a most Dutifull Son; affectionate to his Relations: a most Sincere Friend; very Charitable to the Poor, a kind Master to his servants and Generous to all, which was his greatest Fault. He was of ^{so} sweet a Temper that hardly any thing cou'd make him shew his resentment, but when any thing was said or done to the prejudice of Religion or disadvantage of his Country.

^b 'Oxford' perhaps inserted by Ballard.

¹²⁷ Charles Elstob (*d.* 1721), canon of Canterbury and Elizabeth's paternal uncle, referred to in her own *Life*, appended to letter 25, this edition.

¹²⁸ The 'Uncle who was his Guardian' was Charles Elstob (*d.* 1721), canon of Canterbury and Elizabeth's paternal uncle, referred to in her own *Life*, appended to letter 25, this edition. William Elstob was admitted to St. Catharine's, 23 June 1691. His sister's objection was to him matriculating as a sizar, a poor scholar supported by college who traditionally waited at table for fellow students. See J. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Cambridge, 1922-1954, vol. ii, 1922, p. 100.

¹²⁹ John Waugh was a fellow at Queen's College from 1688-1699, later bishop of Carlisle. Hearne described him as a 'great tutor'. A 'commoner' at the time at which William would have attended Oxford was the second 'rank' of students (below a gentlemen commoner but above 'entrance scholars', 'servitors' or 'battelers'). John Hudson (1662-1719) was a classical scholar, Fellow of University College and Keeper of the Bodleian (1701-1719), and apparently a keen supporter of Elizabeth. See D. Weston, 'Waugh, John (1661-1734)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/64095>, accessed 10 June 2015; T. Aston, ed., *The History of the University of Oxford*, 8 vols, Oxford, 1984-2000; L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell, eds, *Volume V: The Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, 1986, p. 364; and for Hudson, see M. Gretsch, 'Elizabeth Elstob: A Scholar's Fight for Anglo-Saxon Studies', *Anglia*, vol. 117, 1999, p.174, p. 490.

¹³⁰ This was the year in which Elizabeth went to live with William.

He had what might justly be call'd an^c Universal Genius; no Arts or Sciences being despised by him; he had a particular Genius for Languages was a Master of the Greek and Latin; of the latter, he was esteem'd a good Judge, and to write it with great purity; nor was he ignorant of the Oriental Languages, as well as the Septentr^{ional}.¹³¹ He was a great lover of the Antiquities of other Countreys but more especially those of our own, having been at the pains and expence, of visiting most of those Places in this Nation, that are remarkeable either for Natural or Ancient Curiosities, Architecture Paintings Sculpture &c.

What time he cou'd spare from the Study of Divinity, was spent chiefly in the Saxon Learning, in which he was a great Proficient, when he was very young he transcrib'd King Alfred's translation of Orosius, with a design some time or other to Publish it. And made a vast Collection of Materials towards publishing a curious Edition of the Saxon Laws, and towards a History of his Native Place. He collected an innumerable number of Proper Names of Men and Women formerly used in these Northern Countreys. He publish'd a very neat [^]Edition of the Learned Aschams Epistles, also an Essay on the great affinity between Divinity and Law. *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos, quando Dani maxime persecuti sunt eos, cum vers. Latina et notis.* see D^r Hicke's Large and Learned Thesauras. Ling. Vett. Septentrionalium. d. e page 99. He gave a Latin Translation to the Homily on S^t Gregory, publish'd by his sister, and was a great assistant to her in that work, as well as in her Saxon Grammar. He translated into English a Treatise on Superstition written in Latin by the Learned S^r John Cheeke, printed in M^r Strypes^d Annals of the first twelve Years of Queen Elizabeths Reign.¹³² He likewise writ an Essay concerning the Latin Tongue, and upon Grammar, with a short account of its History and use^e for the encour[^]agement of such adult Persons to set upon the Learning of it, who have either neglected or been frighten'd from receiving the Benefit of that kind of Education in their Infancy.¹³³ To which is added, some advice for the most easy and Speedy attainment of it.

^c 'n' added by a later hand.

^d A cross from Ballard refers us to 'Life of Sir John Cheke. Oct: London. 1705.' (See historical notes).

^e A small mark here which might be a full stop.

¹³¹ The northern languages – Old English, Old Norse, etc.

¹³² I.e. J. Strype, *The life of the learned Sir John Cheke*, London: John Wyat, 1705.

¹³³ Elstob presumably enclosed this essay, as there is now a copy of it, in Ballard's hand, at MS Ballard 63, with a note indicating that it was 'Transcribed from the original MS. lent me by M^{rs} Elstob'. Ballard also prefixed a copy of the above *Life* to the essay, presumably so that the original could be retained alongside the above letter.

^f*So this Account may be added from Letters I have received from Mrs. Elstob; That by the Maternal side He was descended from the Old Kings or Princes of Wales; as appears from their ^{NPedigree} in the Earl of Oxford's inestimable Library, curiously drawn upon Vellum with Mrs. Elstob's own Hand: In the middle of it is a column, on the top of which stands King Brockmail; on one side is the Paternal and the other the Maternal Descents –*¹³⁴

Likewise, that his early propensity to the Study of Antiquities was such that at eleven Years of Age he was commonly called, Little Camden.

That he was Chaplain to William Nicholson Lord Bishop of Carlisle: and, Was buried under the Communion Table in the Chancel of the Church of St. Swithins in London.

^g*Mrs. Elstob also publish'd, a Publick Office of Daily and Nightly Devotion for the Seven Canonical Hours of Prayer, used in the Anglo Saxon Church. With a translation & Notes &c. Oct. Lon. 1715.*

6a. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham to Campden}, March 7th 1736^a

Discusses her attempts to publish William's essay. Encloses two letters (given here as letters 6b and 6c) relating to Sarah Chapone's – apparently failed –

^f The following added in Ballard's hand beneath a ruled line.

^g This in a smaller hand, perhaps added by Ballard yet later.

Letter 6a

^a Fols 17-18. Wrapper marked simply 'To M^r George Ballard', with no visible postmark or sign of note of payment of carriage (possibly delivered by hand by a mutual friend).

¹³⁴ Gretsches's *ODNB* article references this manuscript as now being Harley MS 1397. In a nineteenth-century catalogue of the Harleian manuscripts the cataloguer notes that they chose to insert the pedigree put together by Elizabeth into a copy of a 1615 visitation book for the Palatine of Durham (part of MS 1397), as it provides a 'Continuation of the Descent of Elstob to the year 1710' to the one taken in the visitation book. Given that, according to Ballard's notes, Elstob took the pedigree all the way back to a sixth-century king of Powys (Brochfael, or Brockmail), it is possible that this underestimates her contribution, for she probably extended it (however fancifully) in both directions. The cataloguer also comments that 'Mrs. Elstob is very much improved both in Writing & Drawing, since the year 1710', possibly referring to the skills demonstrated in her imitation of the *Textus Roffensis*, at Harley MS 1866 (cf. n. 189 and fig. 4 on p. 244), although it is not clear how much later than 1710 the latter manuscript was produced (as it seems to date to before William's death in 1715). See Gretsches, 'Elstob, Elizabeth (1683-1757)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8761>, accessed 11 June 2015; and *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. ii, 1808, pp. 28-29 and p. 272.

*attempt to procure Elstob a position with Lady Betty Hastings. Discusses the accomplishments of a housewife. Writes of anticipating her death. Ballard seems to have written that he regretted he could not do more to help her, for Elstob reassures him that she is greatly obliged to him nonetheless.*¹³⁵

March 7th 173⁵/₆

Worthy S^r

I receiv'd the Manuscript, and Your most obliging Letter, and am heartily glad that the perusal of it, was so much to your good liking. I do assure you S^r, it shou'd not so long have continu'd unprinted, had my Circumstances been better, or the Booksellers more Generous. It has been offer'd to some of them, who were very willing to Print it, but wou'd give nothing for the Copy, but a few Books when printed, which I think is hard and unjust, that they shou'd reap the Profit of other Mens Labours.¹³⁶

Since you are desirous to know, if I have accepted M^{rs} Capons Proposal. I do, tho' I am very Sensible it is not commendable to expose a private Correspondance, venture to Communicate to so good a Friend, a Copy of the Worthy Gentlemans Letter sent her [^]in answer, to her vastly kind recommendation of me, and the Charming Letter she sent to me. In Answer to hers, after I had received your Answer, I assur'd her of my readiness to serve that Excellent Lady, as far as lyes in my Power. But there are some things to be taught in such a School^b which I cannot pretend to, I mean the two Accomplishments of a good Housewife, Spinning and Knitting. Not that I w^d be thought to be above doing any commendable Work proper for my sex, for I have continually in my thoughts the Glorious Character of a Virtuous Woman Proverbs 31:13. She^c seeketh Wool and Flax and worketh willing with her hands. And as an instance of the truth of this, the Gown I had on, when you gave me the Favour of [^]a Visit, was part of it my own Spinning, and I wear no other Stockings but what I knitt myself. Yet

^b There is possibly a comma here; the edge of the page is damaged.

^c Possibly not a capital 's'; Elstob's handwriting does not clearly distinguish.

¹³⁵ These letters are presented in the same order as in the manuscript, but to follow the correspondence in chronological order they should be read in reverse (6c, 6b, then 6a).

¹³⁶ William's essay on Latin (see letter 5, this edition). Elizabeth's attitude in this letter towards booksellers is indicative of a wider problem faced not only by her, but many of her male contemporaries; publishing academic texts was costly, and often the author would be expected to bear the cost of printing. See Gretsche, 'A Scholar's Fight' (as in n. 24), pp. 178-179.

I do not think my self proficient enough in these Arts, to be become^d a teacher of them. As to your objection on the Meanness of the Scholars I assure you S^r I shou'd think it as Glorious an Employment, to Instruct those Poor Children, as ^{^to teach} the Children of the Greatest Monarch. But I must acquaint you that mine, may truly be term'd, a life of disappointments, from my Cradle till now, nor do I expect any other while I live. This, and hearing no more of that affair, makes me think her Ladiship is provided with a Mistress before now, there being many more de deserving^e than my self, that are in want of such an Employment. Nor do I repine, for I am so inur'd to disappointments, that I expect nothing else, and I receive them, with as much easiness, as others do their greatest Prosperity. Having the inexpressible pleasure to think, I have rubb'd through the greatest part of my life, and that it can be but a short time I have to Labour here. My only care is to endeavour for a small matter to support me, if I shou'd live, till my Sight and ^{^strength} shall fail me. But then I reflect with satisfaction^f on the dependance ^{^I have}, on that Divine Providence, which has hitherto been my ^{^only} support that He will not forsake me then. I often compare my self to poor John Tucker, whose life I read when a Girl, in Winstanley's Lives of the Poets, which affected me so much, that I cannot forget it yet.¹³⁷ He is there describ'd to have been an Honest Industrious poor Man, but notwithstanding his indefatigable industry, as the Author writes, no Butter wou'd stick on his Bread.

Good S^r I was much troubled when I when I read the Apology you made, that you were not in a Capacity of being my Friend, according to your Inclinations. You have Good Friend done more for me, than I cou'd either expect or desire, and my obligations are so great, that it is an addition to my Trouble, that I have no other ^{^way} of making a return, but by addressing my self to the Divine Providence in whom ^{^I trust} to pay that Debt for me. Who am

Worthy S^r

Your most Gratefull and most hum^{ble} Servant

Elizabeth Elstob

^d *Sic*.

^e *Sic* – over two lines.

^f This word apparently rubbed out and rewritten in a darker, thicker pen, as are other insertions ([^]).

¹³⁷ William Winstanley, author of *The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets* (1687). According to Nichols, Elstob means Thomas Tusser; 'He spread his bread with all sorts of butter, yet none would stick thereon'. See Nichols *Literary Anecdotes* (as in n. 18), vol. iv, pp.137-139.

I fear you will complain as you have great reason, of the Loquacity of my Pen, for I am like most Bablers, who when they begin, know not when to leave off. But I cannot forbear acquainting you, with a great dispute I had with my self, when I was giving you the account Dear^g Brothers Pedigree by the Fathers side, whether I shou'd acquaint you with that of his Mother, it being a welsh one, to which the^{air} is but little Credit to be given. But recollecting since, that the Learned D^r Heylyn, in the Description of Wales, in his Cosmography, ventur'd to give the Publick an account of His Pedigree.¹³⁸ I hope I may be excused, if I give an account of mine, in private to a Friend. The D^r if I don't mistake derives his Pedigree from a Cupbearer to the Famous Brockmail Ysgithrog, or Brockwell, a British Prince, who was present at the Slaughter of the Monks of Bangor, mention'd by Bede, and Our other Historians. Ours is deriv'd from the Prince Himself.¹³⁹ whether much to the Credit of himself, and descendants I will not Say.

6b. Sarah Chapone to Elstob, Dumbleton to Evesham, January 11th 1736^a

Chapone states that after her visit to Elstob she was determined to help her in some way, and would inform Lady Betty Hastings that Elstob was still alive, indicating that Elstob had been living incognito for some time. Encloses the response she received from Mr Hastings, whom she asked to contact Lady Hastings on her behalf. Strongly recommends Elstob to take up the proffered position as mistress of a school for the poor.

^g *Sic* – it should presumably read ‘account of my Dear...’.

Letter 6b

^a Fols. 19-20. Both letters 6b and 6c clearly seem to have been appended to Elstob's of March 7th, and both are in the same hand. Letter 6c is marked as a copy, whilst letter 6b is not, and is also addressed for posting, suggesting that 6b is the original letter from Sarah Chapone, and 6c a copy made by her of the letter from Henry Hastings. Compare with other samples of Chapone's hand in MS Ballard 43 (for example f. 123). Addressed ‘To M^{rs}. Elstob in the High-street in Evesham’.

¹³⁸ Peter Heylyn, Church of England clergyman, historian and apologist for Archbishop Laud. The work to which Elstob refers is his *Cosmographie* (1652). See A. Milton, ‘Heylyn, Peter (1599-1662)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13171>, accessed 10 June 2015.

¹³⁹ Cf. n. 134, above.

Dumbleton Jan.y.^{ry} 11.th 1735¹⁴⁰

Madam!

I returned from Evesham the Day after I had had the pleasure of your conversation, fully Determin'd to endeavour to do you some Service. I could think of no method so likely to succeed, as getting Lady Betty Hastings inform'd that you were still Living, which I hope will be enough to engage her generosity to you. I am very fortunately acquainted with a Gentleman who is a Relation of Lady Betty's whom she honours with her friendship, but my acquaintance was but slight with M^r. Hastings and I had not seen him for some years, as soon as I cou'd inform my self where he was, I wrote to him, and gave him an account of your manner of Living, and Circumstances, as far as you inform'd me of them, and desired the favour of him to represent them to Lady Betty Hastings.¹⁴¹ I received his answer Yesterday, which I have here enclosed, and beg that I may know your Sentiments of the Proposal he makes for your removal to the School he mentions. You will give me leave Madam to speak my thoughts of it. I think it the most Eligible thing that could happen for you upon all accounts, you would be certain of an annual income, and in case of sickness or disability to take care of the School, I suppose you might be certain of the favour & Protection, of the worthy foundress, who, I persuade myself, could never See a Person of your merit, in Distress, without endeavouring to soften it, by the tenderest humanity and Compassion. I don't at all wonder^b that you should be neglected in the Situation you are now in because I fear few are Capable of knowing your Worth. You can have little relief from the fatigue of Life, Conversation being the proper entertainment of a thinking Person, and you can find no Companion suitable to your Taste and Learning, these uneasinesses would be all removed, if you were near Lady Betty, who as she would truly

^b Four crossed out words here; possibly 'that that you should'.

¹⁴⁰ Chapone is clearly still reckoning dates based on the Julian calendar.

¹⁴¹ Henry Hastings (1701-1786) was left an orphan aged 14, and 'the trustees appointed by his father's will dissipated a great part of his property'. His own son, Theophilus Henry Hastings, inherited the earldom of Huntingdon from Lady Betty's nephew in 1789, but for the father and (distant – his common ancestor with Lady Betty and her brothers, the 8th and 9th earls, was Francis Hastings, the 2nd earl, who died in 1561) cousin of an earl Henry Hastings apparently lived in fairly humble circumstances, the *Alumni Cantabridgienses* giving him as a shoemaker in its entry for Theophilus Hastings. Henry Hastings was apparently known as 'Lord Hastings' for much of his lifetime, as a courtesy acknowledging his 'near and well-known claim to the earldom'. See H. Bell, *The Huntingdon Peerage*, London, 1820, p. 177; and Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses* (as in n. 23), vol. ii, p.328.

understand, would also, reward your merit, an happiness too great for me to Enjoy, or I should have refer'd it to no other Person breathing. a pretty large Family and a Precarious Fortune, leaves me little room for Generosity, except it be that of the Heart, but all I can, I shall rejoice to do for you. I assure you Madam, that you shou'd not have been so long without receiving a line from me, but that I was desirous of giving you some real testimony of my esteem, before I presumed to make Verbal professions of it. I don't expect the favour of an answer by the return of the messenger, but I hope to morrow Sen'night to be informed of your thoughts upon the Subject of this Letter. If there is any way in which I can Serve you, I beg to be acquainted with it; if it pleases God to make me the happy instrument of doing Good to a Person of your merit and Abilities, I shall esteem it a great Blessing to my self, for which I shall be truly ^{^thankful} to him; who can perform the greatest acts, by the meanest instruments. My Prayers to God^c for you shall not cease. I entreat you to believe Madam, that I am from a full Conviction, tho' too short an Experience of your good Sense,

Your

most faithful and most
obedient Servant,
Sarah Capon.

6c. Henry Hastings to Sarah Chapone, New Hall to {Dumbleton}, January 6th 1736^a

Describes the charity school founded by Lady Hastings and writes that, given that the current mistress is ill and close to death, he will gladly recommend Elstob for the position.

A copy of a Letter from the Honourable M^r. Hastings; to M^{rs}. Capon.

^c Possibly a comma here.

Letter 6c

^a Fols 21-22. In the same hand (most likely Sarah Chapone's) as previous.

Madam,

I am not in the least surpriz'd at the Application you make for a Person of M^{rs}. Elstobs Merit and Goodness. Her Case deserves the utmost Compassion, and if any thing can heighten it, it is the lively manner in which you have painted her Distress, and the amiable Character you have drawn of Her. It was truly Generous and Christian in you the going in Search after her. I have for some years, forbore soliciting any Charity from that Truly good Woman Lady Betty Hastings being thoroughly acquainted with its extensiveness, and the many Channels it Dayly runs through; Nevertheless, this being an uncommon Case, and Lady Betty being no Stranger as I believe to M^{rs}. Elstobs General Character, I have in a Letter, which is to go by this Evenings Post, recommended her to Lady Betty in the best manner I was able.¹⁴² And for the best Incentives to her Charity. I was beholden to the Materials in Your Ingenious Letter. I am sure a Person that has such an Advocate, can never want Friends. I have always had a very great Value for your Person, ever since I had the happiness of first^b knowing you, and this late Transaction has rais'd it not a little. As soon as I have an answer from Lady Betty I shall not fail of acquainting you with it. About two Months ago, Lady Betty writ to me about a Mistress or a Charity School of Girls which she has set up in her Parish, and designs to endow it. The Present Mistress is very ill and not likely to live. I cou'd hear of none I durst recommend. If M^{rs}. Elstobs health and Constitution wou'd suffer her to undertake such a Task I'me^c sure she would like her Situation, and Lady Betty wou'd be much pleased with having such a Valuable Person at the Head of her School. I beg you wou'd know her sentiments upon this Head, and oblige me with her answer. The Place is a very healthy Situation and the House almost joyning to the Church, and a little Mile from Lady Bettys own House. I beg my most hearty service to M^r. Capon. It will always be a Pleasure to me the waiting upon you and him, and I wou'd be glad, if possible to contrive to spend a week with you next summer. I have not heard from our Friend M^r. Unett this good while.¹⁴³ I am afraid he is still

^b One word struck out here.

^c Sic.

¹⁴² Hastings comment that he is 'thoroughly acquainted' with the extent of Lady Betty's charity would suggest that he had previous benefited from it himself (and, perhaps, thought he might need to do so in future, hence his hesitance to make any unnecessary or exasperating claims on her generosity). Cf. n. 141, above.

¹⁴³ 'Mr Unett' cannot be identified.

in a bad state of Health. In hopes of the Pleasure of hearing soon from you,
I am,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient

New Hall near Birmingham.

Humble Servant:

Jan: 6th. 1735-6

Henry Hastings¹⁴⁴

7. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to {Campden}, May 9th 1736^a

Thanks Ballard for the book and specimen of writing that he has loaned. Expresses her satisfaction in Sarah Chapone's friendship and explains that she did not receive the position at the charity school. Asks Ballard not to trouble himself with finding her a position with Lady Northampton; she has employment enough at her village school.

Worthy S^r

Not having had leisure to read through the Annals of Dunstaple, which you were so kind as to lend me, and fearing my so long silence might seem a neglect.¹⁴⁵ I laid hold of this opportunity, it being what the^{^y} call the little Fair day, and the only Holiday which ^{^is} allow'd to my Children and self, to assure you that the Books shall be return'd with my thanks, as soon as I have read them over, and likewise the Beautifull Specimen of the Ingenious M^r Parry's writing, which I look upon with as much delight, as I have formerly view'd the works of Raphael Urban, or Titian, it being as excellent in its kind.¹⁴⁶

Letter 7

^a Fols 23-24. Addressed as letter 6.

¹⁴⁴ Note that although Hastings merely stated that he would recommend Elstob for the position of mistress of Lady Betty's charity school for girls, Chapone presented this to Elstob as a firm 'proposal' of which she should take advantage. This perhaps explains why, in letter 7, this edition, Elstob explains to Ballard that she had not received the position.

¹⁴⁵ Thomas Hearne, ed., *Chronicon sive annales prioratus de Dunstaple*, 2 vols., Oxford: Sheldon, 1733. Evidently the same volume which Hearne had sold to Ballard (for 2s. 6d.) in March 1734. See Bodleian MS Ballard 41, fol. 29^r.

¹⁴⁶ William Parry was an antiquary and rector. His elegant hand-writing, resembling italic print, was much admired by his contemporaries. See T. Cooper, 'Parry, William (*bap.* 1687, *d.* 1756)', rev. M. Clapinson, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21439>, accessed 10 June 2015.

Your opinion of Dear M^{rs} Capon's fidelity is made manifest to me in many Instances, for she is not only Studious but active for my good. As to the School formerly mention'd it was dispos'd of before my Answer cou'd reach M^r Hastings. I had Yesterday the pleasure of her Charming conversation, and the more I know her, the more I admire and Value her. But as all Pleasures have a Sting at their Tail, so the parting too soon, took off much of the satisfaction I had enjoy'd, but still I have the pleasure of reflecting on every word she said, which will be an agreeable entertainment, for my private thoughts, till it shall please God to afford me such another satisfaction.

My Good Friend, for so you must give me the leave to Stile you I wou'd beg of you not to be under any concern, in relation to L-N's Affair.¹⁴⁷ You may satisfy yourself, that I am truly sensible of you[^]r Friendship both to her Ladiship and me, and when I gave my consent upon your double entreaty to be serviceable to that Lady, it was in particular to oblige you. I do assure you, it will be no disappointment at all to me, if her Ladyship has no occasion for my service, for while I can get my Bread in a Just & Honest way, I desire no more. I have at present a School to my mind, and it wou'd not be without great reluctance, that I cou'd leave it. It is a way of Life, [^]of I must confess I am fond ^{of}, if it were not precarious, and fatiguing, but with that I am content, and be assur'd Good S^r that let my circumstances be what it shall please God to [^]appoint I shall still be gratefull to, and think my self obliged to pray for my Benefactors.

I have ever since the Favour of your last, wish'd for an account, of the Unfortunate [^]Gentlewoman you mention'd in it, whom you are pleas'd to compare to me.¹⁴⁸ I am an entire Stranger even to her name, and tho' I am sure it will grieve me to know her Character and misfortunes. I cannot help requesting you to acquaint me with them.

Just so far, was writ on Tuesday last, when I was interrupted, by Company which came in. And have not had an opportunity of acquainting you, that it has been one of the most agreeable weeks I have known this many years, having had the pleasure of seeing two such Valuable Persons as M^{rs} Capon^b, and M^r Parry

^b Seems to have been written over again in a thicker pen.

¹⁴⁷ Lady Northampton; see letter 1, below.

¹⁴⁸ Ballard must have obliquely compared her to an 'unfortunate' Lady in the letter to which Elstob is replying; he apparently went on to explain that Elstob reminded him of Margaret Roper, and educated and eloquent scholar and daughter of Sir Thomas More, who suffered the trial and execution of her beloved father in 1535. Elstob explains in her next letter that she had assumed he was referring to a more recent figure (having of course heard of Margaret Roper). See letter 8, below; and M. Bowker, 'Roper [*née* More], Margaret (1505-1544)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24071>, accessed 10 June 2015.

who obliged me with a visit on Friday. He seems to be a Gentleman of great Candour and Ingenuity, and was so Good at parting to assure me of his readiness to do me service. For which I intreat you S^r to return him my thanks, when you have an opportunity w^{ch}. will be acknowledg'd as a Favour by

Worthy S^r

Your most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

Evesham May 9th 1736

8. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, June 15th 1736^a

Ballard's censorship has made the first paragraph difficult to understand, but it seems that a young woman in whom he had been interested, and whom Elstob had befriended for his sake, had offended him in some fashion. Elstob disagrees with his comparison of herself with Margaret Roper. Requests Ballard's help in procuring a copy of her own Anglo-Saxon grammar to give to Mr Hastings.

Worthy S^r

I was as if I had been thunderstruck when I receiv'd your last, [~~indecipherable~~]^b being with me when it was brought. I do assure you S^r it was purely to shew my respect and gratitude to you that I sought her acquaintance, and sent for her, not being one that is very fond of new acquaintance. However I must do her Justice by assuring you, that hitherto she has behav'd wth a great deal of good manners, and vast respect and very agreeably. She seems to have been born with a Genius Superior to the generality of her Sex, and to be endued with a most excellent memory, she only wanted at first a proper Guide to direct her choice of Books, and to assist and correct her judgement, and likewise her temper, to have made her an excellent Woman, the want of which I imagin was occasion'd, by [~~indecipherable~~]^c being obliged to [^]be often from her. I give you many thanks

Letter 8

^a Fols 25-26. Addressed 'To M^r George Ballard in Campden' with the note 'Car: Pd' (carriage paid) in the corner.

^b Word heavily crossed out.

^c Another word crossed out. Both probably by Ballard.

for the Hint you have given me, and will take care if possible, that there shall be no open rupture, and you may depend upon my secrecy in relation to her.¹⁴⁹

You have put me quite out of Countenance and into the utmost confusion, by the too great Honour you have done me, ^{^in} comparing me to the incomparable M^{rs} Roper a Lady whose least perfection, it will be impossible for me ever to attain, and must therefore beg pardon if I chide you for it, being truly sensible, that ^{^l} don't deserve so great a Compliment.¹⁵⁰ I am surpriz'd that I did not once think of that most excellent Lady, whose Character I was oblig'd to take particular notice of some time ago, among as many of our Learned English Ladies as I cou'd get Intelligence.¹⁵¹ But at this time my thoughts ran upon some more modern ^{^Lady} of whom I was sure I had never heard. I am extremely asham'd that I have given my Worthy Friend M^r Ballard so much trouble knowing how precious your time is. Yet I must confess I am not sorry because it has given me still more reason to admire your extraordinary Worth, and I do assure you S^r that this last Favour of you ^{^f} accurate account of the Learned M^{rs} Margaret Roper will be esteem'd ^{^by} me as a choice curiosity for which I return you a thousand thanks.¹⁵²

I had on Saturday last a visit from M^r West and I believe the occasion of it was to enquire after you, for he told me he heard you were to be in Town that day, I shou'd have been very glad if it had been true, because I shou'd have hoped for a visit from you.¹⁵³

^d Sic. The postscript is unusually poorly punctuated.

¹⁴⁹ Ruth Perry has theorised that this mysterious woman was Ballard's sister, estranged for getting into 'trouble of some sort'. Given that the second struck out section could potentially be 'your dear self', or something similar (there is a down-stroke still showing at the start, and the length would work), this could be correct. See Perry, ed., *Ballard's Biographies*, editorial introduction, pp. 100-101.

¹⁵⁰ See n. 148 to previous letter.

¹⁵¹ This could refer to her collection of notes regarding learned ladies, now Bodleian MS Ballard 64, although this manuscript does not contain any reference to Margaret Roper. However, Elstob may have consulted documents about Roper before deciding not to include her in the notebook.

¹⁵² This was probably an early draft of the account of Margaret Roper that Ballard was to include in his *Memoirs*. See Ballard, *Memoirs* (1752), p. 38-61; and Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, pp. 85-101.

¹⁵³ James West, politician and antiquary. He was educated at Oxford in the 1720s, and his country seat, Alscott, Preston-on-Stour, was roughly fifteen miles from Evesham, so he would have had ample opportunities to meet and be on visiting terms with Elstob. In 1760 at the auction of the library of Joseph Ames (cf. n. 176 to letter 17, this edition), West purchased four volumes of transcriptions of Anglo-Saxon homilies made by both Elizabeth and William Elstob. At his death in 1772 they were purchased by William Petty, second earl of Shelburne and first marquess

I am oblig'd to beg pardon that I have not return'd your Books and hope the little time I have to read, will be a just excuse for me, I must entreat for a little longer use of them, which will very highly oblige.

Worthy S^r

Your most Grateful and humble
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

Evesham June 15th. 1736.

can you put ^{^me} in a way how to procure my Saxon Grammar it is for my Honourable Friend M^r Hastings, who is desirous to see one.¹⁵⁴ I have employ'd our Bookseller to get me one but without success^d

9. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, September 12th 1736^a

Returns Ballard his books, in which she fancies she has come across some of her ancestors. Chastises him for not taking breakfast with her when he visited Evesham. Writes of wishing to visit his mother.

Worthy S^r

I have at last sent your Books with many thanks, and beg pardon for keeping them so long, which I hope you will grant, knowing how little time I have at present to Rea[d]. I am apt to fancy I have met with two of our Family, that is Maurice de Elnestowa and John, the one mention'd p. 280. the other 444. in the

Letter 9

^a Fols 27-28. Addressed 'To M^r George Ballard in Campden', with a surviving red wax seal imprinted with the profile of a woman. The edges of the letter are somewhat decayed, so assumptions made in transcription have been marked by [].

of Lansdowne, whose manuscript archive was purchased in 1806, after *his* death, for the British Library, where the four volumes now reside as Lansdowne MS 370-374. See W.P. Courtney, 'West, James (1703-1772)', rev. P. Woodland, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29085>, accessed 10 June 2015; catalogue entry for Lansdowne MS 374, http://searcharchives.bl.uk/IAMS_VU2:IAMS040-002074801, accessed 11 June 2015; and G. Parker, 'Petty, William, first Marquis of Lansdowne, better known as Lord Shelburne (1737-1805)', *Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols, London, 1885-1900, vol. 45, 1896.

¹⁵⁴ This would indicate that when her brother died she even lost any copies of her final published work.

Annals of Dunstable, ~~whom~~ 'tis probable cou'd I see the old writings^b belonging to the Family I might there find them. There is one peice of History in the Annals of Dunstable, which I cou'd not forbear taking^c notice of, it is of the two Stewards to Prince Edward at Eyton and Houton, in the year 1256 who it seems were wicked and cruel men. Some time hence I think there will be another mention'd in History. Possesso[r] of the last of those places, if not of both, who will make a worse figure, they were troublesome only to their Neighbourhood and a few Abbeys, but this has given uneasines[s] more than once to the whole Kingdom, sed hæc inter nos.

I shall say nothing of the ill usage Poor M^r Wanley has receiv'd from M^r Hearne, having shew'd my resentment upon that subject before.¹⁵⁵

I was heartily glad to see you and your Ingenious Friend^d at Evesham, but ^{^am} not a little angry that you wou'd not oblige ^{^me} so far as ^{^to} breakfast with me, which I hop'd y^{ou} wou'd. I ^{^had not} half time enough to talk with you, and indeed I had some things to say, which were proper only to communicate, to a real Friend as I have ^{^all} the reason ^{^in the world} to esteem you to be.¹⁵⁶

Yesterday being our little Fair day the only Holiday almost that I have in the Year. I design'd a Visit to M^{rs} Ballard your good Mother, but in the Morning was taken so ill, that I was not able to stir out, and am at this time very little better, I wou'd gladly by shewing some respect to her, ^{^to} let you see how much you are esteem'd by

Worthy S^r
Evesham Sep^{tember} 12. 1736

Your most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

I was surpriz'd and vex'd
to hear last night ~~to hear~~ that
M^{rs} Ballard was gone before I

^b 's' added by another hand, probably Ballard's.

^c Possibly a word lost at the edge of the page between 'forbear' and 'taking', as taking has a '=' before it, indicating that its prefix was on the end of the previous line.

^d Marked with a cross and, in the margins, the name 'Gowin Knight.'

¹⁵⁵ See letter 4, this edition.

¹⁵⁶ The 'Ingenious Friend' is identified by Ballard's annotation as Gowin Knight, a physicist and inventor of geomagnetic instruments. See P. Fara, 'Knight, Gowin (*bap.* 1713, *d.* 1772)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15719>, accessed 10 June 2015.

cou'd wait on her, however I
 please my self that it will not
 be long before she will come
 again, when I hope I shall be
 so happy as to see her.

10. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, December 4th 1736^a

Describes the genesis of the Saxon type which she helped to design. Recommends the printer she used, Bowyer, to Ballard. Turns down an offer of a loan of a book. Expresses gratitude at her good fortune in her friends.

Dec^{ber}. 4th. 1736

Worthy S^r

In answer to your good Friend M^r Parrys request, I will acquaint you where the Saxon Letter was Cast & as Testimony of Gratitude to the Mæcenas of ^Λthat Age, I will let you know how it came to be cast. That great Patron and Encourager of Letters, The Late Earle of Macclesfield Lord Chancellor of England, hearing that M^r Bowyer Printer in White Fryers ^ΛLondon wanted a good Saxon Letter, was pleas'd to be at the expence of the Set.¹⁵⁷ M^r Bowyer desir'd me to

Letter 10

^a Fols 29-30. Address as previous. Red wax seal; unclear if impressed image the same as previous. The ink of the first page of the letter is faint and browning, and the line of the pen quite thin.

¹⁵⁷ Thomas Parker, first earl of Macclesfield, was a Whig politician and Lord Chancellor from 1718-1725. In his later years he was known for his hospitality and generosity towards young scholars. William Bowyer (1663-1737), known for his scholarly printing, was the printer responsible for Elstob's *English-Saxon Homily* (1709), *Testimonies of Learned Men* (1713), and *Rudiments of Grammar* (1715). It is likely that he was the printer for the proofs of Elstob's never-completed *English-Saxon Homilies of Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury*. He also produced works by George Hickee, Thomas Rymer, and other prominent scholars. For Parker, see A. Hanham, 'Parker, Thomas, first earl of Macclesfield (1667-1732)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21341>, accessed 10 June 2015. For Bowyer, see the eighteenth-century volumes noted above; and K. Maslen, 'Bowyer, William (1663-1737)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3092>, accessed 10 June 2015.

give him a Copy,^b which I did, from the best Manuscript I cou'd meet with tho' not so exact a one as wou'd have come from the [^]Hand of the Ingenious M^r Parry, yet I am not a little proud that it is approv'd on, nor am I less pleas'd^c to hear there is something going on, to the Honour of our Saxon Ancestors.¹⁵⁸ If the Gentleman you mention Pleases to employ M^r Bowyer He may depend upon employing a truely Honest Man.

S^r I cannot with any assurance desire the loan of the Book you mention, not having return'd what you have been so good as to lend me already, which I have read over and over, but there ~~th~~ [^]are three or four Notes which I wou'd willingly transcribe, only as an assistance to my Memory which is extremely Bad, & which I shou'd have done long before this, if my [^]ill health, and some other Affairs had not prevented. I assure you S^r these long winter Evenings' to me are very Melancholy ones, for when my School is done, my little ones leave me incapable of either reading, writing, or thinking, for their noise is not out of my head till I fall asleep, which is often too late

I am extremely concern'd to think it has been my ill fortune to give so much trouble to my kind Friends and to yourself in particular. However I am not without hopes that Providence has give a turn to my advantage, as I hope and Pray it may to Yours[.] For by the Indefatigable endeavours of my Dearest Friend M^{rs} Chapon, I have receiv'd several Instances of it, and some extraordinary ones. I wish'd when you were here last, I cou'd have had one half hours conversation with you, which I am sure wou'd not have been disagreeable to you, because I know you are my Friend and what I had then to communicate was not proper to speak before a Stranger. I have since rec[^]ieved several more instances of her Friendship, and if that last article of your letter were true [^]which relates to her it wou'd be the most Joyfull news I ever heard in my life. I know the Grounds of it [^]that report, but dare not commit it to Pen and Paper because it is a great Secret. If it were true I shou'd be like Judge Burton, Dye with excessive Joy. That you may

^b This word outside left-hand margin.

¹⁵⁸ Elstob's statement that she provided a model for the type is notable. The published consensus is that Humphrey Wanley provided the copy – Wanley wrote that he had provided Bowyer with 'a set of press letters', but that 'it signified little; for, when the alphabet came into the hands of a workman... he could not imitate the fine and regular stroke of the pen; so that the letters are not only clumsy, but unlike those I drew.' It seems odd that either of them would lie, so it seems that Bowyer asked them both to provide samples of Anglo-Saxon from which to make the final product – this might explain why Wanley did not recognise the 'fine and regular stroke' of his own pen. See H. Carter, *A History of the Oxford University Press*, vol. I, Oxford, 1975, pp. 383-384; and Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. i, p. 117.

meet but with one Friend as Sincere and Indefatigable as my Dear M^{rs} Chapon and as successfull, is the Hearty Prayer of

Worthy S^r

Your most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

I think I never let such
a Letter go from me, to a Person
of Learning and Judgement be=
=fore. But I hope what I said
in the preceding page will
will be a just excuse for the
faults of this.

11. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, December 24th 1736^a

Thanks Ballard for the sight of another of Mr Parry's transcripts, whose Saxon hand-writing she greatly praises. Sends her service to Mr Knight and regrets being unable to send any manuscripts of interest to his father. Thanks Ballard for the loan of a chronicle and of a pair of apparently confidential letters.

Worthy S^r

I am very glad to hear that my Answer to M^r Parry's query was satisfactory, it had waited on you on Saturday as you desir'd, but Wigget was come and gone before I was up. I am vastly oblig'd ^{^to} M^r Parry for his good opinion of my Works, and to you Good S^r for the sight of his charming transcript of the Lords Prayer in Saxon, which in my opinion far exceeds any of ^{^the} Saxon Manuscr^{^i}pts that I have seen.

Bepreas'd S^r to return my most humble service to the Ingenious M^r Knight, and acquaint ^{^him} with ^{^the} pleasure I had in hearing of his good success in his travels, and that You were so merry at my relation of M^{rs}. Astell and her

Letter 11

^a Fol. 31, wrapper at fol. 33. Addressed as previous. Elstob filled up the left-hand margin of the paper and was forced to split words in half with a '=' at the end of lines. Enclosed with the letter – or at least bound next to it – is a copy on vellum of a passage in Anglo-Saxon, with a note indicating that it is 'For the Rev^d M^r Knight' (fol. 32).

Pigeon.¹⁵⁹ I shou'd readily comply with his request, cou'd I send him any thing that I thought worth his Learned Fathers acceptance, but you know where I am placed, is out of the reach of any Manuscripts, so that I can transcribe nothing but what that Learned Gentleman has seen already.¹⁶⁰ I return you thanks [^]for the sight of the inscriptions from that valuable piece of Antiquity. The Characters are undoubtedly Runick, but the little knowledge I once had in that Language, by a long disuse is almost lost, so that I dare ^{not} give any judgement upon it.

I have just run over Rob: de Avesburys Chronicle for the use of which you have my thanks, the two letters you were so kind as to communicate to me were vastly agreeable [^]to me, I have return'd ^{them} without any ones seeing them but my self, with an assurance that it is my daily Prayers that what is mention'd in them, may succeed to the utmost of your wishes which I shall rejoice to hear.¹⁶¹ I please my self very much with the hopes of being honour'd with a visit from the Worthy and Learned M^r Rawlins, and am not without hopes you will bear him company.¹⁶² The Paper relating to K.C.st shall be return'd with the Conspectus some time in

¹⁵⁹ For Knight, see n. 156, letter 9, this edition. Mary Astell was the author of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies*, in which she envisaged the 'intellectual retreat' of communities for single women in which they could escape marriage and cultivate their minds, and an acquaintance of Elstob in her earlier years. See R. Perry, 'Astell, Mary (1666-1731)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/814>, accessed 10 Jun 2015; and Sutherland, 'Elizabeth Elstob', pp. 61-62.

¹⁶⁰ Gowin Knight's 'Learned Father' was Robert Knight, vicar of Corringham, Lincolnshire, from 1709 onwards. In spite of Elstob's statement to the effect that she has nothing to send the Rev. Knight, there is bound with this letter a vellum sheet, with a note in English identifying it as 'For the Rev^d M^r Knight'. Thanks go to Professor Heather O'Donoghue for her help in identifying the text. See J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714*, vol. i, Oxford, 1891, p. 862.

¹⁶¹ It is likely that Ballard lent Elstob the edition of Avesbury's chronicle by Hearne, *Historia de mirabilibus gestis Edvardi*, Oxford: Sheldon, 1720.

¹⁶² Mr Rawlins is Thomas Rawlins of Pophills, Warwickshire (1689-1752), and extremely extensive correspondent of Ballard's. Four letters, written to him by Elstob between December 1737 and February 1738, survive. The letters mostly contain Elstob's thanks for services he has done her (such a passing on a letter and a 'Present' from Brome) and references to her health. However, she does briefly discuss scholarly matters with him, responding to an apparent inquiry for the loan of a book with the regretful explanation 'I was oblig'd with abundance of sorrow, to part with Leland's Itinerary some years ago, you may be assur'd if I had it, it should be at your service'. She also states, elliptically and with some pathos, that 'I am so truly convinc'd of those things you mention that had it not been for a constant reliance on Divine Providence I cou'd never have gone through the difficulties I have undergone.' It is possible this passage refers to her ill-health; it is more likely that Elstob is referring to the death of her brother and her ensuing difficulties. See Bodleian MS Ballard 43, letters of Elstob to Rawlins December 16th 1737, January 9th 1737/8, February 2nd 1737/8, and February 20th 1737/8, fols. 207-210. For Rawlins correspondence with Ballard see Bodleian MS Ballard 41, fols 80-320. For biographical data on Rawlins see <http://emlo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/profile/person/8e8d4db3-c49e-4f3b-9ecd-3994e1c52fed> accessed 3 October 2015. See also n. 177, letter 20.

Christmass being willing to transcribe ^{^it}, which I cannot possibly do till that time of leisure, in the mean time be assur'd that I am

Dec:^{ber} 24.th 1736. Worthy Friend

Your most Gratefull and most
humble servant Eliz: Elstob

My humble Service to
Good M^{rs} Ballard

12. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, January 24th 1737^a

Sends Ballard an account of Evesham. Bemoans the loss of material from James West's library in a fire.

Evesham Jan^{ry} 24th 1736/7

Worthy Friend

I have at last return'd the Conspectus for which I return a Thousand thanks, and beg as many pardons for k[ee]ping it so long.¹⁶³ I have sent you the Account of Evesham [which] I formerly told you of, but doubt it will not Answer your expectation, finding upon second reading there is but very little in ^{it}. but what has been long since in print, if any thing at all.

Now my Good Friend I must Join with you in Lamentation (for I dare say you are grieved as well as my self) for the loss our Learned and Ingenious Friend M^r West has sustain'd by the late Fire at the Temple.¹⁶⁴ I cannot forbear grieving

Letter 12

^a Fols 34-35. This particular letter is in a poor state. Where I have inserted [unreadable] this reflects words which were once on a now-decayed page edge. Assumed words or letters in []. Addressed as previous.

¹⁶³ Elstob is presumably referring to William Wotton's *Conspectus brevis* (1708) of Hickeys's *Thesaurus* to which Elstob had contributed an edition of the Athanasian Creed. See the introduction to this edition.

¹⁶⁴ This again refers to James West (see letter 8, this edition). He kept a collection of books, manuscripts and other items of antiquarian interest in his chambers at the Inner Temple. The fire to which Elstob refers occurred on January 7th 1737. See W. Courtney, 'West, James (1703-1772)', P. Woodland, *rev.*, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29085>, accessed 10 June 2015.

[when] I think what losses have happen'd of that kind within the [past] few years, and heartily beseech allmighty God to preserve [unreadable] our noble Repository's for the Future. My business will [n]ot permit me to add more at present than ^{^my} sincere wishes for your prosperity and am,

Worthy S^r

Your most Gratefull and humble
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

13. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, March 7th 1737^a

Thanks Ballard for mediating a visit from Mr Rawlins and a letter from Mr Brome, who also sent her money. Is uneasy at his having shown Dr Rawlinson her life of William. Directs Dr Rawlinson to the Earl of Oxford's library should he wish to see a copy of their mother's pedigree.

Worthy Friend

Tho' I am not a Letter in your debt, shou'd I be silent at this time, I might justly incur the imputation of ingratitude, having lately receiv'd by your kind mediation, not only the Honour of a Visit from the Worthy M^r Rawlins, (to his own expence, which has given me some uneasiness) but also a most obliging Letter from the Worthy and Learned Mr Brome, with a Present inclosed of three Guineas.¹⁶⁵ Thus much was writ before I had the Favour of your last most obliging and affectionate Letter, but by illness and other hindrances, have ^{^been} prevented from returning my

Letter 13

^a Fols 36-37. Addressed as previous. The line of the pen is slightly lighter here, and the paper seems to be slightly thinner than previous.

¹⁶⁵ The visit from Rawlins is the one Elstob hoped for in letter 11. William Brome [Broome] – who collaborated with Alexander Pope in what came to be known as Pope's translation of the *Odyssey*, and was another correspondent of Ballard's – took a great interest in Elstob, writing repeatedly to Ballard with expressions of concern for her health and requests for 'any of her Performances as well by the Pencill as the Pen', and by October 1743 was passing to Elstob via Ballard his 'most cordial love + service'. See Bodleian MS Ballard 41, Brome to Ballard, letters of February 3rd 1738, July 7th 1738, October 8th 1743, ff 42, 46, 77; and A. Chahoud, 'Broome, William (*bap.* 1689, *d.* 1745)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3571>, accessed 10 June 2015.

thanks before, which I now beg leave to do, and to assure you, it is with the greatest trouble imaginable, that I receive so many obligations, & instances of Friendship, without having it in the least in my power to shew my Gratitude as I ought, either by words or deeds, and must earnestly beg that you will for the future cease to grieve me by such extraordinary testimonies of your generosity, for I think myself sufficiently happy in your Friendship without any such testimonies.

Were it not for the knowledge of your Goodness and Candour towards me I shou'd almost chide you for exposing the very mean account I sent you, at your request, of my Dear Brothers Life, to so worthy and Learned a Gentleman as D^r Rawlinson.¹⁶⁶ I must acquaint you my very Good Friend that it is impossible for you to imagin, what confusion I was in when I read that part of your Letter, which told me you had done it, being very sensible it is not fit to be seen. There is nothing can take off my uneasiness on that account, but the hopes I have, that you were so good as to make an Apology, for the imperfectness of that Performance, and that the Worthy D^r ~~will~~ if he thinks fit to make use of those Hints, for they are no better, will be so good as to put them in better order, and take no notice from whence they came. I shou'd be highly pleas'd to have it in my power to be service^{able} ^b to that worthy Gentleman, but can at present recollect nothing that can Illustrate my Dear Brothers Character more, than by comparing him to your Good self, in his Generosity & Fidelity to his Friend, he never thinking himself more truly ^{happy}, than when he had it in power to serve his Friend, without giving him the trouble to ask him, nor was he ever more troubled, than when a favour was requested which was not in his power to grant. I have not a Copy of my Mothers Pedigree by me, or it shou'd be at yours and the D^{rs} Service. But if he thinks it worth his while to see it. I believe he may find it in my Lord Oxfords Library, having some years ago presum'd to Present it with my Fathers, (written with my own hand, and with some notes), to the Late Earle, understanding he was a Lover of Heraldry.¹⁶⁷ I return you many thanks

^b Word at corner of page; partly obscured by decay of pages.

¹⁶⁶ Richard Rawlinson, antiquarian, bibliophile, and non-juror. He founded an Anglo-Saxon scholarship at Oxford. He also sought to collect biographical material regarding Oxford men from 1690 (the terminal date of Anthony Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses*) to the present day – hence, presumably, his interest in information regarding William Elstob. His papers are now held in the Bodleian Library as Rawlinson MS. See M. Clapinson, 'Rawlinson, Richard (1690-1755)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23192>, accessed 10 June 2015. Ballard would also later lend the *Life* of William to Brome, who – belatedly and evidently unaware of the earlier loan – asked if he might show it to Rawlinson. See the letter from Brome to Ballard, 18 November 1737, Bodleian MS Ballard 41, fol. 41.

¹⁶⁷ See note to addendum to letter 5, this edition.

for the sight of M^r Hearnes Oathe of Allegiance, and Good M^r Brome's Letter, my thoughts on M^r Hearnes and on the Preface you shall know,¹⁶⁸ when I have the happiness of seeing you next, till then and for ever I shall continue to be

Worthy Friend

Your most Gratefull and obliged humble

Servant

Elizabeth Elstob

Evesham March 7th 1736/7

all the faults in this Letter I hope
will be excused, for it was writ
by bits just as I cou'd catch an opportunity.

~~{Four illegible lines, crossed out}.^c~~

14. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, April 8th 1737^a

Praises Ballard for his friendship, possibly after receiving a gift of a book from him. Thanks him also for his invitation of her to Campden but fears she might be too ill to make the journey.

Worthy Friend.

I have receiv'd such ample testimonies of your Generosity and Friendship, that I shou'd be not only the most stupid but the most ungratefull creature in the World, if I were not truely sensible that you are^b a perfect Master of those excellent Qualities. I was always a great admirer of M^{rs} K. Philip's's charming

^c These four lines are heavily crossed out – possibly by Ballard, as he censors elsewhere, but possibly by Elstob before sending – and mostly indecipherable. The first few words perhaps contain 'I am desir'd... you..... will do for...'

Letter 14

^a Fols 38-39. In a darker, heavier hand than previous letter. Addressed as previous, with 'car.pd.'

^b This inserted as an amendment in the margin.

¹⁶⁸ Elstob is probably referring to Hearne's *A vindication of those who take the oath of allegiance*, London: Lichfield, 1731. In spite of his non-juring tendencies, he took oaths on entering Oxford. See T. Harmsen, 'Hearne, Thomas (*bap.* 1678, *d.* 1735)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12827>, accessed 10 June 2015.

performances, and am intirely of your opinion that the Dialogue between Luca-
sia, and Rosania comes behind none of the rest.^{c169}

S^r, I return you ten thousand thanks for your very kind invitation to Campden,
I assure you I have all this Winter pleas'd my self with the thoughts of waiting
on you at Easter, ^{^but have} been so very ill and am now so weak, that I fear I shall
not be able to under take the journey. However ^{^if} I can get a little better and
stronger I think to try one day next, ^{^week} but don't expect me, for I am very
doubtfull whether I shall be able to come or no. If I come I shall be a double
trespasser having a particular Friend who is desirous to come with me. I beg
you will make my humble service acceptable to Good M^{rs} Ballard, and accept
the same from

Worthy Friend,

April 8th. 1737

Your most gratefully and most
obliged Servant:

Elizabeth Elstob

15. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to {Campden}, June 6th 1737^a

Elstob has just returned from a visit to the Ballards' home, and thanks Ballard for the entertainment she received there. Communicates news requested by Mrs Ballard. Encloses documents (no longer with letter, but apparently including some of her own drawings, according to the subsequent letter) for Ballard's perusal.

Worthy Friend

Before I acquaint you how I perform' my Journey, I know my self oblig'd to
return ten thousand ^{^thanks} to you and Good M^{rs} Ballard, for the vastly kind

Letter 15

^a Fols 40-41. Simply addressed 'To Mr George Ballard'.

¹⁶⁹ Katherine Philips, best known for her poems on friendship. (The poem Elstob refers to is 'Rosania to Lucasia on her Letters' an apposite allusion in the context of her correspondence with Ballard.) See K. Philips, *Poems by the most deservedly Admired Mrs Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda*, London: for J. Herringman, 1667, pp. 144-145; and W. Chernaik, 'Philips [née Fowler], Katherine (1632-1664)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22124>, accessed 10 June 2015.

entertainment I met with from you both, and to assure you, that I have not this many Years (if ever) spent my time more agreeably and more to my real satisfaction than at Campden.

Tho' at my first setting out I was very fearfull of my Guide, yet after I was got safe down the ugly Hill, I became so courageous that I fear I shall become a troublesome Visiter. I thank God after a very pleasant Journey I arriv'd safe at Evesham about a q^r before eight.

According to M^{rs} Ballards request, I sent to enquire how M^{rs} Dunn did, she gives her service to her, and is as well as can be expected, and desir'd me to acquaint her that the Child died on Saturday morning of the same disorder. M^{rs} Saunders tells me, it alter'd soon after M^{rs} Ballard was gone.¹⁷⁰ I have many things more to add, but my Children are all about me among^b whom it is impossible to write, which obliges me to conclude with my humble service to Good M^{rs} Ballard and yourself who am,

Evesham June 6th. 1737 Worthy Friend;

I beg one line to acquaint ^{Am^e} of your health Your most Gratefull and most
for I thought on Saturday you were not well. humble Servant; Eliz: Elstob.

I have sent for your Perusal such a Sermon as I believe you never saw, and some trifles not worth your acceptance.^c

16. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, June 19th 1737^a

Elstob is fearful for Ballard's health, especially as she claims he has 'cured' her of her own lethargy, and is embarrassed by his praise of the 'trifles' she previously sent him. Urges him to return her recent visit.

^b Could be 'amongst' – word is at the very edge of a page.

^c This is written 'vertically' along the left-hand margin.

Letter 16

^a Fols 42-43. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Campden'.

¹⁷⁰ Possibly Mrs Ballard had been carrying out charitable visits to the sick in the vicinity of Elstob's home village and was seeking news of them. Chipping Campden and Evesham are around nine miles distant.

Evesham June 19th 1737^b

My Worthy Friend did not waite with more impatience to know how I got to Evesham, than I have done to hear of your health, which I was very apprehensive, was but very indifferent when I left Campden, and am heartily griev'd to hear, you have been so ill since, fearing I might in great measure be the occasion of it, by my great impertinence and too much Loquacity, I do assure you it is only among those I esteem as my best Friends, that I now put on those Gaieties, being reserv'd enough and sometimes thought too much so among ^{Asuch as} I have but little value for.

Since I inform'd you at Campden that ^{Asyou} had gain'd the Title of D^r Ballard, and that you had cured a Gentlewoman of a Lethargy, she hopes in return, you will give ^{Aher} leave to give you her best advice for your health, her opinion is that you work and study too hard, and earnestly desires you will be more moderate in both, and that you will imitate her in chearfullness, which under God has been the only thing that has kept her so long alive, amidst the Frowns of Fortune she has met with, and an ill share of health. she hopes with good care, you having Youth on your side, ~~you~~ may live to a good old Age w^{ch} that you may, and continue to be an Ornament to your Countrey, a delight to your Acquaintance, and an Honour to your Family, her Prayers shall never be wanting so long as she has breath.

Your thanks for the Bundle of trifles which you are pleas'd to call Curiosities put me to the blush, there being not one thing among them worth your acceptance, the little Mochoa Stone indeed may be call'd a Natural Curiosity, it being a pretty peice of Natures Work, for the rest, if you have ever a Drawer for trumpery as I believe most Antiquaries have pray throw them in there.¹⁷¹ Now for the Drawings, I must tell you I have laugh'd ready to kill my self at the respect you have paid to things so imperfect and unfinish'd, done in my childhood, and when a Learner. I had not sent them, but that I understood you had not seen the Face of Dear Dean Hickes, and believ'd ~~you~~ that you wou'd not be displeas'd to see the likeness of my good old Grandfather by the Mothers side, the sweetness of whose Face shews the Goodness of the Man.¹⁷² And since such things please you so much

^b Possibly in Ballard's hand.

¹⁷¹ Moss agate, a semi-precious gemstone.

¹⁷² Elstob pointedly refers to George Hickes as 'Dean', his last ecclesiastical post before the schism of 1688, rather than as 'Bishop', his title in non-juring circles. This passage is the root of a misleading suggestion by Nichols that George Hickes was Elstob's grandfather; a more accurate interpretation would be that Elstob sent portraits of both Hickes, and her grandfather; Nichols

and occasion you to use more than ordinary exercise, which I think very conducive to health, I have sent you some more, among which is the Phyz of of an old Friend, don't Fancy she was ever so handsome, for every one is apt to be favourable to themselves, as Painters are apt to flatter others.¹⁷³

I am sorry you make any Apology for my treatment at Campden their being no occasion for it, it obliges me again to assure you that I never spent my time more agreeably nor more to my Satisfaction, & again to return a thousand thanks to Good M^{rs} Ballard and yourself for the many Favours receiv'd by

Worthy Friend

Your most Gratefull & obliged

humble Servant

Elizabeth Elstob

collates the two. Elstob's maternal grandfather was Mr William Hall, a Newcastle merchant. The portrait of her grandfather does not seem to be attested to elsewhere, but in his will Ballard left, among other things, 'two heads drawn by M^{rs} Elstob Viz': Dean Hickes and M^r John Dryden the Poet' to 'the Reverend D^r Winchester Fellow of Magdalen Coll: Oxon' – i.e. Thomas Winchester, who was a fellow at the college until 1761 and who was later censured as failing to earn 'the annual stipend of twenty guineas by a single word of instruction, enquiry, or advice'. See T. Harmen, 'Hickes, George (1642-1715)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13203>, accessed 11 June 2015; Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, iv, 139-140; E. Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle Upon Tyne*, vol. i, Newcastle 1827, p. 57; Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/817, fol. 333r; and W. Macray and J. Bloxham, *A register of the members of St. Magdalen College, Oxford: from the foundation of the college. New Series*, 8 vols, London, 1894-1915, vol. 5: *Fellows: 1713-1820*, 1906, pp. 83-84.

¹⁷³ Elstob is presumably referring to a self-portrait. In his will Ballard stated that 'to the Rev^d M^r Francis Wise Radcliffe Librarian I leave two heads drawn with crayons by the very learned ingenious M^{rs} Elstob neatly framed and glassed Viz': her own head and the Rev^d and learned M^r Elstob's and my will and desire is that at his death he will give them both to the Bodleian Gallery as being the most proper repository for such Curiosities'. It seems evident that Ballard valued the portraits Elstob had sent him; it seems plausible that he was responsible for them being 'neatly framed and glassed', and it is notable that he does not will the portraits back to Elstob, although this may perhaps be because he did not expect her to survive him (which she did, by just less than a year). His stated desire that they ultimately be deposited in the Bodleian Gallery suggests that one of his chief concerns was that they be preserved for posterity. Francis Wise was the first librarian of the Radcliffe Library, Oxford (now known as the Radcliffe Camera) after its construction. It is not clear whether he carried out Ballard's wishes regarding the portraits or not – they are not attested to in the nineteenth-century printed catalogue of the Bodleian Gallery, but it is possible that the names of the sitters were not properly catalogued, and that they may yet be found amidst the artworks now collected in the Ashmolean Museum. See Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/817, fol. 333r; M. Clunies Ross and A. Collins, 'Wise, Francis (1695-1767)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29786>, accessed 11 June 2015; and J. Norris, *A catalogue of the pictures, models, busts, &c. in the Bodleian Gallery, Oxford*, Oxford, 1839.

Since it is the first time as far
 as I can remember that ever I
 rid 5 miles to visit a Gentleman.
 I shall expect to have the visit
 return'd, and will ^c mention
 the same inducement you made
 use of, that of Change of air for
 your health.

I return you thanks for ^{^the} Miscellany,
 you ^{^need} not hurry in the return of the
 Books

17. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, July 10th 1737^a

Elstob is anticipating a visit from Ballard. She is once again modest in response to his praise for her drawings; the letter closes with a guarded postscript regarding 'our Papers'.

Worthy Friend

I am highly pleas'd to hear you design me a Visit very soon, nothing I assure you will contribute more to my health, than the conversation of so Worthy and Ingeni^{^o}us a Person, especially if the D^r prescribes in those Antient Languages, for which I once had, and still have a very great Veneration, had I leisure to bestow my time on them.

It is impossible for me to tell you how much I am asham'd of the fine encomiums you are pleas'd to bestow on those poor Drawings, which were only done for my own diversion, and a little relaxation from severer Studies. I sent them to make you laugh, not to be seen by any one, and therefore hope you will not expose them.¹⁷⁴ As for Scuderias Head, I will tell ^{^you} what will be best to do

^c Something struck out here.

Letter 17

^a Fols 44-45. Addressed as previous, with 'car.pd'. Faint pen, ink browning with age.

¹⁷⁴ It would seem that in spite of Elstob's modesty she was an artist of some ability, for Mr rome, Ballard's acquaintance, claims that 'none can have greater esteem for her than I have: + more admire her Pen, + now... say Pencill than I do: + her Gladiator, thanks to my generous

with it, when I have the Favour of seeing you here.¹⁷⁵ In the mean time I am with earnest Prayers for your health and Prosperity, and due respects to your self and Good M^{rs} Ballard

Worthy Friend

Evesham July 10th 1737

Your most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

I am glad to hear our Papers are in good Hands, I hope providence will some time or other put it in my power to enquire more about them, in the mean time say nothing of them or me.¹⁷⁶

18. Elstob to Ballard, {Evesham} to Campden, October 3rd 1737^a

Due to illness Elstob can write only a short apologetic note.

Worthy Friend

My Head and Eyes are at present so extremely bad that I can see to write no more than to assure you, that as soon as they are a little better, you shall have a

Letter 18

^a Fols 46-47. Addressed as previous.

Benefactor, I reckon among my greatest rarities' See Bodleian MS Ballard 41, letter from Brome to Ballard, 8 April 8 1738, fol. 44.

¹⁷⁵ Evidently Elstob had drawn a portrait of Mademoiselle de Scudéry whose essay *On Glory* she had translated in 1708.

¹⁷⁶ On 3 June 1737 Joseph Ames, an antiquary, wrote to Ballard informing him that he had been 'so fortunate as to preserve Mr & Mrs Elstob's Papers from dust & forgetfulness'. Ames and Ballard corresponded for several years regarding these, and the Ballard manuscript collection in the Bodleian possesses many of William and Elizabeth's papers. Notably, Ballard does not seem to have sought to reunite Elstob with the works of her youth, choosing instead to preserve them in his archive. See MS Ballard 40, fol. 123; and S. Collins, 'The Elstobs and the end of the Saxon revival', in: C. Berkhout and M. McGatch, eds, *Anglo-Saxon Scholarship: the first three centuries*, Boston, 1982, p. 115 and p. 118.

full and particular answer to you^{^rs} in the mean time believe me to be with the greatest Sincerety

Worthy Friend

Oct.^{ber} 3^d 1737

Your most Gratefull and
obliged servant

Elizabeth Elstob

Tho I scarce see what
I write, I must desire
my se^{^r}vice to Good
M^{rs} Ballard.

19. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, December 16th 1737^a

Elstob is still ill, but glad to hear that Ballard may be planning a visit.

Tho' I am now very ill in by Bed & hardly ^{^can} hold my Pen, I can no longer defer returning my Worthy Friend ten thousand thanks for the many obliging Letters I have receiv'd from him and particularly for his last. I shall heartily rejoice to see you here, but not till your hurry of business is over, which I hope will be by Christmas, when I hope I may be better and able to enjoy your Company who am with the greatest Sincerety,

Worthy Friend

Evesham

Dec:^{ber} 16th 1737

Your most Gratefull and
obliged Servant

Elizabeth [Elstob]

My service to
Good M^{rs} Ballard

Letter 19

^a Fol. 48. Addressed as previous. Bottom right hand corner of letter (Elstob's surname) has been torn off.

20. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, January 30th 1738^a

Elstob is better, and thanks Ballard for visiting.

Evesham Jan^{ry} 30th 1737/8

I am so much better I thank God as to be able to write a little (th'o still very weak the Fever having [^]not quite left me.) However I think my self oblig'd to send my first Letter of thanks to my Worthy and Good Friend M^r Ballard for his kind visit and most obliging Letter as well as for his frequent enquiries after my health. I assure you my Worthy Friend it was your earnest persuasion that made me take more than ordinary care of my health, & under Almighty God, my Good Friend M^r Andrews's Judgement and diligence, has procur'd^b this amendment.¹⁷⁷ I am at present able to add no more than assure you that I am Yours and Good M^{rs} B<allards

Most Gratefull and obliged

Servant Elizabeth Elstob

I return you a
thousand thanks
for the Homly

Letter 20

^a Fol. 49. For some reason in being inserted into the binding this letter was sliced into two pieces roughly an inch from the right-hand margin, and inserted separately into the binding. It is addressed as previous, with a red wax seal, but a new imprint in the wax – it seems to resemble Chinese 'seal' characters (see fig. 3b).

^b The 'd' is superscript, but due to her running into the margins, as opposed to other words in which superscripts are a matter of course (e.g. 'M^r').

¹⁷⁷ In a letter of February 20th the same year Elstob would urge Thomas Rawlins, apparently of some influence in the area, to 'employ him [Andrews], and to Favour him with your kind Offices, among the Worthy Families, with whom you are acquainted', in place of one Mr Jennings, an apothecary in Alcester who was then on the verge of death. See Bodleian MS Ballard 43, letter of 20 February 1737/8, fol. 210, and n. 162, letter 11.



Fig. 3a: One of the best-preserved examples of Elstob's customary stamp (perhaps gifted her by Ballard). MS Ballard 43, fol. 66.



Fig. 3b: Unusual stamp used for the seal of letter 20. MS Ballard 43, fol. 49.

21. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to {Campden}, February 6th 1738^a

Thanks him for a transcript he made for her to give to an unnamed Lady. Describes a visit from Mrs Chapon, Mrs Pendarves and her brother, Mr Granville.

Evesham Feb:^{ry} 6th 1737/₈

Worthy Friend

I doubt not but M^r Smith acquaint[^]ed you with the reason why you had not my thanks for your charming Transcrip^t of the Essay on Glory.¹⁷⁸ I cannot but admire at your patience, in giving yourself the trouble of Transcribing a thing so often, which will [^]scarce bear reading, [^]above once I must confess it makes the obligation the greater and commands my best acknowledgements, I presented ^{it} to the Lady for whom you design'd [^]it who is highly delighted with your Performance, and sends you her service and abundance of thanks.

I must now acquaint [^]you how agreeably I spent two hours on Thursday last, in the Company of my Dear Friend M^{rs} Chapon, w^{ch} seem'd to me not half a one. We shou'd both have been glad to [^]have seen you here, our Conversation was pretty much about you, and we cou'd [^]not forbear blaming you for not waiting on the Excellent M^{rs} Pendarves when desir'd, which prevented your seeing the Worthy M^r Granville her Brother, a Gentleman of a Glorious Character for Goodness and all other Accomplishments.¹⁷⁹ This being the longest Letter I have

Letter 21

^a Fol. 50. Cut and bound in same fashion as previous, although the narrower half of the letter is simply placed loose in the manuscript, rather than bound, as with letter 20. Addressed simply 'To Mr George Ballard'.

¹⁷⁸ Elstob translated Madeleine de Scudéry's *Essay Upon Glory* in 1708 – it may be that Ballard is reproducing her own text. The emphasis on Ballard's 'Performance' suggests that he produced a fine scribal copy.

¹⁷⁹ In 1738, Mary Pendarves was the widow of Alexander Pendarves of Roscrow, to whom she had been unhappily married, and had no fortune to speak of, but many friends at court – including the Duchess of Portland, later to become Elstob's employer. Her brother, Bernard Granville (1700-1776), succeeded his paternal uncle, George Granville as the Duke of Albermarle in 1735 (second Jacobite creation). See B. Brandon Schnorrenberg, 'Delany [*née* Granville, *other married name* Pendarves], Mary (1700-1788)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7442>, accessed 11 June 2015; Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage* (as in n. 1), vol. i, p. 91; and M. de Massue de Ruvignés, Marquis of Ruvigny and Raineval, *The Jacobite Peerage*, Edinburgh, 1904, pp. 4-5.

been able to write since my illness and my strength is increasing by very slowly,
I must beg leave to conclude myself yours and M^{rs} Ballards

Most Gratefull & obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

22. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, April 10th 1738^a

Elstob is still unwell, in spite of a visit to the countryside for a change of air. Discusses Mr Brome's concern for her, and chides Ballard for showing him her drawings. First reference to Mrs Pendarves working towards Elstob's aid, presumably in arranging the position she would later take up with the Duchess of Portland.

Evesham April 10.th 1738.

Most Worthy Friend,

You had receiv'd my thanks for the Favour of your most obliging Letter much sooner, if I had ^{^not} been oblig'd to take the first opportunity the Weather wou'd allow me of going into the Countrey, to try what benefit I shou'd reap by change of Air. I thank God I am return'd something better, tho' still weak and afflicted with my old Nervous Fever, from which I despa^{ir} of ever being free, it affects my Head Eyes and Hands so much as to make me almost incapable of writing. However I will as soon as possibly I can, endeavour to oblige you, and the Worthy Gentleman you mention, by sending you some Memoirs of my Life, tho' it be an unpleasant task, and what I by no mean^{^s} think a proper one for me.¹⁸⁰

It is impossible for me to express my Gratitude to the Excellent and Worthy M.^r Brome, for his affectionate concern for my Health, and the Value he do's me the Honour to express for me. This wou'd make me very vain, were I not certain, it proceeds more from his great Goodness and Candour, than from any desert of mine. I entreat you to return him my hearty thanks for this and his other Favours, when you write.

Letter 22

^a Fols 51-52. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Campden', with 'car.pd', sealed with black wax, impression the head of a lady.

¹⁸⁰ It would appear that Dr Rawlinson had requested her memoirs. (See letter 25, this edition).

My Worthy Friend you never gave me more reason to chide you, than for mentioning my wretched Drawings to so good a Judge as Mr Brome, had I [^]thought that you wou'd have expos[ed] them to the view of any one you shou'd never have seen them, pardon me for saying this for I am extremely ashamed of them.¹⁸¹

I have heard nothing yet, what success my excellent and generous Friend M^{rs} Pendarves is like to meet with in my affair, when I do, you shall be sure to hear from her, who is with all imaginable respect yours and Good M^{rs} Ballards

Most Gratefull Servant E Elstob.^b

23. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to Campden, July 16th 1738^a

Apologises for a long silence. Regrets the lack of any visit from either him or Miss Granville and Mrs Pendarves. Cannot answer his inquiry about Mary Astell. Assures him she will write him a piece, possibly her own life, for his Memoirs, in spite of her reluctance. Thanks him for a copy of a letter.

Evesham July 16th 1738.

If my Worthy Friend knew with what difficulty I write, he wou'd not only pardon my long silence, but be very sorry for me. Nothing but this tedious indisposition I do assure, you shou'd have prevented my sending my acknowledgements of the Favour of yours much sooner. I return you many thanks, for the account of my Age, it doubly pleas'd me, not only because it made me more certain of it, but because it acquainted me with the manner of Registering in that place, not having I can remember ever seen a certificate of that kind that mention'd the Gossips.¹⁸²

^b This is obscured by fraying at the bottom of the page.

Letter 23

^a Fols 53-54. Addressed as previous. Seal in red wax once again.

¹⁸¹ See n. 173, letter 17.

¹⁸² Elstob appears to have been uncertain of her own age and Ballard has evidently checked the relevant Newcastle parish register. She expresses surprise that the 'gossips' (*i.e.*, godparents) are given in the baptismal record, a style common on the continent and Scotland but unusual in England.

I have pleas'd my self ever since I receiv'd your last with the hopes of seeing you here, but fear the threat'ning message I sent you by M^r Oldsworth has made you afraid to come, I very much wish to see you that I might vent a little of my spleen, being much out of humour with you for not waiting on Miss Granville and M^{rs} Chapon, when they so much desired to see you. I thi[nk] there is an ill fate attends me, and that I shall never have the satisfaction of seeing those two excellent Sisters, for last summer the bad weather prevented my seeing the incomparable M^{rs} Pendarves, and this summer the small-pox being in Evesham, was the reason I did not see her equally good ^{Asister} Miss Granville. I lately [re]ceiv'd a charming ^{Letter} from my Honourable Friend M^{rs} Pendarves the contents of w^{c[h]} I think not proper to communicate, there is something in it, which I believe will not please you very well, tho' I am under no uneasiness at it.

I don't remember that I ever heard M^{rs} Astell mention the Good Lady's name, you desire to know, ^{but} I very well remember, she told me, it was Bishop Burnet that prevented that good Design by dissuading^b that Lady from encouraging it.¹⁸³

You cannot imagin my Worthy Friend how uneasy I am, that I have no[t] been able to perform my promise, in relation to the Memoirs. You may depend upon it, I will be as good as my word, as soon as possibly can. I assure you I never undertook any with greater reluctance, being very sensible there [is?] nothing in the circumstance of Life worthy of Notice, and that I am not able [present?] to write with such a Spirit as I cou'd wish, my Mind being as much weaken'd as my Body.

I beg a thousand pardons for not having return'd your Copy of M^r Lenton's Letter, it [?] a year since I began to transcribe it, but have not been able to finish it, which I will endeavour [?] do as soon as possible, in the mean time, believe me to be with ^{the} greatest Sincerety

Worthy S^r

I beg when you write to the Worthy
M^r Brome to present my humble
service, and to do the same to all my

Your most Gratefull and obliged Servant
Elizabeth Elstob

^b Corrected in a darker hand.

¹⁸³ Bishop Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715), bishop of Salisbury and historian, who dissuaded Princess Anne of Denmark from sponsoring Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Part II* (1697). See R. Perry, 'Astell, Mary (1666-1731)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/814>, accessed 11 June 2015; and M. Greig, 'Burnet, Gilbert (1643-1715)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4061>, accessed 11 June 2015.

Friends in Campden.
 If you see Miss Hopkins bepleas'd
 to give my Service to her, and let her
 the know the Family is pretty well. ¹⁸⁴
 Evesham
 July 13.
 1738^c

24. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to {Campden}, October 10th 1738^a

Elstob is moving to Bath for the sake of both her health and her 'affairs'. She fears missing her friends but assures Ballard that there is no one she would rather hear from than himself. She cannot yet return a transcript to him.

Evesham Oct^{ber} 10th 1738

Worthy Friend

Being assured by all my Friends that the Bath is the only place in the World to settle in; not only on account of my health, but on account ^{of} my affairs also, having an indefatigable Friend a Person ^{^of} Honour to recommend me.¹⁸⁵ Tho' it will be almost Death to me to go so far from my Excellent Friends here and

^c Added by Ballard. NB this is not the date given by Elstob at the top of the letter.

Letter 24

^a Fols 55-56. Addressed simply 'To Mr George Ballard'. Clearly written in haste as contains numerous insertions, blotches and corrections.

¹⁸⁴ I.e. Anna Hopkins (d. 1766-1768), spinster of Clapham, Surrey, and another of Ballard's correspondents. Anna Hopkins' great-uncle, William Hopkins (1647-1700), was an antiquary and friend of George Hickes. Members of Anna Hopkins' extended family lived in Evesham, hence Elstob's comment regarding the health of 'the Family'. See Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/740, fols 175^v-176^r (will of Deborah Hopkins, Anna's mother); Prob. 11/602, fols 328^v-329^r (will of George Hopkins, Anna's father); Prob. 11/477, fols 265^r-266^r (will of George Hopkins, Anna's grandfather, identifying his brother as William); Prob. 11/939, fols 153^v-155^r (will of Anna Hopkins, identifying herself as a spinster); G. Martin, 'Hopkins, William (1647-1700)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13754>, accessed 12 June 2015; and MS Ballard 43, fols 100-118.

¹⁸⁵ Possibly referring to either Mary Pendarves or Sarah Chapone; see letter 25, this edition. For Mary Pendarves see n. 179, above.

hereabouts, yet upon their persuasion ^{I design} to set out for Bath on Thursday next, that I may be there before ^{the} roads are too bad. The only thing can Aleviate my Grief is at the parting with my Friends is the hopes I entertain of hearing from my Friends which I may easily^b ^{do} from this part of the World, I assure Good M^r Ballard There is^c no one I shall rejoice to more to hear from than himself, and will certainly write to you as soon ^{as} possibly can and acquaint you ^{of} my success. I am extremely concern'd that I cannot return Transcript of the ^{Nuns} to day, I have but one Page to write, and take care to Leave it with Miss Hopkins, who will take care to send to you She sends you her service, and desir'd me to tell you she receiv'd the Money and that it was not put down. I am at present in so great a Hurry that I can ^{add} no ~~illegible single letter~~ no more than to assure that I am with Sincerity your_s and Good M^{rs} Ballards,

I have sent you ^a Script for the Worthy M^r Knight, and will not fail to perform my other promise as soon as possible.

Most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

I intreat you to Present my most humble ^{service} to the Valuable M^r Brome.^d

25. Elstob to Ballard, Bath to Campden, November 23rd, 1738^a

A somewhat downcast letter. Elstob was unable to see Ballard before she left Evesham and has met with little success in Bath procuring a position, in spite of 'zealous' recommendations on the part of her friends. A doctor friend has told her that her chosen employment of improving the minds of young ladies is not appreciated. She reluctantly encloses her autobiography. Bath has improved her health, but not completely cured her.

^b The 'l' is thick and possibly correcting a 't'.

^c The 'i' is also quite thick, as though correcting a mistake.

^d This is written down the left-hand margin.

Letter 25

^a Fols 57-58. Written on thin paper with some bleed-through from writing on each side. A much neater hand than previous. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Campden', with 'car.pd'. The face of the wrapper is grey with dirt.

Bath Nov.^{ber} 23^d. 1738

Worthy Friend

It is impossible for you to imagin how much I am concern^{^d} that I had not the happiness of seeing you before I left Evesham, cou'd it have been done, I wou'd have made Campden in my Way. I have been as much concer'd, that I cou'd not write to you before, having been obliged to write several long letters since I came, which I cou'd not avoid, but knowing your Goodness and that you are sensible with what difficulty I write, I am in great hopes of your pardon.

I am sorry I can send you no agreeable news from Bath in relation to my affairs, I am still EE¹⁸⁶ and am I believe still to meet with nothing but discouragements and disappointments, having met with nothing else since I came, notwithstanding I have been most zealously recommended by Dear M^{rs} Penda^rves Miss Graⁿvill and M^{rs} Chapon to several Persons of Worth and Honour. I receiv'd a visit from a very good a^{^nd} Worthy Gentleman occasion'd by a letter to him from Miss Granville in my favour. He has ~~been~~ some time ago, been an extraordinary Friend to me, and will I dare say be the same still as far as is in his power, and I know no body has it more in their power than he has in this place, being one of the most Eminent Physicians here.¹⁸⁷ He tells me mine is a wrong employment to hope for any encouragement in, if I cou'd teach to make Artificial flowers, a bit of Tapistry and the like, I shou'd get more than I shall by instilling the Principles of Religion and Virtue, or improving the Minds of Young Ladies, for those are things little regarded.

I have at last sent you what you so often requested, and what I undertook with so much unwillingness, and depend so much on your Friendship as to hope, that if you think as I do from my heart, that it is not fit to be communicated, you will be so kind to me as to commit it to the flames, the most proper place for it. I thought it unnecessary to stuff it with the Particular misfortunes and disappoint^{^ments} ^{^I} have met with, being very sensible that the Learned D^r Rawlinsons noble design will not want Materials far more valuable to augment it.

I believe my very Worthy Friend will not be displeas'd to know how Bath agrees with me, I thank God I think I am something better, and stronger, and that I dont tremble quite so but, but still the ugly Fever sticks close to me w^{ch}

¹⁸⁶ EE = Elizabeth Elstob.

¹⁸⁷ Identified as Dr Oliver in letter 27, this edition. William Oliver settled in Bath in 1725 and quickly gained the leading practice of the city. A philanthropist, he helped to found the Bath General Hospital in the late 1730s. See A. Borsay, 'Oliver, William (1695-1764)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20736>, accessed 11 June 2015.

confirms me in my former opinion, that it will not easily be got off. I hope you and Good M^{rs} Ballard enjoy your healths, for the continuation of which you both have my sincere and hearty Prayers who am

Worthy S^r

Your most Gratefull and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

When you write to M^r Brome
bepleas'd to make him my Compli=
=ments, and when you favour me
with a line direct to M^r Rosewells
in Kings-mead Square. by Cross
Post.

Addendum to letter of November 23rd, A Life of Elizabeth Elstob^a

Elizabeth Elstob Daughter of Ralph and Jane Elstob, was born in the Parish of S^t Nicholas in New-castle upon Tyne, September the twenty ninth Sixteen hundred and Eighty three. From her Childhood she was a great lover of Books, which being observ;d by her Mother, who was also a great admirer of Learning, especially in her own Sex, there was nothing wanting for her improvement, so long as her Mother liv'd. But being so unfortunate as to lose her when she was about eight years old, and when she had but just gone through her Accidence and Grammar, there was a stop put to her progress in Learning for some years. For her Brother being under Age when her Mother dy'd she was under the Guardianship of a Relation,^b who was no Friend to Womens Learning, so that she was not Suffer'd to proceed notwithstanding her repeated requests that she might.¹⁸⁸ Being always put off, with that common and vulgar saying that one

Addendum to letter 25: Life of Elizabeth Elstob

^a Fols 59-60.

^b This is marked with a superscript cross, referring to a note in the margin by Ballard; 'D.^r Charles Elstob Canon of Canterbury.'

¹⁸⁸ Dr Charles Elstob. Elizabeth's description of her uncle's apparently misogynistic attitudes towards women's learning have often been repeated in modern-day scholarship, but it is notable that she addressed her *Testimonies* to her uncle, and that both he and his wife Matilda subscribed

Tongue is enough for a Woman. However this discouragement, did not prevent her earnest endeavours to improve her mind, in the best manner she was able. Not only because she had a natural inclination for Books her self, but in obedience to her excellent Mothers desire. She therefore employ'd most of her time in reading such English and French books (which last Language she with much difficulty obtain'd leave to learn) as she cou'd meet with, till she went to live with her Brother, who very joyfully and readily assisted and encourag'd her, in her Studies, with whom she labour'd very hard as long as he liv'd. In that time she translated and Published, An Essay on Glory written in French by[^]the Celebrated Mademoiselle de Scudery. And Publish'd an English-Saxon Homily on the Birth Day of S^t Gregory, with an English Translation and Notes &c. Also the Rudiments of Grammar for the English Saxon Tongue. She design'd if ill fortune had not prevented her to have Publish'd all Alfricks^c Homilies, of which she had made an entire Transcript with the various readings from other Manuscripts, and had translated several of them into English. She likewise took an exact Copy of the Textus Roffensis upon Vellum, now in the Library of that Great and Generous encourager of Learning, the Right Honourable the Earl of Oxford.¹⁸⁹ And transcribed all the Hymns, from an Ancient Manuscript belonging to the Church of Sarum. She had several other designs, but was unhappily hinder'd, by a necessity of getting her Bread, which with much difficulty, labour, and ill health, she has endeavour'd to do for many Years, with very indifferent success. if it had

^c These three words appear to be written over previous text.

for a copy each of her *English-Saxon Homily* – suggesting that her brief statement about him in here should not necessarily be taken as fully indicative of their relationship and his views on her scholarship. See E. Elstob, *An English-Saxon Homily on the Birth-Day of St. Gregory*, London: W. Bowyer, 1709, third pagination, p. 51; and Gretsche, 'A Scholar's Fight', pp. 172-173.

¹⁸⁹ Now in the British Library, as MS Harley 1866.

See <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=3580&CollID=8&NStart=1866>, accessed 18 May 2015. Elstob apparently presented the manuscript to the library of Robert Harley, first earl of Oxford, in the hope of gaining his patronage for William's projected edition of Anglo-Saxon laws; it was described in Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes* as 'one of the most lovely specimens of modern Saxon writings that can be imagined'. The quality of Elstob's manuscript work can be seen below, at figure 4. See Gretsche, 'A Scholar's Fight', pp. 175-176.

Another manuscript of the Textus Roffensis put together by Elizabeth with her brother William is also in the British Library, at Stowe MS 940, and after William's death in 1715 apparently resided in the hands of their uncle, Charles Elstob, until the latter's death in 1721. Elizabeth was not remembered in Charles Elstob's will – perhaps her negative impression of him, communicated in in her account of her life, was due partly to the fact that he possessed manuscripts of hers and William's, but did not see that they were returned to her on his death? See http://searcharchives.bl.uk/IAMS_VU2:IAMS040-001953787, accessed 11 June 2015; and Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/584, 52^{r-v}.

not been that Almighty God, was Graciously pleas'd to raise her up lately some Generous and Good Friends she cou'd not have subsisted, To who she always was, and will by the Grace of God be most Gratefull.

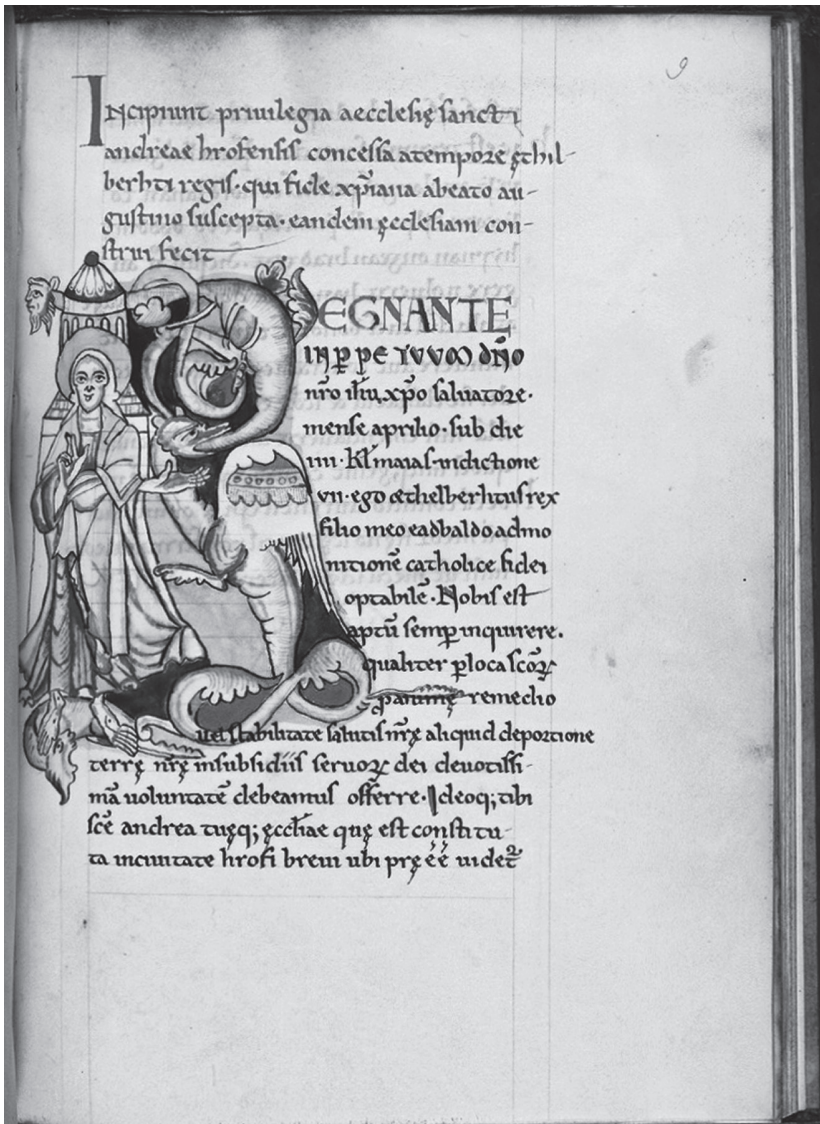


Fig. 4: Historiated initial 'R'(egnate) with Christ and a dragon. An extract from Elizabeth Elstob's facsimile of the Textus Roffensis. British Library MS Harley 1866, f.9. (CC0 1.0).

26. Elstob to Ballard, Bath to Campden, January 8th 1739^a

Elstob is anxious at not having heard from Ballard since her last letter, but has the good news of having procured an offer of a position with the Duke and Duchess of Portland to teach their children.

M^r Rosewells Kings Mead Square
Bath Jan^{ry} 8.th 1738/9.

Worthy Friend

I cannot forbear writing any longer, being apprehensive your want of health has prevented my hearing from you, or that a Letter I sent you near two months ago never came to your hands.¹⁹⁰ I beg you will let ^Λme hear ~~you~~ if possible by the next cross Post how you do. Tho' my hands are ^Λfull of Letters I am oblig'd to write, I must acquaint you with the good Fortune which has befallen me, after the many disappointments I have met with here. It is a^Λn Offer from the Duke and Dutchess of Portland to Teach their Children to Read, with the allowance of a Sallary of Thirty pounds a year which commenc'd on Christ-mass day last, a most extraordinary instance of Generosity, for I am not to wait on her Grace till Summer, there are only two little Ladys to teach at present, the eldest not four year old, the little Marquiss not one, they are Children of a most charming Disposition, and the Character I have of the Duke and Dutchess cannot be equall'd by any of their Rank, so that neither my Best Friends ^Λnor my self cou'd have ^Λwish'd for a more happy ^Λand Honourable Situation for me.¹⁹¹ My time will not allow to add

Letter 26

^a Fols 61-62. On wrapper: 'To M^r George Ballard at Campden Gloucestershire'; 'Cross Post' (and marked with, unsurprisingly, a cross in the right hand top corner, and a scribble). Ink-stamped both 'Bath' and more faintly 'Gloucester', with a red wax seal with the head of a lady.

¹⁹⁰ Letter 25, sent 23 November 1738, did reach Ballard, so he was simply remiss in replying.

¹⁹¹ The Duchess of Portland was Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, granddaughter of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford (in whose library some of Elstob's manuscripts came to rest, e.g. see n. 84, above). Bentinck was a lover of botany, a collector of art and natural history specimens, and was on close terms with the so-called 'Queen of the Blues', Elizabeth Robinson, alias Mrs Montagu. She and Mary Pendarves had been childhood friends, explaining the success the latter had in using her influence in the interest of Elstob's 'affairs'. See letter 22, this volume; P. Rogers, 'Bentinck, Margaret Cavendish [*née* Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley], duchess of Portland (1715-1785)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40752>, accessed 11 June 2015; and E. Eger, 'Paper Trails and Eloquent Objects: Bluestocking Friendship and Material Culture', *Parergon*, vol. 26, 2009, pp. 109-138.

any more, tho' I have a thousand more ^{^things} to say to you, than to assure you that I long to hear from you and that I am with great Sincerity Yours and good
M^{rs} Ballards

Most Gratefull and affectionate
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

27. Elstob to Ballard, Bath to Campden, April 12th 1739^a

Elaborates on the concern expressed in the previous letter at not having heard from him between November and January. Has recently been violently ill but plans to return to Evesham until she is needed by the Duchess of Portland, health allowing.

Bath April 12.th 1739

Worthy Friend

The receipt of your Letter gave me as much Joy and Satisfaction, I dare say, as the News I sent gave to you, for I had a great while been very much perplex'd to Guess what cou'd be the reason I did not hear from you. Sometimes I thought you were ill or dead, and sometimes, I thought you had take something ill from me or that my Letter had not come to your Hands. All this you had been made acquainted with and shou'd have receiv'd my thanks before, if I had been able to write, but I was seiz'd the nineteenth of January last with a Violent and dangerous illness, which has not left me yet, and has [~~word indecipherable~~]^b brought me much weaker than ever you saw me. I have many times despair'd of ever seeing any of my ^{^Friends} again, nor have I at present any great hopes, the Distemper returns so frequently, sometimes I shall have a little respite for an hour or two, and then I am as bad as ever. It is Gods great Mercy that I have a most excellent Physician, who notwit^{^h}standing he is vastly hurry'd among the Noble and the Rich, yet Visits me frequently, not only as a Physician but as a Friend, Snd as I believe you will esteem and Love D^r Oliver for my sake, I have sent you a Poem Inscrib'd to him, in which is the Justest Character of him I ever saw of

Letter 27

^a Fols 63-64. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard at Campden'.

^b Crossed out by Elstob whilst writing letter.

any Person.¹⁹² I believe the Description of Bathwill not be less agreeable to you, being writ by the same Ingenious Female.^c ¹⁹³ I wish I cou'd send you any[^]thing that wou'd be more acceptable, but I will say no more of that, till I have the Satisfaction of seeing you which I hope will be soon, if it please God to give me health and strength to to reach Evesham, where I design to stay till her Grace is pleas'd to send for me, and I am not without hopes, you will be so good as to come and see me. My very best wishes attend Good M^{rs} Ballard and your self, and I am with the greatest Sincerety

Worthy Friend

I beg the favour of you
to send M^{rs} Chapons
Letter to the Post House.

Your most Grateful and obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

28. Elstob to Ballard, Evesham to {Campden}, November 26th 1739^a

Thanks Ballard for a gift of silk. Is setting out earlier than expected to wait on the Duchess. Sends him a copy of an old charter which she has transcribed.

Evesham Nov^{ber} 26th 1739

{Word indecipherable}^b

I beg ten thousand Pardons for not writing to my Worthy Friend M^r Ballard before this, but illness or one thing or other has happen'd to prevent [^]me not disrespect I do assure you. I return you a great many thanks for your kind present of silk, and the sight of the Catalogue, it is no small concern to me that I do not find my Transcript of the Homilies in the Worthy Gentlemans Custody you mention[.] I verily thought I had taken up my Winter Quarters at Evesham but I have

^c This is marked with a cross and a note in the LH margins, unreadable.

Letter 28

^a Fols 65-66. Addressed 'To M^r George Ballard'. Red wax seal of a bust of a lady has survived well.

^b Unclear if crossed out by Ballard or Elstob.

¹⁹² See n. 187, letter 25.

¹⁹³ Mary Chandler, *Description of Bath*, London: J. Leake, 1736.

lately receiv'd an unexpected Summons to wait on my Charming Dutchess and design to set out this Day, had I staid longer, some of my time wou'd have been employ'd in trascribing some ~~and~~ old Charters^c which by chance I met with;^d a Copy of one of them I request you will accept, it is the most perfect of them, they being very much dammag'd by age or accident. I have a hundred things more to say but must defer it till a time of more, [^]leisure and only at present assure [^]you that I am with great sincerety and readiness [^]to serve you on all occassions that shall offer

Worthy Friend

My service waits on
Good M^{rs} Ballard

Your most Grateful and Obliged
Servant Elizabeth Elstob

29. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Campden, January 26th 1740^a

Elstob apologises for not writing for so long, having been busy with her new charges. She is very happy in her new position and gives brief pen portraits of all the family. Sends her acknowledgments to Mr Brome.

Whitehall Jan^{ry} 26th 17³⁹/₄₀

I beg my Worthy Friend M^r Ballard will not impute my not writing to him sooner to any neglect or disrespect, for my Charming little Ladies take up my time so entirely that I have not the least leisure to do any thing, from the time they rise till they go to bed they are constantly with me, except when they are with her Grace, which is not long at a time. You will I don't doubt be glad to know, that I think my self the happiest creature in the World, having the Honour to serve two of the most Incomparable Persons of their Rank and Quality in the Kingdom, and I do with the greatest truth assure you, that the fine Character I had of them both before I came falls infinitely short of what they deserve. They are pleas'd to use me with great goodness and Condescension, and I must tell

^c The 'h' covers a mistake.

^d The semi-colon is a correction in a darker hand.

Letter 29

^a Fols 67-69. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Campden Gloucestershire', and franked by the Duke of Portland.

you her Grace has more than once mention'd you to me, and enquir'd your Name, but it has hitherto happen'd so unluckily, that when we have been just going to talk of you, and I with joy hop'd an opportunity had presented it self, for me to do you service, some body or other has come in, and put a stop to our discourse and my happiness, however I am not without great hopes, I shall some time or other have an opportunity which may be proper to say something in your favour, and I hope with success. In the mean time I earnestly entreat you, to consider and let me know, in what I can serve you to your best liking, for unless I know that I shall be at a loss what to ask for.

Her Grace is a most surprizing Lady considering her Age, she is vastly Ingenious, and is possess'd with an extraordinary good Judgement, so that you may be certain her Conversation is entertaining to the highest degree.¹⁹⁴ She is a great Collector of Curiosities both Natural and Artificial many of which she has been so good as to show me with her own hand.¹⁹⁵ I^{^n} short to give you an account of of all her Graces Accomplishments and Perfections is more than I can possibly do, and shou'd be done by a much better hand.

I must now beg leave to say something of my Charming little Pupils, whose Persons, sweet Temper and Good Sense, plainly discover whose offspring they are. The eldest Lady not yet four years and a half old, and who did not know a Letter when I came, already not only knows them all, but can spell and read very prettily for so short a time, and can say some little Poems, and a great deal of them Catechism, which she knew not one word of before, the next Lady to her, who has a wonderful lively wit, comes little behind her Sister, tho' not three years old till next Month, and I don't doubt but in a short time the little Marquis, not yet two years old, will come under my Care, for he already bids his Nurse bring him to me to read, So that you cannot but believe I am highly delighted with them.¹⁹⁶

I had like to have forgot to acquaint you with the Incomparable M^{rs} Pendarves's goodness, for I assure you I had not been with her above an hour before she enquir'd after you, in a most sweet manner, and I am apt to believe it is she

¹⁹⁴ '...considering her Age'; the Duchess of Portland would have been just shy of twenty-five when Elstob wrote this letter.

¹⁹⁵ The Duchess was an important naturalist in her own right. See Alexandra Cook, 'Botanical Exchanges: Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Duchess of Portland', *History of European Ideas*, vol. 33, 2007, pp. 142-156.

¹⁹⁶ The 'eldest Lady' is Lady Elizabeth Bentinck (1735-1825), the 'next Lady to her' is Lady Henrietta Bentinck (1737-1827), and 'the little Marquis' is William Henry Cavendish Cavendish-Bentinck, later to become Prime Minister – twice. See Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 25, vol. xii(1), p. 225, and D. Wilkinson, 'Bentinck, William Henry Cavendish Cavendish- (1738-1809)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2162>, accessed 11 June 2015.

that has mentioned you to The Dutchess, and I did not forget to tell them both who it was that made my Brown Gown, which was commended by them both.¹⁹⁷ M^{rs} Pendarves is every way accomplish'd by Nature and Genius, and may justly be esteem'd an Honour and Ornament to her Sex.

I have a favour to request of you, which is, that when you write to our Worthy Friend M^r Brome, you will not forget my best Compliments to him, and to present my acknowledgements to him for the good Offices he has been pleas'd to do me with M^r Ed.^dHarley,¹⁹⁸ for which, tho' I have already return'd my thanks with my own hand, I think it cannot be done too often, because it has given satisfaction to Her Grace.

I consider that long Letters of little moment prevent your employing you^{er} time more to your advantage, I will therefore at present only assure you of my Sincere Friendship and hearty wishes for your health and prosperity and that I am Your and Good M^{rs} Ballards

Please when you favour
me with a line to unclose
it, and direct the Cover
to His Grace The Duke
of Portland in Whitehall.

Most Grateful and obliged Servant
Elizabeth Elstob

30. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Grosvener Street, October 3rd 1740^a

Apologises for taking so long to write, pleading both lack of time and lack of interesting occurrences to write about. Entreats him to visit her if possible.

Letter 30

^a Fols 70-71. Addressed as follows:

'To

M^r George Ballard at the R^r Hon^{ble}

the L^d Barringtons in Grosvener

Street near New Bond Street

London.'

¹⁹⁷ This would indicate that Elstob availed herself of Ballard's skills as a tailor.

¹⁹⁸ I.e. Edward Harley, the second Earl of Oxford (1664-1735). Elstob refers numerous times to manuscripts or transcripts of hers that could be found in his library, although they likely entered it under the aegis of his father, Robert Harley, the founder of what is now the Harleian collection in the British Library. (E.g. addendum to letter 25, 23 November 1738).

Bulstrode in Bucks.¹⁹⁹
 Oct^{ber}. 3.^d 1740.

I blush'd, and trembled before I open'd my Worthy Friends most obliging Letter, being conscious of my fault, but that uneasiness soon vanish'd, when I perceiv'd with what Candour and Good nature, you upbraided me for my long silence. I intreat my valuable Friend not to charge me with any neglect or disrespect, for had any thing happ'ned, that wou'd have been in the least Satisfactory of entertaining, tho' I have less time than I ever had in my life to command because it is not my own, I wou'd have made a hard shift to have writ to you before, I am highly pleas'd to hear you are coming so near me, and request you will let me know [^]by the first Post which way you return, if on Horse-back, or any other way, you know you must go by the very Gates that comes to the House, for we are hardly a Mile from Gerrards Cross, I shall heartily rejoice to hear from you, and much more to see you, and assure you that I am with the Greatest Sincerety

Worthy Friend

Pray let us contrive to see one
 another if Possible. If you come,
 I will promise to shew you four of
 as sweet Children as can be seen.
 and a very sweet place.²⁰⁰

Your most Grateful and Affectio[n]^{ate}
 Servant
 Elizabeth Elstob

31. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Oxford, July 21st 1740^a

Describes the loss of her and William's books and manuscripts. This letter is followed by a gap of ten years, although the tone of the following letter would

Letter 31

^a Fols 72-73. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard at Mr Tho.^s Paviers in Jesus College Lane / Oxon'. Signed Grace of Portland.

¹⁹⁹ Elstob writes from Bulstrode, the country house of the Portland family.

²⁰⁰ It would seem, by his later familiarity with the Portland children, that Ballard accepted Elstob's invitation. (See letter 37, this edition).

*suggest that this is merely an absence in the record, rather than a cessation of correspondence.*²⁰¹

Bulstrode July 21.st 1740.

Worthy S^r

I am very sorry I have not been able to answer you ^{Asooner} and much more so, that it is not in my power to give you any satisfaction concerning my Brothers Collections. If my memory which is extremely bad, do's not fail me, I some years ago told you, that at my first going into Worcestershire, I intrusted my Manuscripts and books with several other things in the hands of a Person, with whom I believ'd they wou'd be very safe,²⁰² but to my great surprize and grief I heard soon after she was gone to the West Indies to a Daughter that was settled there and cou'd never hear of her since, it is at least thirty years since this happen'd to me, and you may reasonably think it has made ^{Amc} very unhappy ever since, which if my Friends were sensible of, I must believe they wou'd avoid all occasions of bringing it to my remem—brance.^b I heartily rejoic'd to hear of your happy change of life, and as heartily pray for the continuance and improvement of it.²⁰³ The illness in my head will not permit me to add more than that I am

Worthy S^r

Your most obliged humble servant
Elizabeth Elstob

^b -- = a mistake in the centre of the word crossed through.

²⁰¹ In his will Ballard notes that the books of correspondence which he left to the Bodleian had been 'bound up with my own hands'. This, coupled with his interventions (both clarificatory and, at times, apparently censorial) evident in the manuscripts here edited, arguably support the thesis that the letters from Elstob dating from between April 1740 and April 1750 were deliberately left out, perhaps due to containing sensitive material. It certainly does not seem like Ballard, an inveterate rescuer of material of antiquarian interest (he left seventy-three volumes of manuscript material to the Bodleian) to simply lose letters from a correspondent such as Elstob. See Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/817, fol. 333^v.

²⁰² Probably including books given to her by George Hicckes before his death. See R. Harris, ed., *A Chorus of Grammars: The Correspondence of George Hicckes and his Collaborators on the Thesaurus linguarum septentrionalium*, Toronto, 1992, p.123.

²⁰³ This may refer to Ballard's receipt of an annuity of £60 a year from Lord Chedworth – sources are vague as to when he initially received it, though the change of his address to Oxford may indicate that it was around this time. Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, editorial introduction, p.40.

32. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Oxford, April 12th 1750^a

Ballard appears to have requested Elstob's help in procuring him subscribers for his Memoirs, and though she regrets that she cannot be of as much aid as she would have been in the past, she assures him she will do her best. She is worried about both his and her own ill health.

Whitehall April 12th 1750

Had I receiv'd my Worthy Friends obliging Letter with the Proposals, forty years ago I might have been able to have served you in this affair; but alas! my acquaint^{an}^{^ce} & interest is reduced to a very narrow compass; however I will let no opportunity escape me to do you service and therefore desire you to send me a few Proposals & to let me know if I have any success, where to send the Subscriptions & Names.

I am very sorry to hear S^r.: that you enjoy so ill a share of health I am afraid you hurt yourself by Studying so hard & I told you the ill consequence of it years ago & I hope you will be more carefull for the future.^b I return you thanks for your kind enquiries after mine I can make no great boast tho' just at this time my chief complaint is weakness, & the dread I am in of Losing ^{^the use of} my right Hand by a contraction in the sinew which Disables me from writing & obliges me give my sweet Ladys the trouble of writing for me.²⁰⁴

I am

Worthy S^r.:

your most obliged Friend & Servant

Eliz Elstob

Letter 32

^a Fols 87-88. Wrapper addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in the Corn Market in / Oxford' signed 'Grace Portland'. Letters 32-38 appear in chronological order in this edition, different from the order in which they were bound in the manuscript. The manuscript order is as follows: 34 (8 May), 38 (19 December), 37 (13 December), 36 (10 August), 35 (11 June), 33 (20 April), 32 (12 April). It is sealed in red wax with the impression of a bust of a man in Roman style, right-facing profile. This letter is written in a thin, widely-spaced hand that is not Elstob's - as she notes towards the end of the letter, one of the Portland daughters is acting as her scribe.

^b This sentence shows numerous instances in which the writer has had to correct mistakes mid-word with a heavier hand.

^c This insertion is possibly in Elstob's hand.

²⁰⁴ The letter is not written in Elstob's hand.

33. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Oxford, April 20th 1750^a

Elstob has been searching for Lady Packington's prayers for Ballard, unsuccessfully, and has also been handing out proposals for his Memoirs and securing subscriptions for the same.

Whitehall April y^e 20th, 1750.

S^r

I have made the most diligent search I possibly cou'd, for Lady Packington's two Prayers, but have not found them, but I will search once more and if I don't find them ^{then} it is probable M^{rs} Chapone will be able to get you a sight of them for the Lady who lent them to me is married in her neighbourhood she was Grand Daughter^b to the Author and Daughter to S^r John Packington.²⁰⁵ I have disposed of five of your proposals and receipts and desire you to send me half a dozen more by the next post, which if I have not the good fortune to dispose of, I will return when I have used my best endeavours. – be assured that I am

S^r:

I dont send you the Names
of those that have subcribed

Your most faithful Friend
and humble Servant

to me, because I hope to send you more,

E: Elstob.

four of them that have subcribed [sic] are names

you won't be displeas'd to see for they are all my dear Pupils, and all your friends²⁰⁶

Letter 33

^a Fols 85-86. Addressed 'To M^r Ballard at M^r Pavior's Farrier / In the Corn Market / Oxford', signed by the Grace of Portland. Seal and handwriting as in previous letter.

^b Marked with a cross, referring to a note in the margins in Ballard's hands: 'Lady Gray'.

²⁰⁵ Dorothy, Lady Pakington. She is mentioned in Ballard's *Memoirs* chiefly as the supposed author of the devotional tract *The Whole Duty of Man* (1658), and it may be that these 'two Prayers' are related to Ballard's attempt to prove her authorship. Elstob does eventually find the prayers referred to in this letter – see letter 40 and addendum, this edition. See also S. Mendelson, 'Pakington [*née* Coventry], Dorothy, Lady Pakington (*bap.* 1623, *d.* 1679)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21142>, accessed 12 June 2015; Ballard, *Memoirs* (1752), pp. 316-336; and Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, pp. 290-303.

²⁰⁶ All of the Bentinck children appear on the published subscription list. See Ballard, *Memoirs* (1752), p.ix; and Parry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 396.

34. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Oxford, May 8th 1750^a

Relates the work that Miss Hopkins has been doing on his behalf in distributing his proposals for his memoirs. She is still searching in vain for the Packington prayers.

Whitehall May y² 8th. 1750.

S^r

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I tell you how much you are obliged to Miss Hopkins. I sent her sight of your Proposals which was all that I had she sent to me this day for two and twenty more which she hopes to dispose of, but I desire you will make them up two dozen. I have made another search for Lady Packington's Prayers but in vain, which I am very sorry for. we shall leave the Town the end of next week but you may write to me direct to his Grace at Bulstrode Bucks. M^{rs} Hopkins will take care to send the List and ^Λmoney to me or to you at Oxford. I have not time at present to tell you how much I have been disa^Λppointed in this affair hoping yet that I shall have better success. I can add no more ^{at present} than that I am

S^r

Your most faithful Friend and humble Serv[ant]
E Elstob

35. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Oxford, June 11th 1750^a

Sends Ballard a list of subscribers for his Memoirs. An 'ungenerous person' has put Elstob much out of temper and she seems to be counting the days until her death.

Bulstrode June 11.th 1750.

S^r

I have been so very much out of order since we came hither, that I have not been able to acquaint you that I have receivd ten Guineas from M^{rs} Hopkins for twenty Subscriptions and ^Λshe gives hopes ^Λshe shall obtain more. I have sent you

Letter 34

^a Fols 74-75. Addressed as and in same hand as previous.

Letter 35

^a Fols 81-82. In Elstob's hand. Addressed as previous.

her List of the Subscribers. The money is ready when you send for it, with six Subscriptions which I have got. I have been prevented from doing ^{^more} by the ill nature of an ungenerous Person, whose name you ^{^shou'd} know did ^{^not} the sense of my Duty deter me from exposing her.²⁰⁷ I desire you ^{^will} say nothing of this because it ^{^will} do me a prejudice. I have ^{^a} great deal to say to you, but I am extremely ill, and can only ^{^add} that ~~th~~ I hate this ill natured world and heartily rejoice to think I cannot continue long in it, be assured let my time be what it will I shall always ~~wh~~ wish you prosperity and happiness who am

S^r

you may perceive how unable I am
to write by the many blunders I have
made

Your most obliged and hūble Servant
Eliz Elstob

Addendum to letter of June 11th: Subscription List^a

Thomas Martin Esq.²⁰⁸

William Martin Esq Clapham^b

Miles Mann Esq Town Clerk of the City of London.

S^r John Barnard Kn.^d [?] & Alderman.

John Thornton Esq Fenchurch Street.²⁰⁹

Addendum to letter 35: Subscription List

^a Fol. 83. This list arranged into two side-by-side columns, one of female subscribers and one of male. The list appears to be in Anna Hopkins' hand (see, for example, letter of Anna Hopkins to George Ballard, 14 August 1741, Bodleian MS Ballard 43, fol.100).

^b This is halfway between the first and second name, so could apply to both.

²⁰⁷ This 'ungenerous Person' has yet to be identified.

²⁰⁸ Thomas Martin, was a prominent and extremely wealthy banker who was baptised in Evesham. William Martin (1687-1757) was his younger brother. In his will, Thomas Martin referred to Anna Hopkins as 'my Cousin... who now lives with me' (note that in letter 41, this edition, Elstob directs Ballard to send Hopkins' copies of the *Memoirs* to Martin's home in Clapham), names her as co-executrix, left her an annuity, and bequeathed her property, land, and rents in both Tottenham and Clapham for the duration of her lifetime, to be transferred to his nephew Joseph Martin after her death. See I.S. Black, 'Martin family (*per. c.* 1700-1832)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53428/53422>, accessed 12 June 2015; and Prerogative Court of Canterbury, Prob. 11/908, fols 354^r-355^r.

²⁰⁹ Probably, given that Anna Hopkins was based in Clapham, the merchant and philanthropist John Thornton (1720-1790) who contributed to building new churches in his home town of Clapham, Surrey. See E. Welch, 'Thornton, John (1720-1790)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27358>, accessed 11 June 2015.

M^{rs} Stephenson Clapham
 Miss Minyer
 Miss Watson
 Miss Butterfield
 M^{rs} Bewick
 M^{rs} Waldo
 M^{rs} Symes
 M^{rs} Duckett
 M^{rs} Thornton
 M^{rs} Edmonds
 M^{rs} Wastfield
 M^{rs} Anna Hopkins. Two Books
 M^{rs} Willberforce Kings-Arms-Yard
 M^{rs} Ann Wollfryes Bartholomew Close.

^cThe Names of those Subscribers that [^]cou'd procure
 The Right Hon.^{ble} The Marquis of Titchfield.²¹⁰
 The Right Hon.^{ble} Lady Elizabeth Cavendishe Bentinck.
 The Right Hon.^{ble} Lady Henrietta Cavendishe Bentinck.
 The Right Hon.^{ble} Lady Margaret Cavendishe Bentinck.
 M^{rs} Frances Smith. 2 Books.²¹¹
 the whole sum is thirteen
 Guineas.

^c Added in Elstob's hand.

²¹⁰ The eldest son of the Duke of Portland. n. 196, above, and n. 214, below.

²¹¹ Frances Smith was Elstob's alias – she appears under this name in the published subscription list in Ballard's *Memoirs*. Cf. letter 42 and see Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 402 and Ballard, *Memoirs* (1952), p. xv. Intriguingly, the name 'Mrs Frances Smith' appears in the subscription list to Elstob's *Homily*, immediately above the name 'Mr James Smith'. This could simply imply that Elstob took her alias from the name of an old acquaintance, but, also intriguingly, William Elstob's name does not appear in the subscription list. Could this have been a private joke between brother and sister, and Elstob's later use of the name a continuation of this beyond William's death?

36. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Oxford, August 10th 1750^a

Has been unable to send Ballard his subscription money as no one travelling to Oxford has called at Bulstrode Park.

Bulstrode Aug.st 10th. 1750.

S^r

I am quite unhappy that I have not had an opportunity to send your subscription money before this. Neither of the Gentleman you mention'd ever call here, nor has there been any body that went hence to Oxford. I have thought if you approv'd of it, that it might be safely sent by the Coach, but if not, when M^{rs} Hopkins sends the other subscription money I will endeavour to get a Bank bill for it. This is the first letter I have be^{en} able to write since my last to you nor am I ^{now} able ~~at~~ to add any more I am so very weak, than to assure you that I am

S^r

Your most obliged Friend and
humble Servant
Eliz:Elstob

37. Elstob to Ballard, {Bulstrode} to Magdalen, December 13th 1750^a

Inquires after Ballard's health. Her own health has been bad. Is sending money to Ballard for his book via Dr Shaw, principal of St Edmund's Hall. Postscript apparently from one of Elstob's charges expressing pleasure at his being accepted into the University of Oxford.

Decem:13.1750.

S^r

I should have been extremely glad if you had let me know what Benefit you received from your native Air and should be glad to hear how you do at present Pray have you ever tried M^{rs} Stephens's receipt for the Stone it is generally

Letter 36

^a Fol. 80. In Elstob's hand, somewhat shaky, with a number of blotched words. Addressed to 'Mr Ballard at Mr Paviers' a Farrier in the Corn Market in / Oxford' and signed 'Grace Portland'.

Letter 37

^a Fols 78-79. Not in Elstob's hand. Addressed 'To Mr George Ballard at Magdalen College / In / Oxford', signed Grace of Portland.

esteemed an excellent remedy and I wish if you have not used it that you would. as for myself I cannot say much for I think myself in a very bad way and have been for at least these six Months, I suppose your Friend M^r Mores acquainted you that he called on me at Bulstrode, I was heartily grieved I was not able to show him the House nor prevail with him to drink any thing,²¹² I am in great tribulation about M^{rs} Hopkins not having heard from her since I heard from you I am very apprehensive she is in Mourning for her favourite Sister Jenny which I shall be very sorry for for she was a favourite of mine, I can add nothing more at present only my hearty wishes for your Health and a long continuance of it

I am

S^r

Your Sincere Friend & Humble Servant
E Elstob

It was not much above an Hour before I received yours that I had requested D^r Shaw the worthy and Learned Principal of S^t Edmond Hall to convey your Money to you, which he very readily under^{took} to do, and will procure you a Bill for it.

Jo [?]

I am not a Stranger to the Charming Character of the Excellent Lord Lewisham of whom I have been a great admirer a long time and indeed of all the Family²¹³

I am pleased to hear you are become a Member of the University I am very well satisfied you will be an Ornament^b to it, I have so much to say to you

^b The letter 's' at the end of this word has been smudged off.

²¹² Edward Rowe Mores (1730-1778), historian of printing and another of Ballard's correspondents. When he visited Elstob he stated that he found her 'in her sleeping-room at *Bulstrode*, surrounded with books and dirtiness and the usual appendages of folk of learning'. See J. Makala, 'Mores, Edward Rowe (1730-1778)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19203>, accessed 11 June 2015; Ashdown, 'The Learned Saxonist', p. 144; and Bodleian MS Ballard 37, fols 164-178 for letters from Mores to Ballard dating from between 7 February 1749 and 18 April 1754.

²¹³ William Legge, Viscount Lewisham at the time of the composition of this letter. At this time he was a student at Trinity College, Oxford, which accounts for Ballard's apparent knowledge of him. Two days after Elstob wrote this letter, he would inherit the title of earl of Dartmouth at the death of his grandfather (whom his own father, George Legge and also Viscount Lewisham, had predeceased). See P. Marshall, 'Legge, William, second earl of Dartmouth (1731-1801)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16360>, accessed 11 June 2015.

I cou'd fill this Paper of it was ^{^not} for fear of tiring my Dearest Lady Harriett tho' she say's you wou'd be soonest tired. what M^{rs} Elstob has to say more must be refered to some other time. and therefore she bids you adieu.

38. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Magdalen, December 19th 1750^a

Elstob ill. Sends Ballard money for his book. Discusses briefly the young Lord Titchfield, one of the Portland children, whose masters at school attempted to hold him back.

Bulstrode Dec.^{ber} 19.th 1750.

S^r

My Charming young Scribe being engag'd, I am oblig'd to try what I can do with a Pen tho' with great difficulty, having almost lost the use of my right hand. I have send you D^r Shaw's Bill for thirteen Guineas which is all the money I have receiv'd from M^{rs} Hopkins, and the few which I cou'd procure. You are much oblig'd to D^r Shaw for the great esteem he expressed for you, but I was surpriz'd to find he was ignorant of your Book, till I shew'd him your Proposal, pray don't be backward in letting him have one, he has a good acquaintance and a great deal of good nature, and I don't doubt but he will do his best to serve you. I cannot forbear again mentioning L^d Lewisham now L^d Dartmouth, whose excellent qualities ar cannot be sufficiently admir'd. This repitition [?] is an introd-[^]uction to the Char[^]acter of another hopefull young Nobleman I mean L^d Tichfeild who is a very extraordinary Youth, as you will find by the progress he has made since he went to Westminster, he was just turn'd of Nine when he went, and last week was with great Honour Elected Captain of the Fifth Form, he will not be thirteen years of age till the fourteenth of April.²¹⁴ I must tell tell [sic] you this ^{^is not} oing to any favours of the Masters who on the contrary have

Letter 38

^a Fols 76-77. Once again in Elstob's hand but with several blotches and corrections. Addressed as previous.

²¹⁴ I.e. William Henry Cavendish Cavendish-Bentinck. The 'extraordinary Youth' of whom Elstob is so proud is the same 'little Marquis', still in his nurse's care, who demanded she read to him when she first arrived at the Portland's. See n. 196, and the contents of letter 29, above.

done all they cou'd to keep him back, but to his own industry and incomparable Genius.

I hope you [^]will pardon my [^]not adding no more at present, for you may perceive by my frequent blunders that I am quite t̄tir'd and can only assure you that I am

S^r

Your faithfull Freind and humble Servant

Eliz: Elstob

39. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Magdalen, January 16th 1752^a

Apologises for not writing sooner, pleading poor health. Sympathises with his disappointments and expresses cynicism as to the current lack of concern with learning. Fears that education, especially in women, is undervalued. Inquires whether he would care for Lady Packington's prayers, which she has finally found.

Whitehall Jan^{ry} 16th 1752

I cannot begin my Letter without making an Apology for [not?] wr[^]iting to my Worthy Friend before, but my wretched health which I have wa[?] so long will I hope procure my pardon. I am extremely sorry t̄ to hear of the dis[a]pointments you have met with and for [^]the little success I have had in my e[^]ndeavo[rs] to serve you, but am not at all surpriz'd, this is not an Age to hope for any enc[our]ag[^]ement to Learning of any kind.²¹⁵ For your part I am sorry to tell you the ch[oice?] you have made for the Honour of the Females was the wrongest subject you co[uld] pitch upon. For you can come into no company of Ladies or Gentlemen, wh[ere?] you shall not hear an open and Vehement ex[^]clamation against Learned Women, an[d] those women that read much themselves, to what

Letter 39

^a Fols 89-90. In Elstob's hand, with a few instances of words corrected in a heavier hand and a lot of small mistakes corrected in superscript. The page has either been cut or has deteriorated at the right-hand side, meaning some loss of text – editorial assumptions indicated by []. Addressed as previous.

²¹⁵ A common complaint during an age in which 'polite learning' was favoured over the 'pedantry' of in-depth scholarly works. See Green, 'Elizabeth Elstob', pp. 138-143.

purpose they know best; this I k[now] they wou'd be highly affronted to be thought ignorant.²¹⁶ The prospect I have of t[he] next age is a melancholy one to me [^]who wish Learning might flou[^]rish to the end of th[e] world, both [^]in men and women, but I shall not live to see it; yet I cannot help la[?] for [^]those that will, and who love Learning as well as you do, and [^]as do's

Looking over some old Letters from some S^r
of my Friends a day or two ago, I found Your Assured Friend and
the two Prayers written by the Lady Pack=^r humble servant Eliz.: Els[tob]
in[^]st^onif you [^]have them not, I will transcribe them
and send them to you.²¹⁷ I shou'd be glad to [^]know what the Manuscript was which
you s[aw?] in Queens College Archives by that perhaps I may be able to find
out how it came which at present I can't guess.

40. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Magdalen, February 24th 1752^a

Apologises for not sending Lady Packington's prayers sooner, as she is having difficulty transcribing them.

You had my good Friend receiv'd Lady Packingtons Prayers soone[r] if the badness of my hand wou'd have permitted [^]me to transcribe them, but my char[ming] scribe not being Mistress of her time yet, I am oblig'd to catch opportunities a[s] they happen, and hope this will be a reasonably excuse for my adding no more at present [^]than my sincerest wishes for your health and happiness who am

S^r

Your most obliged humble
Servant Eliz Elstob

Letter 40

^a Fol. 91. Addressed as previous, in the hand of Elstob's 'scribe'. Letter, itself in Elstob's hand. Edges badly scuffed; assumed obscured text given in square brackets.

²¹⁶ This echoes Elstob's earlier published words; 'For first, I know it will be said, What has a woman to do with Learning? This, I have known urged by some Men...' See Elstob, *English Saxon Homily*, p ii.

²¹⁷ See letters 33 and 34, this edition, for Ballard's inquiries regarding these prayers.

Addendum to letter of February 24th: Lady Packington's prayers^a

A Prayer for King Charles the Second in his Banishment, composed by the incomparable Lady Packington, who was supposed to be the Author of the whole Duty of Man.^b

For the King.

O thou supreme Majesty, by whom Kings reign, in whose hands their hearts are, to turn them whither soever thou wilt; we most humbly beseech thee to pour down the richest of thy mercies upon thy Servant our King; to take him into thine own immediate and special protection; & proportion thy assistances and reliefe to the greatness of his needs and destitutions. O Lord, he is a Young {unexperienced} Pylot to steer so torn a Vessell in so impetuous a Storm; O thou that stillest the rage of the Sea, and the madness of the People, say to these waves, be calmed. If it be thy will, bring him by a serene and gentle passage to the Haven where he wou'd be. But if thy Wisdom hath otherwise design'd, and he must yet longer abide the Tempest, yet, O Lord, let not the water floods drown him; be thou his guide in this terrible deep; & furnish him abundantly with those gifts & graces which are usefull for him in any of his capacities. Above all, Lord, grant him to Anchor upon thee; and to weigh all his deliberations in the Ballance of the Sanctuary: O Lord make him still to remember there is a God in Israel: and let him abhor ^{^to send to} the God of Ekron²¹⁸ for help; by any indirect arts, or unchristian {compliances} to put himself out of the road of thy Benedictions. Let thy mercy pardon whatsoever hath already of this kind past from him; let the unsuccessfullness of those sinister expedients, but most principally the sin of them, be a document to him to rely no more on such broken reeds but on the Lord Jehovah in whom is everlasting strength and whom thou hast secured his affairs from the ill aspect of his own sins or frailties, Bepleased, O Lord, to fence them from the more malignant influence of our's, and let not

Addendum to letter 40: Lady Packington's Prayer

^a Fols 92-95. The manuscript features a catchword at the bottom of each page; these marked with {} but not duplicated. Possibly enclosed with letter 40; bound immediately after it. Written in a hand that is not Elstob's, with a number of crossed-out mistakes (indicated by †) and blotches.

^b The full stop here is a little curious – embellished almost like a '%' symbol, or perhaps '§'.

²¹⁸ 'And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease'. 2 Kings 1:2, KJV.

that treacherous Party within our own bosom continue to blast all his enterprizes but let our Prayers, & fears, and penitencys as earnestly contend for him, as ever our perjuries, blasphemies, & abominations have done against him. and then, O lord, when our iniquities, which sep^harate between thee & us, are removed; we know thy hand is not short'ned that it cannot save; it is all one with thee, to help with many or no Strength.^c

Give salvation to the King; &, in all outward disadvantages, let thin own arm support, & thy righteousness sustain him. let this little Cloud of hope, that seems no bigger than a mans hand, yet spread itself upon the whole heavens, and bring down a refreshing shower upon him and his people. Protect his Sacred Person, prosper his designs, fasten him as a nail in a sure place, & hand upon him all the glory of his Fathers house; that he may be a repairer of the Breach, the restorer of the cities to dwell in, that he may be a Nursing Father of thy Church[.] And may comfort the waste places of Sion. But if our Sins have so far incensed thee, that as thou hast taken away our King in thy wrath, so thou wilt [^]not give us another, unless it be in thine anger; if thou hast designed him, to succeed his blessed Father, not in his throne, but in his sufferings; make him likewise to succeed^d him in his virtues. Give him that inward Sovereignty over his own passions, more valuable than a thousand Kingdoms; {and} let him so cheerfully wear his crown of thorns with his Saviour here, that he may receive a crown of Glory from him hereafter, and that for the merits of the same Jesus Christ.

A Prayer for Resignation,
By the same excellent Lady^e

Lord, I beseech thee to incline my Soul to do and suffer thy will, whatsoever it is; with that readiness and courage, and cheerfullness here, with which they that do continually behold thy Face, do always execute thy commands delivered in heaven. For the time that it shall be thy will, That I attend thy service here below, Lord, shew me thy way that I should walk in, that I may not live unprofitably before thee. Bethou^f pleased to employ me as thy Servant, tho' most unworthy of that Honour, to bring in some Glory to thy name; some estimation to thy holy Faith whereunto I am called; some advantage to others, especially to those who

^c The change of paragraph occurs on a page break; there is no catch-word.

^d Both these last two words and 'sufferings' feature a much darker hand; perhaps the pen was spurting ink, or the writer had to cover a mistake.

^e The writer's transcription gets a little messier here; perhaps they were tiring or in a rush.

^f *Sic*.

are near unto some improvement in their spiritual eternal state, some fruit to my account, some ground of {comfort} & rejoicing to my own Soul. Lord, carry me safe, & unmoved, & undefiled thro' all the unquiet billows & defilements of this life. And in all the exercises of my vigilency, patience, and constancy, do thou continue to watch over me. not to permit me to fall off from them through any part of the deceitfulness of sin, the repeated importunity of the tempter, the empty terrors of the allurements of the world or the sloth & treachery of my own Soul. Lord, it is thy restraining grace, from which I acknowledge to have received all the degrees of innocence, thy preventing & assisting, from which I have derived all the strength unto victory over my sin: and be thou pleased to continue these securities of thine to me, every hour & minute of my life; that under the Shadow of thy wings I may rejoice: that by this Armor of thine, I may have truce, or victory over all my Ghostly Enemies; and then, Lord, for viands of this short travail of min, for the remainder of it, give me a heart to be satisfied & rejoice in my portion, {be} it the meanest, that thy wisdom, ¶^{on} the sight of my infirmities, shall see fittest to chuse for me. And how long or how short space soever thou shalt please to continue me here, be pleased also to continue my thirst of thee: which, without forsaking my station, may anticipate the comfort and joy of beholding thee; that seeking & savouring of the things above, I may have my fruit unto holiness, & the end everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

Finis²¹⁹

²¹⁹ These prayers are reproduced in their entirety in Ballard's *Memoirs*, with the comment that they 'were copied from a manuscript at Westwood, by a lady, who does not give me leave to mention her name, but whose veracity no one who is acquainted with her, will ever call into question' – Elstob did not wish to be acknowledged by name for the aid she had provided, a desire that seems to be of a piece with her decision to subscribe to the volume under an assumed name (see addendum to letter 35 and n. 211). See Ballard, *Memoirs* (1752), pp. 332-335; and Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, pp. 301-303.

41. Elstob to Ballard, Bulstrode to Magdalen, November 14th 1752^a

Thanks Ballard for writing to Lady Harriet. Apologises that she cannot answer his inquiries about Arabella Stuart. Is looking forward to seeing his book and urges him to visit, as she cannot go to Oxford herself due to infirmities.

Bulstrode November y² 14th 1752

S^r

Nothing but the many infirmities with which I am continually afflicted, with shou'd have prevented my writing to you long before this to return my charming Lady Harriets acknowledgements for your kind design of the Poem you mention'd which never arriv'd and for the admirable Letter you sent Her; it happen'd to be very acceptable to her because she knows that Great Lady very well.

I am much concern'd that I can give you but little or no certain intelligence concerning the Lady Arabella Stuart;²²⁰ in reading M^r Mallets Edition of Lord Bacons works the fourth volume,²²¹ I met with a Lady Arabella who I verily believe to be the Lady you enquire after; she was a relation to King James the first and to the then Countess of Shrewsbury, her Picture is at Welbeck a fine Seat of Lady Oxfords and that of the Countess abovemention'd.^b I am heartily sorry I did not know Your inclination to be inform'd about Her when I was there or if I had known by last Summer when our Family went, I might perhaps have

Letter 41

^a Fols 96-97. Addressed as previous. The first line (from 'Nothing' to 'afflicted') seems to be in Elstob's hand, albeit shaky, but then another hand takes over. Dissimilar to previous 'scribe'. The hand could belong to the younger Portland girl as conceivably Elstob would have had greater influence on her handwriting due to teaching her earlier in life, and the hand seems similar, but not identical to, Elstob's own. This would also explain the erratic spelling and punctuation, or lack thereof.

^b Possibly a comma – this writer does not distinguish much between them as her full stops are short vertical dashes and her commas slightly longer ones.

²²⁰ Lady Arabella Seymour (1575-1615). Ballard presumably requested details to include in his *Memoirs*. It is in the entry for Arabella Seymour that Elstob receives her only mention in his book; 'I have been informed by the learned and ingenious Mrs Elstob, that her papers are still preserved in the Harleian and Longleat Librarys...' See Ballard, *Memoirs*, p. 249; and Perry, ed., *Memoirs*, p. 241.

²²¹ Francis Bacon, *The Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, Lord High Chancellor of England: In four volumes*, David Mallett, ed., London: A. Millar, 1740.

been able to have given you some satisfaction, but it will be impossible to do it till the latter end of next Summer when the Family will go thither if it please God they are well

I gave me great pleasure to find that we shall have the happiness of seeing your Book so soon & don't doubt but it [^]will give ^{as} great to all it^c Readers, I must beg the favour of you to write to M^{rs} Hopkins I would do it with all my Heart but indeed I am not able, if you write to Her please to direct to M^{rs} Hopkins at Tho.^s Martins Esq^r: at Clapham in Surrey, I think. ~~the best way for~~ if you send the Books to Bulstrode the best and most expiditious way will be to send them by the Oxford Coach with orders for them to be left at the Bull upon Gerards Cross Common.

I am very much obliged to you Good S^r for your so kindly wishing to see me, I do assure you I am not behind you in wishes to ^{see} you for I have a hundred things to say to you, and I had I been able to have born the Journey I wou'd have come to Oxford on purpose to visit you, but alas I am so weak + infirm that it is as much as I am able to perform when I come from and go to London you will excuse my adding more than to assure that I am

Your most obliged
Humble Servant
Eliza: Elstob

42. Elstob to Ballard, Whitehall to Magdalen, January 30th 1753^a

Elstob writes to confirm safe receipt of her copies of Ballard's book. Apologises that she cannot procure more receipts for him. Sends thanks from Lady Harriet for a poem he sent to her.

^c *Sic.*

Letter 42

^a Fol. 98. In Elstob's hand, rather shaky, addressed 'To Mr George Ballard in Magdalen College / Oxon' on the other side of Elstob's letter, with a further wrapper page around that, also in Elstob's hand, addressed and signed as previous letters ('To Mr George Ballard in Magdalen College / Oxon' signed Grace of Portland).

Whitehall Jan^{ry} 30th 1753.S^r

My Ladies being all engag'd with her Grace I am oblig'd to take up my ^{^Pen} and write tho' with great pain to acquaint your that your books came safe and without the least hurt. I have sent you all the receipts I cou'd procure, for her ^{^Grace} after she she [sic] had suscrib'd never mind where she put the receipts so that I cannot have ^{^them}, and L^d Titchield tells me ^{^he} has lost his, so that I can only ^{^send} those of the three Ladies and M^{rs} F Smiths whose right name is Eliz: Elstob. I dare say you will have no second demand for the other two since they own they ~~th~~ have the books. I think every minute lost that hinders me from the pleasure of reading your book, which I hope will be a just excuse for my adding no more than that I am

Worthy S^r

I had almost forgot to send Lady
Harr[^]etts thanks for the Poem you
were so good as to send her

Your most obliged and hum^{ble} Servant
Eliz: Elstob²²²

²²² Given that this seems to be a somewhat abrupt note for their correspondence to end on, it seems reasonable to assume that Ballard simply failed to save any further letters from Elstob for his manuscript collection (or deliberately chose to leave them out). The same presumably occurred during the long hiatus between letters 30 and 31.