

ALEXANDER JOHN ELLIS: A
STUDY OF A VICTORIAN
PHILOLOGIST

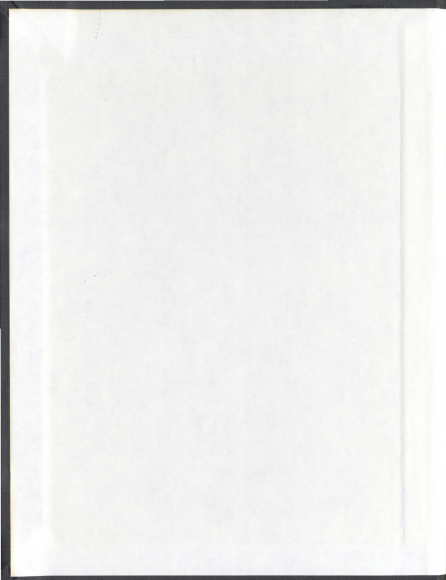
PART I

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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ROBERT ALAN SANDERS



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ALEXANDER JOHN ELLIS:
A STUDY OF A VICTORIAN PHILOLOGIST

by



Robert A. Sanders

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of English Language and Literature

Memorial University of Newfoundland

St. John's, Newfoundland

May 1977

ABSTRACT

Symbols, both graphic and mathematical, exercised a lifetime fascination for the Victorian scholar, Alexander John Ellis (1814-90) in connection with his investigations into spelling reform, phonetics, mathematics, physics, and particularly philology. In conjunction with the phonographer Isaac Pitman, he undertook during the 1840's to revolutionize reading instruction for the illiterate masses by utilizing a special phonotypic alphabet. In 1866, Ellis devised Palaeotype, a system of sound notation employing combinations of existing type faces to represent minute phonetic distinctions. Ellis then constructed an account of the evolution of English speech sounds through the course of twelve centuries in his monumental study On Early English Pronunciation (1867-89). Central to his account are his conjectured pronunciations of the sounds represented in the texts of Chaucer and Shakespeare. Expanding his investigation, Ellis conducted the first dialectal survey of the British Isles and drew the first reliable map of English dialectal boundaries. This landmark in English dialectal history was based upon dialect tests, comparative specimens, word lists, and viva voces. Providing assistance and encouragement with the complex survey were Thomas Hallam, Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, J.G. Goodchild, and hundreds

of "dialectal informants." In order to preserve the nation's vanishing dialectal forms, in 1871 Ellis took the lead in establishing the English Dialect Society, whose efforts later were the basis for Joseph Wright's great English Dialect Dictionary. Ellis likewise conjectured the sounds of both Latin (1874) and Greek (1876). His vigorous leadership in the affairs of the Philological Society of London brought him into close contact with scholars like F.J. Furnivall, James A.H. Murray, William Aldis Wright, Francis J. Child, and Henry Sweet. Ellis figured prominently in those events leading to the publication of the Oxford English Dictionary, undertaken by the Philological Society. Extensive studies into theoretical mathematics, particularly his work on "stigmatics," earned for him the admiration of his colleagues in the Royal Society of London. His experiments regarding the nature of pitch in organs included a major revision and translation of Helmholtz's study Tonempfindungen (1875) and a scientific determination of the scales of non-European instruments (1885).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to express my indebtedness to a number of persons and institutions for support given in connection with this study. The Memorial University of Newfoundland generously awarded me a fellowship and travel grants to undertake this investigation of Alexander John Ellis. Professor Frederick A. Aldrich, Dean of the Graduate School, has shown me kindness and given encouragement during the progress of this study. Professor David G. Pitt, Chairman of the Department of English Language and Literature, has been helpful and supportive of my work from the time I was privileged to be a student in his seminar. He facilitated access for me to some of the great manuscript collections in Great Britain. Professor George M. Story directed me to a number of valuable scholarly contacts in England. Professor Philip Gardner kindly made arrangements with Professor Eric Bullock, formerly of Liverpool University, for me to use the resources of the Royal Society of London.

I wish to acknowledge my deepest gratitude to Professor William J. Kirwin, my dissertation advisor, who first introduced me to the work of the philologist A.J. Ellis and suggested the need for an in-depth biographical treatment of his contributions to British scholarship. His patient and steady guidance throughout the various stages of my investigation has continuously given me encouragement. I

gratefully acknowledge his many efforts on my behalf.

There are many individuals and institutions that have rendered assistance and given advice in connection with this study. I welcome the opportunity to thank those who have cooperated in providing me with personal access to manuscript sources as well as permitting me to have xerox copies of manuscripts and rare printed materials.

I am particularly indebted to Sir James Pitman of Bath, who graciously arranged for me to examine the correspondence between his grandfather Isaac Pitman and A.J. Ellis during their years of association with the reformed spelling movement of the 1840's. I am grateful to Mary Abercrombie (Mrs. David Abercrombie) of Edinburgh, who kindly allowed me to refer to the manuscript of her biography of Isaac Pitman, a work which gives attention to the association he had with Ellis.

The Bodleian Library at Oxford University granted me personal access to the sixty volumes of the Hallam-Ellis Papers, a collection of material relating to the Ellis dialect survey of the 1870's and 1880's. The Bodleian also permitted me to procure microfilms of large sections of the correspondence of these two men for subsequent detailed analysis.

The Taylor Institution at Oxford cooperated in letting me search through the uncatalogued Joseph Wright Papers.

Miss M.G. Hughes arranged for the duplication of large numbers of clippings from notebooks. Dr. Edward Schofield and P.J. Porter of the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum assisted me in consulting the Hipkins Papers, the Bernard Shaw Papers, and the George Leland Correspondence. I am especially indebted to both J. Harvey and T. Pound of the Library of King's College (London) who extended every possible courtesy so that I could search the uncatalogued Skeat-Furnivall Papers. Their patience and cooperation were invaluable. Miss M. Percivall of University College (London) was helpful in connection with locating information regarding Ellis' association with the Board of Governors of that institution. I am pleased to acknowledge with gratitude the courtesies over many days afforded to me at the Royal Society of London. Its Librarian, Mr. I. Kaye, enabled me to examine Ellis' mathematical papers as well as his correspondence to other Fellows. To be able to work in that great library was indeed a memorable privilege.

I wish to thank staff members of the Manuscript Department of Cambridge University for permitting me to use the Henry Bradshaw Papers and the Prince Bonaparte Correspondence. Miss M. Weedon of the English Faculty Library (St. Cross, Oxford) was particularly helpful in securing for me certain rare dialectal pamphlets. Mr. I.C. Cunningham of the National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh) permitted me to

examine the Hipkins Cartoons and the Sir James Murray Papers in that institution.

Murphy D. Smith of the American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia) made available to me many Ellis letters written to its Fellows. I acknowledge with pleasure his personal assistance. Marjorie G. Wynne of the Yale University Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library arranged for me to search the diaries of the Sanscritist William Dwight Whitney. Rodney Dennis of the Houghton Library at Harvard University permitted me to examine the F.J. Child Papers. I wish to thank the Bibliothèque Nationale for their cooperation in permitting me to draw upon the Paul Meyer Correspondence, a collection which is invaluable with respect to Ellis' studies in Romance languages.

In addition to the above-mentioned, I should like to thank the following persons and institutions that rendered valuable assistance by giving advice, locating manuscripts, arranging for xerox copies, and contacting other possible sources of information:

The late Professor Harold Orton of the University of Leeds provided encouragement and information. Mr. R.L.S. Harrison, Director of Stephen Austin and Sons, Ltd. provided useful observations regarding the Victorian printing establishments. R.W. Burchfield, Editor of the Oxford English Dictionary Supplement, offered some useful suggestions

concerning the location of the archives of the Philological Society as well as suggesting various other scholars who might prove helpful. Miss Margaret Selley of Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. kindly researched that firm's archives for material which could be helpful. M. Harrison of Canolfan, Swansea, gave me some valuable suggestions. Marion Angus and A.G.H. Elsegood of Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd. made every effort to provide assistance in locating certain Pitman correspondence. Valerie A. Ripley of the Longman Group Ltd. gave me information about the location of the firm's archives for the latter half of the nineteenth century. Philip Bryant of Bath University provided information about the Pitman Papers which have not yet been classified. Professor R.H. Robins of the University of London gave me assistance regarding the papers of the Philological Society. L.E. Kenyon of the British Federation of Master Printers provided me with some useful suggestions about possible sources of information related to printing policies in Ellis' time.

I am indebted to Ronald Pearsall of Brightling, Sussex, who shared with me his knowledge of the Furnivall Papers of King's College (London). I acknowledge the assistance of the staff of the General Register Office at Somerset House (London), who extended to me many courtesies. H.J. Malyon, Secretary of Kensal Green Cemetery (London), was most obliging on several occasions.

Evan MacGillivray, Librarian of the Orkney County Library was helpful regarding the location of the papers of the Orcadian poet Walter Traill Dennison. T. Kaye, Librarian of Trinity College (Cambridge) graciously located for me the William Aldis Wright Correspondence with Ellis as well as other related material.

I should further like to acknowledge the assistance of the following persons and institutions that provided substantial assistance in locating material relevant to this investigation: the library of the Memorial University of Newfoundland (Reference Staff); Museum of the History of Science (Oxford) - P.R. Maddison; Sheffield Central Library - John Babbington; University of Newcastle Upon Tyne Library - A.Elliot; Salop County Library (Shrewsbury) - O.S. Newman; Sidney Sussex College Library (Cambridge) - T.R. Langley; Downing College Library (Cambridge) - R.J. Bates; King's College Library (Cambridge) - A.N.L. Munby; Cambridge University Archives - Elizabeth Leedham-Green; Leeds Public Library - J.M. Cullinger; University of Leeds: Brotherton Library - D. Cox; University of Lancaster Library - A. Graham Mackenzie; Nottingham Public Library - P. Sykes; The John Rylands Library (Manchester) - Glenise Matheson; Lincolnshire Archives Office (Lincoln) - C.P.C. Johnson; Liverpool City Libraries - G. Chandler; University of Manchester Library -

F. W. Ratcliffe; Cheshire County Council Record Office (Chester) - Eileen Simpson; University of London Library; Palaeography Division - Leon Gibbs; South Museum Library (South Kensington) - H. Woolfe; Sotheby & Co. (London); Dr. Williams's Library (London) - Kenneth Twinn; Victoria and Albert Museum (London) - Joyce Whattney.

University of London: Institute of Germanic Studies - V.J. Riley; Royal Asiatic Society (London) - Patricia Baker; House of Lords: Record Office - H.S. Cable; The Clarendon Press (Oxford) - Isobel M. Findlay; Queen's College Library (Oxford) - Helen Powell; St. Edmund Hall (Oxford) - D. Horsfield; Lincoln College Library (Oxford) - Nigel Wilson; University of Bristol Library - Norman Highan; Royal Society of Arts (London) - D.G.C. Allan; Bernard Quaritch Ltd. (London) - G.W. Hart; Northumberland County Record Office - R.M. Gard; Oxford University Press - John Bell; The National Portrait Gallery (London); University of Edinburgh Library; Professor David Abercrombie, Department of Phonetics, University of Edinburgh; National Register of Archives (Scotland) - D.M. Hunter; King's College Library (Aberdeen University) - C.A. McLaren; National Library of Wales (Aberystwyth) - Monica Davies.

University of Besançon Library - J. Thiebaut; University of Grenoble Library - Jeanne Condamin; University of Montpellier Library - J. P. Bernard; Universitäts-Bibliothek

der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin - A. Kral; University of Bremen Library - A. Sohn; Deutsche Staatsbibliothek (Berlin) - H.E. Teitge; University of Marburg Library (Lahn) - U. Bredehorn; Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Berlin): Handschriftenabteilung/Zentralkartei der Autographen - Hans J. Mey and L. Schippang; University of Leiden Library (Netherlands) - C.L. Heesakker; University of Amsterdam Library - S. Wartena; University of Uppsala Library (Sweden) - Åke Davidsson; Royal University of Oslo Library (Norway) - Oddvar Vassstveit; Austrian Academy of Science (Vienna) - Ludmilla Krestan; Royal Library of Belgium (Brussels) - Martin Wittek; State Library of the Czech Socialist Republic (Prague) - Karel Kozelik; University of Iceland Library (Reykjavik) - Björn Sigfússon.

Trinity College Library (Dublin) - S. Pressley; National Library of Ireland (Dublin) - Desmond Clarke; Royal Irish Academy (Dublin) - Brigid Dolan; Royal Swedish Academy of Science (Stockholm) - Else-Britt Talts; Biblioteka Jagiellońska (Cracow) - Jan Baumgart; McGill University Library (Montreal) - G.D. Sprott; Queen's University Library - (Kingston, Ont.) - William F.E. Morley; Public Archives of Canada (Ottawa) - J. Atherton; Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development/A.G. Bell National Historic Park (Baddeck, Nova Scotia) - Richard Davis.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia) - E. Wolf; The Library of Congress: Manuscript Division (Washington, D.C.) - Roy P. Basler; New York Public Library (N.Y.) - Jean R. McNiece; University of North Carolina Library (Chapel Hill, N.C.) - Carolyn A. Wallace; The Newberry Library (Chicago) - Diane Haskell; Pennsylvania State University Library (University Park, Penna.) - Charles Mann; Princeton University Library (Princeton, N.J.) - William S. Dix; Swarthmore College Library (Swarthmore, Penna.) - George K. Huber; Syracuse University Library (Syracuse, N.Y.) - Amy S. Doherty; Trinity College Library (Hartford, Conn.) - Marian Clarke; Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Inc. (Washington, D.C.) - William E. Cwiklo; The Wadsworth Athenaeum (Hartford, Conn.) - Elizabeth G. Hoke; University of Wisconsin Library (Madison, Wis.) - J. Frank Cook; The Boston Athenaeum (Boston, Mass.) - Penelope P. Behrens; Boston Public Library: Department of Manuscripts - James Lawton; Brown University: The John Hay Library (Providence) - Stuart Sherman; University of Cincinnati Library - Frederick A. Marcotte; Columbia University Library: Manuscript Department (N.Y.) - Kenneth A. Lohf; Duke University Library (Durham, N.C.) - Sue McHale; The Folger Shakespeare Library (Washington, D.C.) - L. Yeandle.

Hamilton College Library (Clinton, N.Y.) - George Thompson; Johns Hopkins University: The Milton S. Eisenhower

Library - M.C. Beechens; The Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery (San Marino, Cal.) - Jean P. Preston; University of Pennsylvania; Charles Patterson Van Pelt Library: Rare Book Collection (Philadelphia) - Neda M. Westlake; Andover Theological Library (Cambridge, Mass.) - Reference Staff.

In addition to the above-mentioned I should like to express my gratitude to the many other institutions and persons who patiently responded to my inquiries and made every effort to be of assistance.

Robert A. Sanders

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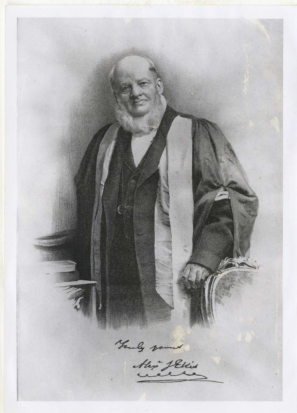
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CHAPTER I

REFLECTING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH INVESTIGATIVE SPIRIT

In each age there are remarkable men who contribute to the intellectual climate of their nation and whose inquiring minds have affected the lives and work of their contemporaries. In the thousands of pages of The Academy and The Athenaeum, two of the leading nineteenth century British periodicals of broad general coverage, we regularly find the announcements of the numerous learned societies which were proliferating throughout the major cities of the country. Among them are the names of many diligent scholars who won the approbation of their associates because of their impressive erudition, but regrettably the names of those very men, now only included in membership lists, have long since vanished although they were once considered notable within their respective learned circles. Sometimes we still encounter in those announcements an occasional reference to someone who incidentally rendered assistance to figures whom we still regard as leaders in the progress of British scholarship.

The decades of the second half of the nineteenth century were filled with an unprecedented amount of



1. A.J. Ellis, Cambridge, June 10, 1890
(Courtesy of the British Museum, Dept. of Manuscripts)

scholarly activity. Sir Austen Layard was shipping his winged Assyrian colossi to the British Museum; Michael Faraday was discovering the two chlorides of carbon; Edward Hayes Plumptre, the Dean of Wells, was translating Aeschylus; and Sir Samuel Baker and his intrepid wife together on a small boat, were seeking the source of the Nile through the infested swamps of the Sudan under the most horrendous travelling conditions imaginable.

Each week brought the readers of the two periodicals thrilling accounts of the new discoveries in the form of papers that were delivered before the different societies devoted to archaeological, literary, philological, and scientific pursuits. The accomplishments of Englishmen, both at home and abroad, fostered a spirit of pride among scholars and lay people throughout the Empire. The Royal Asiatic Society, for example, met with the approval of the most ardent of Imperialists of the nineteenth century. Papers dealing with matters of Indian culture were of particular interest.

Scientists coveted membership in the prestigious Royal Society of London because of its renown in the world of scholarship. Royal patronage conferred an aura of exclusiveness upon many learned societies of the time, and such a body as the Royal Geographic Society welcomed at its meetings those who had visited the remote

lamaseries of Outer Mongolia and Tibet. Concurrently, the Philological Society of London conducted its monthly meetings either in Burlington House or in rooms at University College. Those who were not privileged to attend the gatherings read in the pages of the two periodicals interesting summaries of the work undertaken in connection with the unknown languages of certain South American Indian tribes and attempts to differentiate among the nuances of terms for hunting and fishing. The readers of the minutes of these sessions also learned that heated discussions regarding syntactical variations among the Icelandic Sagas followed the delivery of papers on that genre by specialists in Scandinavian studies.

An atmosphere of formality prevailed everywhere that the scholarly societies congregated. Throughout the country one could find reproduced the same dignified groups of men in elegant attire meeting in York, Manchester, and Edinburgh, who reviewed the latest mathematical theories on logarithms or marveled at the pristine condition of a recently discovered hoard of Caledonian antiquities found in one of the Highland passes. The nineteenth century, particularly the middle decades, was a time of high enthusiasm for making all kinds of discoveries. In many respects it rivalled the Elizabethan Age in its intellectual exuberance. The sophisticated approaches to twentieth

century research had their origin in those Victorian learned societies which were continually arising as offshoots of larger groups of a more general nature.

Contributing to the efforts of these groups were many truly remarkable men, but occasionally there would be one whose intellect encompassed so wide a range of studies that he deserves to be singled out for special consideration because he illuminates the scholarly scene of the Victorian Age in a valuable manner. Alexander John Ellis (1814-90) was just such a man because his approach to scholarship reflects the intensity, dedication, and competence of so many students of that period in phonetics, philology, musicology, mathematics, and physics. His career is all the more unusual because he directed all his efforts among the various academic disciplines with equal fervor. His work earned for him the highest respect from Europe's most distinguished scholars. Ellis was always of a practical turn of mind, and as a master printer, he entered into a partnership with the Bath phonographer Isaac Pitman in the reform of English spelling and reading.

British education for the masses was in a sorry state, and Ellis felt a genuine obligation to improve the opportunities for the thousands of working people who were hampered from any kind of advancement because of their inability to read and write. Spelling reform has

been a favorite subject for consideration among Englishmen during the course of many centuries, but no one put more effort into the practical aspects of publishing suitable materials for attaining literacy than Ellis. His labor on behalf of the common man in the struggle to acquire some basic skills is an integral part of the story of the history of education in Great Britain.

He was privileged to work closely with the most eminent physicist of all Europe, Hermann von Helmholtz, in the effort to establish a system of even temperament for musical instruments, bearing in mind the limits of the range of the human voice in conjunction with those instruments used in Western Europe. Ellis became a prominent figure in the affairs of the Musical Association of London. His friendship with Alfred Hipkins, who was associated with the firm of London piano manufacturers, Broadwood's, gave him the opportunity to develop an extraordinary sensitivity to the degrees of pitch, thereby enabling him to investigate all kinds of problems relating to the pitch of the human voice and the scientific analysis of language. He earned the admiration of the principal phonetic scholars of England and the Continent. His work in music and phonetics brought him in touch with people who were the leaders of the time and included William Whewell, Henry Sweet, James Murray, Bernard Shaw,

Thomas Hallam, Lord Tennyson, Baron Rayleigh, George Grove, and a host of other interesting personalities.

Alexander Ellis was fortunate in being free of all pecuniary worries as he carefully went about developing plans to make special large scale studies in music, mathematics, language, and other related disciplines. Because he gave himself whole-heartedly to each of his investigations without any obvious preference on his part for one over the other, he came to be on very close terms with a wide number of authorities who respected his judgments and expertise in each area of study.

Almost a hundred years have elapsed since Ellis tried to reconstruct the sounds of Homer and Virgil as well as attempt to ascribe values to the pronunciation of the words of Chaucer and Shakespeare. His ambitious survey of the dialects of the British Isles evolved from his historical studies of the development of the English language. His unprecedented effort in connection with the recording of the provincial sounds of the nineteenth century still serves as a wellspring for modern dialect scholars.

In this thesis we are obliged to examine Ellis' work from a number of vantage points, for the complete range of his achievements borders on the amazing in the annals of scholarship. Each aspect of his life's interests became involved in some way with the others. His fascination with

the manipulation of graphic symbols underlies all his work and continued as the basis for the investigations he made throughout his lifetime. Letters and shapes in their phonetic, mathematical, and scientific usages provided him with completely new alternatives for communicating his theories through more satisfactory modes of representation. His graphic symbols were useful for indicating the incommensurables of analytical geometry just as his special modifications of the printer's font aided him in renovating the English alphabet in connection with his association with Isaac Pitman. In every discipline he studied Ellis could make graphic symbols do what he wished.

This passion for graphic symbols was most fully realized in his own elaborate schema for the transcription of minute phonetic distinctions to represent the historical sounds of the English language during the course of its six centuries of development. Palaeotype was Ellis' scientific answer to the problem of showing the precise phonetic values of words which no longer existed or had been drastically modified by the mid-nineteenth century. Melville Bell's system of Visible Speech, an iconic scheme which had little likelihood of large scale adoption, received Ellis' closest attention. Palaeotype was a complete modification of Bell's scheme in which Ellis altered the conventional Roman faces of type into an elaborate

arrangement of his own. This solution to the problem of recording speech articulations earned for Ellis the admiration and respect of the leading scholars of the country. It led to the further modifications of sound notational systems by the distinguished philologist Henry Sweet, who readily acknowledged his indebtedness to the pioneering work in phonetics which Ellis had done in the 1870's.

Ellis' thorough knowledge of the mechanics of human speech was also of great value in guiding young Alexander Graham Bell in his studies. Bell's later investigations were to culminate in the discovery of the means for transmitting the human voice on the telephone. Ellis brought his critical observations to the scholarly world on the usefulness of Edison's phonograph as an instrument for preserving records of human speech. He was part of the spirit of nineteenth century intellectual inquiry that was sweeping across all Europe. In addition, Ellis directed his thinking to the movement for resolving the difficulties in the creation of a practical method of communication for the nations of the West through the means of a universal language. Every aspect of the possibilities inherent in language interested him profoundly. He allowed himself, despite his own commitments, to be drawn into the various projects of his contemporaries who felt that he could make a valuable contribution.

The work on musical pitch in connection with his translation of Helmholtz's Tonempfindungen brought Ellis a rare dimension of experience in his phonetic investigations. No other scholar possessed the same degree of knowledge regarding the properties of sound as Alexander Ellis. He was an authority on the subject in every sense of the word. Because he was so proficient in analyzing hundreds of shades of pitch and articulation, he was able to undertake the recording of the varieties of England's contemporary pronunciations as spoken in all the counties throughout the British Isles. Ellis believed it was necessary to know everything, however remotely related to a subject, in order to deal competently with every type of investigation in any discipline.

It must be emphasized that Ellis was by no means a dilettante with regard to his scholarship. Had he been so considered in that light because of the large span of his interests, men such as the great Parisian organ builder Bosanquet, the tonometrist Koenig, the classicist Roby, the mathematician Boole, and the Assyriologist Sayce would not have depended upon his judgments. Europe's most eminent etymologist Friedrich Pott appreciated the ability which Ellis had in dealing with some of the phonological and etymological decisions the Philological Society faced. Ellis is a very important part of the story behind the

publication of the exhaustive Oxford English Dictionary, for it was during his incumbency as President of the Philological Society that much of the progress of that impressive lexicographical work occurred. Ellis shared with James Murray the aggravations and frustrations that arose in conjunction with the great undertaking.

As President of the Philological Society, Ellis directed for several years the professional activities of men who were noteworthy for their own exacting views towards scholarship and who insisted on impeccable habits of workmanship. He was in the forefront of much of the most distinguished philological investigation of the nineteenth century and was an important agent in the affairs of the Chaucer Society with F.J. Purnivall. He was influential in carrying out the aims of the Early English Text Society's program of publishing the texts of the nation's early literary records for the first time. It was only natural that Ellis realized the need for writing a definitive history of the changes of the English language. Such an investigation was basic to the work of his colleagues and future generations. No work holds a more honorable position among the Early English Text Society's Series than does Ellis' On Early English Pronunciation.

The Royal Society of London recognized Ellis for his work in theoretical mathematics by making him a Fellow, an

honor which meant more to him than any other which he received throughout his life. He played an active role in the affairs of that august body, and his work on its Council brought him into close contact with the greatest scientific figures of the age. The London Mathematical Society, the Society of Arts, and the Musical Association of London all valued the contributions which Ellis made towards their work. His professional contacts with the memberships of those groups enabled him to encourage the studies of many scholars in North America, who did not possess the extensive resources which were the great libraries of Europe.

Ellis was part of the intellectual cross-fertilization of the Victorian Age. Fortunately, he was a prolific correspondent, as well as extraordinarily productive author. He has left behind him an extensive record of all his efforts during the course of his career, thereby making it possible for us to reconstruct a detailed picture of a "gentleman-scholar" actually at work. Step by step we are able to examine his employment of different techniques of scholarship which he used in his monumental phonetic history of the English language over a twenty year period. A panorama of "eminent" Victorians unfolds for us in the thousands of extant letters which he sent continually to people in all walks of life who shared his concerns.

The letters are filled with strong outbursts of emotion concerning the shortcomings of others who failed to pay attention to the careful directions which he had prepared to expedite the dialect survey. There is a feeling of optimism for all his work in connection with Isaac Pitman in his desire to ameliorate the rampant illiteracy of the day. Every side of Ellis' character is revealed in the vast correspondence with Thomas Hallam as the friendship between the two men developed into a dependence upon each other for intellectual corroboration of each other's theories about dialects as well as a mutually satisfying sounding board for their personal problems. This impressive correspondence warrants inclusion among the noteworthy epistolary collections of the nineteenth century. The collections of letters, notebooks, and journals at the Bodleian Library and King's College (London) have preserved intact a record of the events which Ellis took part in while making his survey of the state of English pronunciation during his own time. The materials are invaluable for an understanding of his achievements in the field of historical philology, and it is in the letters which he sent to colleagues all over Europe that the human qualities are evident of so many of the philologists who are remembered only as shadowy figures in the nineteenth century. Today's serious students of Chaucer have occasion to use Furnivall's Six-Text edition

of the poet. In his relationship with Ellis, he becomes for us one of the most engaging people who throng the scholarly scene. We still view Lord Tennyson as a principal literary figure of Queen Victoria's time, but we can get new insights into the meticulous work habits he maintained by examining the letters and references Ellis made to their private analysis of the sounds of the Old Farmer's Lincolnshire dialect. Twentieth century students who still examine the careful edition of Havelock the Dane which Walter Skeat prepared may not be aware that he was one of the most dedicated scholars of the later decades of the nineteenth century whose sincerity of purpose in saving the early literary records of England was reinforced by Ellis in a series of enthusiastic letters. In connection with Ellis' hopes for the formation of an English Dialect Society, Skeat assumed a vital role in interesting others to share Ellis' conviction about the importance of such a group for saving the linguistic past of the country. A remarkable group of men come to life again in the Ellis correspondence.

Realizing that his own letters would provide succeeding generations with an opportunity to share his scholarly efforts, Ellis was careful towards the close of his life to arrange to send Thomas Hallam all his materials to insure that they would be preserved in toto along with that portion of the correspondence which Ellis knew that

Hallam had faithfully been keeping in Manchester for later disposition in the Bodleian Library. He felt an obligation to the future and sincerely believed in the value of the work he had done over the course of the years.

In the following pages we shall consider the development of Alexander Ellis' career as a scholar by treating each of his special interests within its own chronological course. It will be necessary to return on occasion to earlier periods of Ellis' life in order to pay adequate attention to his progress in each of the disciplines which he investigated. Only by considering the man separately as a scientist, mathematician, educator, and philologist are we able to appreciate the breadth of learning he possessed and the nature of the contributions he made to the level of nineteenth century scholarship. No undertaking was too difficult for him; no amount of time was too long in which to carry out his studies.

His life may well serve as an inspiration to the researcher of the twentieth century who has the benefit of so much technological assistance. With his box of "planished points" and quires of legal paper, Ellis produced an amazing amount of work which still deserves the admiration of students today. Vicariously we are able to share in the spirit of Victorian scholarly dedication which his work represents. We can observe in action a man of learning and

infinite curiosity, who was committed wholly to the advancement of the cause of learning. It is the purpose of this study to pay long-overdue recognition to one who was a prime influence upon the intellectual activity of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPING PHONOTYPY AS THE PRINCIPAL INSTRUMENT OF THE ENGLISH READING REFORM (1843-47)

In Great Britain during the 1840's vigorous efforts were undertaken to relieve the growing illiteracy prevailing among the adult population by such men as the shorthand specialist Isaac Pitman and the phonetician Alexander Ellis. As a result of their extensive correspondence about phonetic matters, together they directed their efforts towards the reform of English spelling in order to solve the nation's literacy problems. Ellis' scientific insights into phonetics were of incalculable value to Pitman's ventures in publishing. Ellis set forth the most comprehensive exposition of spelling reform in his Alphabet of Nature, thereby gaining considerable prominence in the annual meetings of Pitman's Phonographic Festivals. The Reading Reform was rapidly attracting adherents throughout Great Britain and America because of Ellis' theoretical contributions and his ability to put into practice complex ideas. His early training and preparation for this role as an educational reformer and publisher will be examined in turn.

Throughout his life Ellis remained very proud of having been born in Hoxton, a part of London retaining an authentic Cockney atmosphere which continued to delight him because of its distinctive speech patterns and colorful personalities. The early years of Ellis' life were the comfortable middle class existence of a young man, who, owing to a turn of good fortune, was able to receive a first class education which enabled him to devote his entire life to scholarly pursuits in a great many disciplines.

He was born on June 14, 1814, the son of James Birch Sharpe. When he was eight years old, his parents sent him to a large private school at Walthamstow, Essex, where the Reverend Elezar Cogan directed the program during 1822-26. During the fourth year at this boarding school, a relative on his mother's side offered him a bequest with the stipulation that if he willingly changed his surname Sharpe to that of Ellis, he would be enabled to devote his entire life to study and research "unhampered by pecuniary cares".¹

The young boy accepted this condition and his decision proved to be a very wise one. The royal license of November 24, 1825 which changed his family name made it possible for him to indulge all of his scholarly predilections

¹"A.J. Ellis, 1814-90", Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society, 21 (1891), 275.

throughout his life. He was well aware of his good fortune, which later allowed him to travel extensively, to engage in private publishing ventures, and to invest large sums of money in a variety of causes and undertakings which caught his fancy over the years.

With pride he readily acknowledged his "honored namesake" William Ellis, a schoolmaster. Addressing the College of Preceptors years later in 1875, he emphatically advised that group of London schoolmasters to renew their own inspiration from his benefactor's writings.²

Shortly after he left the Reverend Mr. Cogan's private school in Essex, arrangements were made to enroll the young man in the Middle Temple, though it appears that he had no serious intention of following the legal profession and was never called to the bar.³

The generous financial support from the obliging maternal relatives paid for further schooling at the distinguished Shrewsbury School, in those years directed by headmaster Samuel Butler (1774-1839), who later was to

²Isaac Pitman, "Remarks," Phonetic Journal, 49 (1890), 592.

³"A.J. Ellis," Men of the Times (1887), p. 350.

become the Bishop of Lichfield. Ellis' removal to Shrewsbury School probably took place shortly after his enrollment in the Middle Temple. During his years at Shrewsbury Ellis developed a deep loyalty for that school which he gratefully acknowledged. As an Old Salopian he had the opportunity of hearing the town's citizens speak Shropshire dialect, and there is no doubt that he regularly came into contact with many local boys whose Welsh origins made him conscious of the phonetic distinctions within the English language. Four years of rigorous public school training provided a sound education with its major stress having been placed on a foundation in the classical languages.

Ellis was becoming part of that group of traditionally trained Englishmen preparing for a conventional university education which would enable him to assume his proper role in the affairs of the nation. His educational achievements were impeccable, and the Ellis relatives, having taken steps to make certain that this branch of the family name would not be obliterated, sent the promising young scion to Eton College.

At that time this venerable school was under the tutelage of headmaster John Keate (1793-1852), a man notorious in nineteenth century educational circles for his stern enforcement of a harsh discipline by means of frequent and severe beatings. Keate was a veritable Orbilius Pupillus, whom Horace had described as "fond of flogging".

Alexander Ellis always retained the deepest compassion for children who were forced to endure the cruel teaching methods based on the early nineteenth century views concerning the best ways of assimilating any kind of book knowledge. Scarcely a week passed at both Shrewsbury and Eton when almost the entire school had not been summoned to the flogging block. Many of these beatings were given to students who could not learn the ancient languages. Ellis wrote compassionately, "O! the weariness, the soul-sickening, mind-deadening process of a classical education! Words! Words!" Latin and Greek deserved their proper place, but a knowledge of one's own country along with reading, writing, and modern history was absolutely essential.⁴

Speech Day at Eton forever remained in his mind as a terrible institution for the young student because the noblest writers were "butchered to make scholastic holiday."⁵ His association with the College of Preceptors over the course of many years brought him in touch regularly with the educational philosophies of the seventies and eighties. He was reminded of the unhappy days at Eton because conditions had not changed too radically from those

⁴A.J. Ellis, "The Problem of Education--No. 2," Phonetic Journal, 7 (April 1848), 159.

⁵A.J. Ellis, Reading Aloud. A Lecture Delivered before the College of Preceptors, June 11, 1873. (London: C.F. Hodgson, 1873), p. 5.

of his youth. He never hesitated to express his criticism of corporal punishment and deplored the uselessness of so much of the nation's schooling.

We can understand the personality of the man all the better if we look at some of the incidents occurring during the formative school years. As a phonetic specialist, Ellis would recall with dismay the wretched diction which he had heard from his own schoolmasters at Shrewsbury and Eton. When the master, birch in hand, mumbled for "Addis" or "Ennis" to recite, Ellis and his classmates Herries and Harris would also rise with trepidation. Already Ellis was becoming particularly aware of phonetic distinctions. When another grim master would confuse him with his friend Mellish, it resulted in the startling appellations of "Mr. Mellis and Mr. Hellish!"⁶ A distaste for poor diction never left Ellis no matter where he directed his attentions. He was present at the Sir Walter Scott Centenary Banquet held in Edinburgh on August 9, 1871 and was especially appalled at the diction he heard everywhere about him at the meeting following the banquet at the Corn Exchange.⁷

The joyless years at Eton also provided much training in mathematics, a discipline in which he excelled,

⁶Ibid., p. 5.

⁷Ibid., p. 12.

so that by 1833 the nineteen year old youth had completed all his program at Windsor. Such diligence and industry no doubt were pleasing to his benefactors. Steps had to be taken to prepare him for entrance to a university program. His generous relatives saw to it that during the last half of 1833 Ellis went to Brighton accompanied by a tutor to prepare for the entrance examination of Cambridge University.

That year he entered Trinity, the largest college of that university, where he was put into immediate contact with young men from Westminster, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury, Tiverton, Kendal, Richmond, and all the other schools where a classical orientation had prepared them for the intellectually stimulating life at university.

At Cambridge, Ellis' tutor was "Mr. Peacock".⁸ In all likelihood this was George Peacock (1791-1858), who furthered the introduction of Continental mathematical notation at Cambridge. Ellis' passionate interest in mathematical studies received its impetus in those early Cambridge years. M.W. Thompson, an old Member of Trinity College, when writing to its Master in 1874, observed wistfully that had he fifty sons, he would have entered them

⁸ Admissions to Trinity College, Cambridge, edited by W.W. Rouse Ball and J.A. Venn, 5 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1911-16), IV, p. 291.

all at Trinity "on Peacock's side".⁹ That old graduate went on to remark: "Never was there a tutor of Trinity as I imagine more affectionately remembered by his pupils."¹⁰

Each Trinity tutor was responsible for six to eight students, and he had to provide a daily hour of individual attention. The student had to read classical subjects, Euclid, algebra, and trigonometry. The second year student had to pass an examination in one of the Greek Gospels, specified Greek and Latin works, and Paley's Evidences of Christianity. In order to gain mathematical honors it was necessary to read mechanics, hydrostatics, dynamics, differential and integral calculus and Newton's Principia.¹¹ In all likelihood this was the program which Ellis followed. Ellis' efforts were directed towards achieving top honors. The three classes for mathematical honors were wranglers, senior optimes, and junior optimes.

While Ellis was a student at Cambridge he led the conventional life of a young man with ample financial means.

⁹ John Allen to W.H. Thompson, 25 November 1858. Trin. Coll. Add. MSS b.49 in Robert Robson in "Trinity College in the Age of Peel" in his Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark (London: Bell, 1967), p. 323.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 323.

¹¹ P.H. Nicklin, A Report Made to the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania at a Stated Meeting on Tuesday the 4th of November 1834 Concerning the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England (Philadelphia: Joseph and William Kite, Printers, 1834), pp. 18-19.

He took his program seriously and made every effort to win the approval of his benefactors. There are no references among his writings to life-long friendships made during those years. He does not appear to have been a solitary person but rather an affable, pleasant person who was interested in the many activities in progress at university.

Student life at Cambridge was at times Spartan in character. While a student at Trinity he sat down to dinner at four o'clock. The undergraduates had ceased dressing formally for dinner after about the first quarter of the century. The students endured rather unrefined dining conditions because they carved for themselves as the joints were passed along the tables; the bed makers and "gyps" in bonnets and shawls waited on the tables. Only a charcoal fire in a brazier heated the Hall of Trinity.¹²

In addition to studying intensively, Ellis found time to experiment with a variety of poetic forms. Among the memorabilia from Ellis' years at Trinity are translations which he made from Goethe's poetry as well as several from Lessing's works. It is evident that he studied German during his university period because he worked with a prose translation of Faust. He also prepared a translation of the first book of the Iliad and a number of pieces from the

¹²D.A. Winstanley, Early Victorian Cambridge (Cambridge: University Press, 1940), p. 388.

Alcaics, which could possibly have been class assignments.

We even learn from these assorted papers that he had played the role of the Duke in The Merchant of Venice in addition to three other minor parts for the Cambridge University Theatrical Club. He became involved in the affairs of the Cambridge French Society and attended the Cambridge Musical Club's soirées. During that period Ellis joined the Scientific Lodge of Freemasons. We know that he attended social events because there is extant a souvenir of his attendance at the 1837 Bachelor's Ball.¹³

During the interval when Cambridge was not in session in 1834, Ellis spent his first long vacation in Paris, a stimulating and happy time for him. It was a welcome opportunity for him to perfect his French, now that his own horizons were rapidly expanding on the Continent. With infinite gratification to himself and certainly with pleasure to his relatives, he learned about his having been elected to a scholarship for his third year.

The twenty-two year old student again tried his hand at writing poetry, and during his last year at the university he published a slim volume about his Trinity

¹³Cambridge University, Department of Manuscripts, Ellis Memorabilia, Additional MS 6145.

years, which he modestly titled Verses.¹⁴ It was intended primarily for private circulation among his friends at university. Already his financial independence was enabling him to indulge his fancies, and he was able to pay Messrs. Palmer and Metcalfe of Trinity Street, Cambridge for the printing costs. Verses was designed as a reminder of the pleasant hours which Ellis and his friends had spent together.

The poems reveal little that is imaginative and original. His poetic sallies had long been familiar to his Cambridge friends. There is, however, an engaging courtliness in his prefatory remarks to the little book, particularly his modest reference to "this toy of mine own in my nonage -- the infancy of my muses".¹⁵ He included several school eclogues, one referring to Windsor in October 1832, as well as a tripartite ballad: "The Walk", "The Feast", and "The Grave". Among these youthful excursions of sentiment appear poems addressed "To Julia" and "To Eliza". It is almost impossible to imagine a youthful Ellis composing amorous words, for in his later writings he always appears rather majestic, urbane, and sedate.

¹⁴A.J. Ellis, Verses (n.p., Palmer and Metcalfe, 1836).

¹⁵Ibid., vii.

Young Queen Victoria ascended Britain's throne in 1837, the same year that Alexander Ellis was graduated Bachelor of Arts being Sixth Wrangler and first of the second class of the Classical Tripos. He had also just been made a Fellow of the Cambridge Philosophical Society, an honor which continued to afford him much personal satisfaction long after he had left Cambridge.

Again financial independence offered him liberty of action, and he decided to remain within the scholarly community for a year and a quarter after taking his degree. Ellis makes no reference to his own parents any more. There was a brief interlude following his graduation when he visited Dresden, living with a local family in order to acquire some fluency in German. While in Dresden he had an opportunity of seeing Goethe's Faust acted, and he then realized how slight was his knowledge of German at that time. Thirty years later, after becoming sufficiently skilled to be able to write gracefully in that language, he re-read the masterpiece and observed how many "chords" the lines struck in him which he had been unable to experience as a young man.¹⁶

Ellis was twenty-six years old in 1840, and he was financially able to marry Ann Chagtor of Speneithorne Hall,

¹⁶Pitman, op. cit., p. 593.

Yorkshire, and they settled in Dorking, Surrey. Though he says little about her during his years of correspondence, he always felt affectionately towards her as a helpmate and hostess.

It is very much in keeping with Ellis' wide-ranging interests to find that at this time he published, interestingly, a book on Horse-Taming (1842), which purported to be an account of two experiments made in England based on American Indian techniques. Ellis had read George Catlin's work on travels among the Indians, and he himself had tried some of those experiments as a young man at Cambridge. In this little book Ellis urged "gentlemen, farmers, stablekeepers, horse-trainers, and horse-breakers" to try the experiments.¹⁷

Now that Ellis had completed university and had worked at some of his varied interests, he started to turn his attention to phonetics, a science which was holding considerable interest for him at this period. Isaac Pitman's practical application of phonetics, his "Phonography",

¹⁷ A.J. Ellis, Horse-Taming: Being an Account of the Successful Application in Two Recent Experiments Made in England, of the Expeditious Method of Taming Horses, as Practised by the Red Indians of North America (Windsor: n.p. 1842).

as he termed it, was a system of shorthand, which was receiving much favor among increasing numbers of working people of all types. It was this system which later would serve as the point of departure for a major portion of Ellis' labours and enthusiasms and which, in turn, would lead him to undertake his major philological effort, the reconstruction of the sounds of the English language through its historical periods. His ten year association with Isaac Pitman represents one of the most productive stages of his remarkable career.

David Abercrombie comments on the systems of stenography which had been developed by the end of the eighteenth century. He speaks of the considerable speed which could be attained in the schemes worked out by Gurney, Byrom, Blanchard, and Taylor. They were difficult to learn and did not allow for any further advance to be made in the direction they were taking. By the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a demand for a system to serve the needs of the expanding commerce of Great Britain.¹⁸

The pedantic notion had existed that spelling should illustrate the etymology of a word. When Pitman worked for voluntary education organizations, he soon recognized the

¹⁸David Abercrombie, "Isaac Pitman," in Studies in Phonetics and Linguistics (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 95-96.

inordinate amount of time that had to be spent on the process of learning to read and write. Pitman had first learned Taylor's system of shorthand in which the vowels were disjoined instead of being incorporated in the outline. There is tremendous economy of effort in writing Pitman's system of "Stenographic Sound-Hand" once the student learns the scheme of more than a hundred characters. It involves a geometric base for the symbols and requires thickening, halving, and position. The vowels can be indicated with precision when necessary. The general appearance of a page of phonography is strange owing to the many curves and pothooks which form the characters which have been designed to assure speed of execution.¹⁹

The system created in 1837 had become "exceedingly popular." In 1842 Pitman was able to publish the first number of a lithographed periodical written in accordance with his system which he called The Phonographic Journal. During the first year of this periodical he conceived the idea of printing as well as writing phonetically. He said, "Phonography must soon supersede all other systems of shorthand, then become the common medium of written communications, and, lastly, change the printed character

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 102-3.

of the millions that speak the English language."²⁰ A half sheet of regular letter-press was added to the Phonographic Journal in 1843 to plead for a change in the printing character. This additional matter was called The Phonotypic Journal.

Isaac Pitman, whose efforts were directed towards encouraging working people to use his system of shorthand, aroused the interest of Ellis when he saw the announcement in the first issue of the little Phonotypic Journal of January 1843 regarding the new directions which that periodical would take. At the beginning of the first article Pitman wrote:

We shall therefore in the Phonotypic Journal advocate the cause of Phonography as a Means for the attainment of the greater end--Phonotypic Printing!²¹

Spelling reform now became Pitman's chief goal at the age of thirty. He was convinced that shorthand would serve as the best introduction to all efforts at changing English orthography.²² His system of shorthand was a logical relationship between characters and sounds. Pitman

²⁰ Ellis, A Plea for Phonetic Spelling; or, The Necessity of Orthographic Reform (London: Pitman, 1848), p. 16.

²¹ Isaac Pitman, "Announcement," Phonotypic Journal, 1 (January 1843), 3.

²² Alfred Baker, The Life of Sir Isaac Pitman (London: Pitman, 1908), p. 84.

believed longhand could be improved by employing the same principle.²³

Upon further consideration it no longer seemed worthwhile to Pitman to print phonography because so many of the 115 symbols of the phonographic alphabet he had devised would not be pleasing to the eye. He believed that the best solution lay in finding additional signs for certain vowels and consonants within the familiar Roman alphabet. The original idea of printing in special types based upon Pitman's principles of phonetics belongs to Thomas Hill, one of Pitman's earliest friends. The two men joined efforts and proceeded to print and publish the Phonotypic Journal.²⁴

Ellis had not heard of Pitman's system of phonography until the beginning of August 1843 although he himself had been working on a "phonetical analysis of language."²⁵ He had come across Pitman's system "by

²³ Sir James Pitman and John St. John, Alphabets and Reading: The Initial Teaching Alphabet (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1969), pp. 79-80.

²⁴ "The English Spelling Reform," Westminster Review, 51 (1849), 63-65.

²⁵ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 6, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie. Acknowledgment is hereby gratefully rendered for the privilege of using Mary Abercrombie's study of the life of Isaac Pitman based on Sir James Pitman's Family Papers. She has extended the present writer the courtesy of allowing him to draw upon her manuscript

accident."²⁶ Ellis started to study the 'Manual', the basic text, as well as the August 1843 issue of the Phonotypic Journal, with great diligence and was relieved to find that his own efforts had not been in conflict with those of Isaac Pitman. Indicating his plans to master the system thoroughly, he wrote to Pitman suggesting that he would gladly welcome the opportunity of deciphering carefully-written phonographic renderings of any materials which discussed phonetic problems.²⁷

With the greatest aplomb Ellis offered Pitman a number of suggestions for avoiding ambiguities among the long and short vowels as well as a number of revisions among the symbols for certain consonants. Though Pitman had devoted much of his attention to the representation of sounds by printing types, Ellis boldly pre-empted the "phonotypic division" of phonetics, leaving the "phonographic division"

version. Those Ellis shorthand letters which she transcribed into normal English spelling which she did not use for her investigation are designated in this present study of Ellis as "transcribed by Mary Abercrombie." All material taken from her manuscript biography is noted as "Abercrombie MS." Acknowledgment is also hereby made to Sir James Pitman who permitted the present writer to consult the materials which he had placed on temporary loan with Mary Abercrombie. Those letters which Ellis wrote in conventional English spelling to Isaac Pitman, but which were not used in the Abercrombie study, are designated as "Pitman Family Papers."

²⁶ Ellis, A Plea for Phonetic Spelling, p. 16.

²⁷ Ibid.

to Pitman's care. It is unlikely that Pitman assented to such an arrangement.²⁸ One hesitates in ascribing arrogance to Ellis, for he was always exquisitely polite in all matters of scholarly courtesy. It was, rather, a great zeal and enthusiasm, combined with youthful confidence, which prompted him to sound officious in his letter to Pitman.

The young man also tried to convince Pitman that it would be possible to eliminate shorthand transcriptions providing that a trained printing house compositor would be employed to set up the work in phonotypic form directly from the phonographic representation.²⁹ All of Ellis' suggestions for the improvement of the phonographic symbols were aimed at improving the type-setting process for phonotypy.

He tried to assure Pitman tactfully that since they had both bestowed so much effort on the phonotypic problem, he himself had ventured upon an enlargement of the Pitman system. Ellis' own investigations had come as a result of his frequent efforts at transcribing those European and Oriental languages not printed in Roman type

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

faces such as Russian, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Hindustani, and Sanscrit.³⁰ His goal had been the construction of a phonetic alphabet which would be easy to print.

It is difficult to ascertain just how extensive was Ellis' knowledge of these languages. He had learned them with the help of private tutors. There was time at his disposal after his graduation from Cambridge and he had the financial means to purchase the costly grammars and lexicons for his studies.

Ellis courteously offered to send Pitman a special detailed letter for publication in the Phonotypic Journal, one which would set forth the differences between his own system and that of Pitman's. Ellis insisted that Pitman give him an opportunity to revise the proofs of the forthcoming "Letter."³¹ Throughout his life Ellis was obsessed with the need for completely accurate work and spent untold hours labouring over proofs.

The "Letter" contains the 82 "primitive European and Asiatic" sounds, including 46 for English, as compared with Pitman's own phonographic alphabet with its 39 English sounds. Ellis had informed Pitman that he had made a

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 6, 1843, "A Phonotypic Alphabet," transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

serious attempt to adapt his own alphabet to Pitman's phonography by avoiding double consonants and double vowels. Since Pitman's phonotypy didn't include symbols for the Oriental sounds, Ellis offered to share with him this new alphabet.

He made arrangements to have a dozen copies of this alphabetical proposal printed and graciously tendered Pitman the offer of one of those which he shortly would have available. Though Ellis stated that the new system was "perfect", he still felt misgivings and cautiously suggested that only in an oral interview with Pitman would it be possible to convey the "primitive sounds" owing to the difficulty of writing minute shades of sound on paper.³² In those years Ellis felt confident that he had symbolized all the possible distinctions of human speech.

Well aware that he might have incurred the displeasure of Pitman by having adopted a somewhat unpleasant tone, Ellis carefully praised the merits of phonography for its "nearly perfect symbolisation of sound", at the same time offering his suggestions for easing the compositor's work in making the transition from one system to the other only because he desired to clear up any "shortcomings" in the Pitman system.³³

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

Whether Pitman would be willing to publish the divergent views offered by another on the corrections of phonography along with the steps taken for expanding the phonotypic alphabet worried Ellis. He reassured Pitman that failure to print the "phonographs" would cause no harm. In the letter written to accompany the long "epistle" (as Ellis termed it) for inclusion in the Phonotypic Journal, he employed a much more relaxed tone in his remarks, but the article itself later expressed the same points in a far more decisive manner. Ellis had now become a man of strong convictions and unswerving determination, and Pitman immediately recognized that he would have to deal with a personality which would not hesitate to engage in heated controversy. Ellis' letters reflect the growing confidence which he felt for the validity of his own ideas. It may be noted that only a few letters exist now of the responses which Pitman made to Ellis.

In August 1843 Ellis busily set himself to deciphering the "grammalogues" in Pitman's notices to the Phonographic Corresponding Society which appeared in the Phonotypic Journal. He continued making rapid progress in learning phonography and welcomed a set of transcriptions in foreign languages which Pitman gladly sent to his eager pupil for studying shorthand. Ellis' proficiency was not yet good enough; however, Pitman recognized a kindred

spirit. With great animation, Ellis responded to Pitman's queries concerning the feasibility of using italic vs. Roman types for Pitman's phonotypic efforts. Ellis relished arguing about the use of Greek sigmas, at the same time expressing his hope to avoid the necessity of being obliged to arrange for the manufacture of new matrices for casting special type faces. Pitman preferred using capital letters only in the phonotypic alphabet. Ellis brusquely dismissed the idea completely, saying, "They dazzle the eye as in Russian Books!"³⁴

Ellis was familiar with all the recent spelling treatises including M. Thibaudin's Proposed Original System for a Radical, Universal, and Philosophical Reform in the Spelling of Language (London: W.S. Orrick and Co., 1842). Ellis also brought to Pitman's attention anything which his own voluminous reading on the subject led him to believe could be useful. During this period Ellis was becoming familiar with a wide variety of investigations which were taking place in areas related to the use of language. His detailed documentation of these works has rescued from oblivion many obscure items which cast light on contemporary thinking.

³⁴ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 10, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

In his efforts to learn Pitman's system of shorthand, Ellis encountered problems. His approach to their solution was to ask Pitman how certain words were to be "phonographized." Pitman was delighted to encourage Ellis' interest and obliged him by responding with alacrity to any inquiries. His enthusiasm for Pitman's phonography did not get out-of-hand because his efforts were directed towards the study of Martin Ohm's mathematical works. Pitman, accordingly, prized all the more those communications from Ellis' home in Dorking.³⁵

Pitman hopefully sent his new alphabet to Ellis for approval, but the manuscript was returned to its author with a great many alterations. Ellis showed his own interest in the cause of phonctypy by sending an order for ten shillings to be added to the sparse funds for procuring some of Pitman's new and expensive matrices. Almost daily he wrote a letter to Pitman. He enjoyed dissecting the various sound possibilities and analyzed the English words containing the R sound in such a fashion that possible users of the proposed phonotypic alphabet would certainly find themselves hard-pressed to distinguish among the minute differences which Ellis described.³⁶

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 11, 1843.

By August 15, 1843 Ellis ventured in a phonographic letter to write about the phonotypic symbols which still appeared questionable to him. He had not yet acquired speed in shorthand, and in response to Pitman's invitation to join him in the formation of a shorthand school, Ellis informed him that he had no interest whatsoever in such an arrangement. He was satisfied with his own efforts at preparing an article on phonotypy, and he was hoping very much that Pitman would publish his views. Perhaps that is the reason why he took care to see that he was listed among the subscribers of the Phonographic Corresponding Society, a group which shared an enthusiasm for shorthand.³⁷ Pitman ignored Ellis' views on using a fount of capitals in the Supplement to the Phonotypic Journal, but phonotypy was at last making its appearance.

There arose the grave danger that the letters from Ellis to Pitman would likely cease for a while because Ellis felt that his latest list of "simplifications" was enough, and he did not wish to "encroach" on Pitman's patience.³⁸ One can only conjecture that Ellis was already

³⁷Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 15, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

³⁸Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 16, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

beginning to feel himself becoming too involved with Pitman after so brief a time. Opportunities for scholarly contacts were beginning to present themselves, and Ellis took advantage of the stimulation which such meetings afforded. He was then only twenty-nine years old when Pitman wanted to work so closely with him.

Through the courtesy of Pitman, Ellis received with much interest a letter from Edward Hincks (1792-1866), who had discovered an accurate method of deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics and who simultaneously with Rawlinson had discovered the Persian cuneiform vowel system.³⁹ These valuable beginnings in his association with Pitman provided an unparalleled opportunity to sort out his own phonetic views for later amplification and revision.

In spite of these interesting contacts with scholars and his apparent reluctance to involve himself too deeply with Isaac Pitman's affairs, Ellis found himself drawn very strongly to the projects which were getting underway in Bath. Ellis clearly could not resist the opportunities which association with Pitman offered with regard to the pioneering work in phonotypy. He wrote, "I am willing to sink my own private labors as such to advance the interests of phonotypy which you have the greatest and best means of

³⁹ Ibid.

carrying out."⁴⁰

With considerable interest Ellis learned of Pitman's plans to print the Gospels in phonotypes and offered suggestions for representing those names which were "variously and incorrectly pronounced." Ellis had known the Hebrew scholar Wilhelm Gesenius (1786-1842) and had earlier discussed the matter with him. Ellis had proposed that Pitman follow the Hebrew pronunciation viz. "Yohann" for "John". He was only an interested yet helpful bystander in the entire affair.⁴¹

A week later Ellis wrote with irritation that he deeply regretted Pitman's failure to agree with this suggestion concerning the names in the Bible and urged him to reconsider. Dr. Hincks, too, shared the same view as Ellis. The only thing which Ellis felt that he could do at this point was to inform Pitman that he should settle at least for John Walker's Key to the Classical Pronunciation of Greek, Latin, and Scripture Names. Ellis' knowledge of reference books was remarkably extensive. With determination he adjured Pitman for the last time on the matter: "Pray give this more thought before you decide."⁴²

⁴⁰Abercrombie MS.

⁴¹Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 23, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁴²Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 31, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

Sometimes Ellis had to calm the overly-enthusiastic Pitman, who would make sarcastic remarks in his letters about those who didn't acknowledge the benefits of phonotypy. Ellis, on the other hand, was always moderate, though firm, in all his writings. Whenever Pitman would exaggerate certain matters, Ellis quietly reminded him that "violence is best avoided in all things."⁴³

Pitman's attempts to change the orthography of the English language by means of phonotypes became very much more evident. Ellis was to be the most important member of Pitman's Phonographic Corresponding Society, for he had been chosen to "chase the hydra monster from the land."⁴⁴

A week later Ellis summarized his own proposals for a phonotypic alphabet which would utilize Greek letters, italics, and a variety of diacritical marks for English and other European languages. He presented the opening verse of Psalm 100 in six languages employing a great variety of symbols.⁴⁵

In spite of the elaborate criticisms which Ellis repeatedly forwarded to Pitman during 1843 concerning the

⁴³Abercrombie MS.

⁴⁴Isaac Pitman, "On Phonetic Printing," Phonotypic Journal, 2 (September 1843), 141.

⁴⁵A.J. Ellis, "Letter to the Editor," Phonotypic Journal, 2 (September 1843), 142-44.

forthcoming phonotypic alphabet, he did not set aside work on his own phonotypical alphabets into which all his convictions could be incorporated without having to defer to Pitman's opinions. On September 7, 1843 Ellis sent five phonotypic alphabets, two of which were in capitals and three in lower case, to Isaac Pitman for his examination. In the first two, he expressed the short vowels by the use of "skeleton" types; the next two showed the long vowels in "antique or Egyptian"; the last alphabet presented the long vowels in italics. He also provided an accompanying commentary to the alphabets. He indicated that any one of the five alphabets would be adequate.⁴⁶ His friends who had shown interest in his work also received a copy of this large single sheet titled "Five Phonotypical Alphabets."⁴⁷

On September 12, 1843 Ellis offered his advice concerning the necessity for establishing a fund so that the money could be allocated to purchase a phonetic fount from Messrs. V. and J. Figgins.⁴⁸ The expenses of procuring new fonts of type were formidable. Ellis had worked out a solution to the problem which he believed would meet with approval of the growing number of self-taught phonography

⁴⁶Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, September 7, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁴⁷A.J. Ellis, Five Phonotypical Alphabets (Dorking, n.p., September 7, 1843).

⁴⁸Baker, op. cit., p. 84.

students or those who were still learning the system at minimal cost to themselves. He called upon the public by writing, "Let those who pay from 2s 6d to 5s a course subscribe three pence; those who pay 10s, six pence; and those who receive private tuition, one shilling."⁴⁹ This proposal is typical of the commonsense ideas that indicated his ability to cope with the realities of a situation as well as with its scholarly and theoretical aspects.

In a sense Ellis' involvement at this time with the experimenting Pitman was limited to giving advice. Though he was occupying himself with the fine points of Pitman's phonography, he was not obliged to commit himself to Pitman's projects in a financial way. Because Ellis had examined Pitman's article on phonetic printing prior to its publication, Pitman felt confident about dealing with him.⁵⁰

Pitman's reform had its headquarters from 1844 to 1851 at 5 Nelson Place in Bath. The enormous correspondence from Pitman to Ellis came for the most part from the two rooms crowded with compositors and bookbinders working in an atmosphere of intense industry. Pitman also modified his London publishing arrangements, and in 1845 was "removed" from Messrs. Bagster & Sons at No. 15 Paternoster Row to a

⁴⁹A.J. Ellis, "Announcement," Phonotypic Journal, 2 (October 1843), 156.

⁵⁰Abercrombie MS.

shop at No. 1 Queen's Head Passage. Pitman also designated his establishment in Bath as "The Phonographic and Phonotypic Depot". It was at this time that Pitman's nineteen year old brother Frederick took over the management of the Depot. It was he who later was to publish so many of Ellis' pamphlets and larger phonotypic works.⁵¹

Though his correspondence with Pitman was regular, Ellis had not met him in person. He wrote, "If only I could speak to you!" He responded indefatigably to Pitman's long phonetic disquisitions during September 1843. The correspondence flowed between Bath and Dorking regularly. Having to explain minutely his theories and interpretations taxed Ellis' patience to the utmost, and he expressed his hope that business or "avocations" would bring the phonographer to London for at least a single hour's conversation so as to enable him to explain adequately to Pitman his own concept of the vowel system.⁵²

By the end of September Ellis had polished his own version of a phonetic alphabet to the extent that he sent it off to Pitman with a note indicating that it could be distinguished chiefly by additions and by a slightly

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, September 26, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

different analysis of the vowels.⁵³ This varied considerably, however, from the Five Phonotypical Alphabets, each containing a different phonetic transcription of the Psalm 100.

For a long time Ellis had been working on this "General Phonetical Alphabet of the English, German, Italian, Spanish, French, Modern Greek, Russian, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Sanscrit & Hindustani Languages Adapted to Common Founts of Types." Among the many languages which provided examples to illustrate sound combinations was the Laplandic kb. Ellis always had a propensity for the philologically esoteric. Pitman, nonetheless, argued with him about some of the representations of sounds in the examples. "I have never mingled with any but well-educated people at Eton and Cambridge," retorted Ellis condescendingly.⁵⁴

Unperturbed by Ellis' hauteur, Pitman went ahead with his plans to use the new fount of phonotypic capitals in the issue of the larger 1844 Phonotypic Journal, a publication which did elicit Ellis' approval, for he considered the result "more important looking".⁵⁵ Pitman

⁵³Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, September 22, 1843, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁵⁴Abercrombie MS.

⁵⁵Ibid.

also accepted one criticism of Ellis' and removed all controversial and technical discussion from the Journal. This kind of material was to be moved into the new Phonographic Correspondent so that beginners would not be diverted from their goals.

Ellis' exposition of phonetics was valuable for the "introductions" to the systems of phonography and phonotypy which Pitman was planning to publish at the Phonographic Institution at Bath. When Ellis presented the little sixteen page work to Pitman, he did not anticipate the ensuing difficulty which was to arise. He rebelled with vehemence at Pitman's unexpected alterations of some of the colloquialisms which had deliberately been termed by its author as "familiar" rather than scientific. It was all right for Pitman to note those places wherein he differed from Ellis. Any modifications by Pitman which would distort Ellis' true convictions were positively unacceptable. There were plans to issue Ellis' preface to Pitman's work as a separate penny pamphlet, and Ellis was determined that his own views would be perfectly clear to the readers. Ellis agreed to bear the expense of making corrections "rather than any such matter should go forth to the world under my signature,"⁵⁶ and also sternly warned him of the possibility

⁵⁶Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, January 24, 1844, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

of engaging in future phonotypic endeavors. Ellis had shown the courage to question Pitman's "editorial omnipotence", and the result was far from pleasant.⁵⁷

In spite of these occasional outbursts of ill temper, the two men felt sincere admiration for one another. At "Colamandene Lodge" near Dorking (Surrey), with all its comforts, Ellis could enjoy academic pursuits. The working conditions for Pitman were very dissimilar. Pitman and Ellis were analyzing English sounds in different ways. According to his own notes, Pitman pursued his own efforts in Bath in two dreary gas-lit basement rooms "festooned with drying proofs". When Pitman wrote to his brothers about Ellis, he had the grace to delineate him as "the best philologist I have met with."⁵⁸

There were numerous matters of phonetic interpretation argued by the two men in their correspondence. Neither acceded to the other's opinions, and the amount of debate on descriptions of particular sounds filled an inordinate number of pages in a never-ending exchange of views. For example, the thorniest phonetic problem which ever confronted Ellis was the representation of R sounds. As early as 1844 Ellis gave his opinion of that letter's

⁵⁷ Abercrombie MS.

⁵⁸ Abercrombie MS.

representation in a detailed article sent to Pitman's Journal. It was his view that it was not correct to classify it as a consonant. He considered R as trilled, the ordinary sound of the letter in London English. He believed that the inconsistencies of spelling the different combinations of R would at last be solved by the introduction of phonetic spelling because the present variety of phonetic symbols in writing and printing were responsible for the chaotic situation. Phonetic printing would remove all the inconsistencies that existed.⁵⁹

He also worked out an elaborate series of tables showing all possible initial combinations, final combinations, and "indifferent combinations of consonants along with an indistinct vowel as a basis for syllabication." His aim primarily was to point out the laws that regulate the many combinations in consonant clusters in English. This kind of analysis was in line with Ellis' mathematical leanings.⁶⁰

Ellis regarded his own acquisition of the understanding of speech sounds during the early years with Pitman as a slow and painful process. At this time he submitted a

⁵⁹ A.J. Ellis, "On the Letter R", Phonotypic Journal, 3 (January 1844), 11-12.

⁶⁰ A.J. Ellis, "On Syllabication and the Indistinct Vowel", Phonotypic Journal, 3 (February 1844), 36-38.

brief account of his notions in a work entitled Phonetics: A Familiar Exposition of That Science.⁶¹ This appeared as an introduction to Pitman's systems of phonography and phonotypy. The work is another of the type that Ellis later wrote as articles for Johnson's Universal Cyclopaedia and the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Many problems had to be considered with regard to selecting phonotypic symbols. Ellis argued the case of "unstable letters," i.e., those which differed in their pronunciation throughout the country, and he pressed for the adoption of the pronunciation of the "educated classes in the south of the country" as a standard.⁶² Pitman, it may be recalled, did not possess the advantages of Ellis' own experiences in the best schools, and sometimes to Ellis' consternation, used combinations of sound which distressed him a great deal.

Ellis took pains to be complimentary in his remarks about phonography because he valued the forms which Pitman

⁶¹A.J. Ellis, Phonetics: A Familiar Exposition of the Principles of that Science Intended as an Introduction to Mr. I. Pitman's Systems of Phonotypy and Phonography by a Member of the Phonographic Corresponding Society. To Which Is Added an Essay on Phonography, by Another Member of the Society (Bath: I. Pitman, 1844).

⁶²A.J. Ellis, "Unstable Combinations," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (March 1844), 76.

PHONETICS:
 A FAMILIAR EXPOSITION
 OF THE
 PRINCIPLES OF THAT SCIENCE;
 INTENDED AS AN
 INTRODUCTION TO MR. L. PITMAN'S SYSTEMS
 OF
 PHONOTYPY & PHONOGRAPHY.

BY A MEMBER OF THE
 PHONOGRAPHIC CORRESPONDING SOCIETY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
 AN ESSAY ON PHONOGRAPHY,
 BY ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY.

BATH:
 PUBLISHED BY ISAAC PITMAN, AT THE PHONOGRAPHIC
 INSTITUTION, 5, NELSON PLACE.

LONDON:
 S. BAGSTER AND SONS, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.
 SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS, AND BY PHONOGRAPHIC LECTURERS AND
 TEACHERS.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

1844.

had devised, the best invented up to that time. The phonotypic alphabet seemed to him capable of representing sounds so accurately that readers could not make a mistake by pronouncing the word according to Ellis' standard. He despaired of the inaccuracies of the existing symbols of the English alphabet and illustrated his point with humor and skill by quoting in phonotypic letters the query which Boswell put to Samuel Johnson:

"? DŲŲ SE NĚAUR, ӨR NĚAUR, DOKTӨR JONSUN"
"NEAUR, SUR"

He also anticipated many questions concerning phonotypic ambiguities and dismissed all cavilling remarks with the instruction to follow the general meaning--"a sufficient answer to all objectors!"⁶³

Frequently carried away by Pitman's phonotypic excesses, as well as by his own phonetic flights of originality, Ellis realized that he had to return to a practical approach. Fortunately his sense of reality prevailed as one may see in an obscure footnote to his analysis of Volney's European Alphabet. Ellis quietly observed that although the "blow had already been struck one would not destroy or wish to destroy the millions of volumes printed in the old alphabet."⁶⁴

⁶³ A.J. Ellis, "Ambiguities of Language," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (February 1844), 73.

⁶⁴ A.J. Ellis, "Notes on Volney's 'L'Alphabet Européen Appliqué aux Langues Asiatiques'," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (April 1844), 108.

Exuberance, rather than caution, characterized the direction which the phonography-phonotypy efforts took at the Second Annual Phonotypy-Phonography Festival in Birmingham on May 27, 1844, though without Ellis attending. At the Town Hall the phonographers eagerly discussed the new alphabet, and the two hundred participants took their tea amid "Hullah's Part Music." Ellis' name was frequently heard at the meeting, for already he was becoming well-known among the readers of The Phonotypic Journal.⁶⁵

By May 1844 the correspondence between Ellis and Pitman had increased very much. There were arguments about phonetic points which sometimes had a sense of unpleasant urgency about them. Ellis noted that already 454 pages of observations had been sent down by him to Bath. Another year would pass before the two men were to meet one another.⁶⁶

Ellis was cautious about the direction that spelling reform might take. "It is my hope that phonotypical spelling will be made consistent with itself, and that we shall not be feverishly anxious to approximate very closely to the present heterography, as it has been termed."⁶⁷

⁶⁵"Phonographic Intelligence," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (July 1844), 205.

⁶⁶Abercrombie MS.

⁶⁷A.J. Ellis, "Phonotypical Suggestions," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (July 1844), 201.

Ellis wrote the above words after five months of work with various symbols to represent sounds. Neologisms were beginning to appear in connection with the spelling reform, and words like "phonotypy" and "heterography" became increasingly familiar.

The Phonotypic Journal from June 1844 to June 1845 published Ellis' Alphabet of Nature, his full exposition of phonotypic printing in all of its aspects. It reflects the skill and painstaking care which Ellis gave to the solution of alphabetic modifications. During 1845 Ellis published a separate edition of the work. When this reprint appeared, Ellis was dissatisfied because domestic problems had been occurring during the period when the work was first coming out in serial form in the Journal. He had been obliged to write sections of the work from month to month to appear in the issues of Pitman's publication. He recognized his mistakes and felt frustrated by the discrepancies which he uncovered. His separate edition of the entire work gave him an opportunity to make corrections and insertions of sections which explained at greater length the vowel sounds.⁶⁸ At Oxford the eminent Sanscritist Max Müller approved highly of

⁶⁸ A.J. Ellis, The Alphabet of Nature; or, Contributions towards a More Accurate Analysis and Symbolization of Spoken Sounds; with Some Account of the Principal Phonetic Alphabets Hitherto Proposed (London: S. Bagster and Sons, 1845), pp. i-viii.

The Alphabet of Nature--"a work full of accurate observations and original thought," particularly because Ellis had included in its pages an account of the researches on the human voice "made by distinguished physiologists."⁶⁹

In July 1844 Pitman sent specimens of all the phonotypic literature, including The Alphabet of Nature, to thirty of the "leading magazines and metropolitan newspapers and to a hundred lesser magazines." Ellis was not enthusiastic about this sort of promotion in the press. The responses to the new alphabet were highly favorable, and prior to his departure for Germany in 1845, Ellis had the satisfaction of noting that the Spelling Reform was no longer an impractical theory, but that it had "taken root downwards and bears fruit upwards."⁷⁰ Throughout his life Ellis indulged in the habit of employing colorful figures of speech in all of his writing.

In September 1844 Ellis prepared his own account of the events leading to the adoption of the 1844 phonotypic letters and included all the rules for printing books and articles in phonotypes. He announced with pride that the alphabet was sufficiently comprehensive for the representation of every sound in European and Asiatic

⁶⁹ Max Müller, Proposals for a Missionary Alphabet Submitted to the Alphabetical Conferences Held at the Residence of Chevalier Bunsen in January 1854 (London: Spottiswoode, 1854), p. 3.

⁷⁰ Abercrombie MS.

languages.⁷¹

Some members of the Phonetic Council considered Ellis' application of phonography to thirteen languages as an effrontery to the course of phonography. One of the members, Theophilus Walker, said that Pitman had been "fettered and led astray" by Ellis. The furor died down after much spleen had been vented. Ellis was making plans to go to Germany because his wife's health had suffered as a result of the birth of twins in 1844.⁷²

The most significant of the developments taking place at this time was a plan which Ellis had for establishing a London printing office of his own in the future; however, he did agree to assist Pitman financially in two years' time in connection with the existing phonotypic effort. He hoped to be able to offer Pitman about five hundred to a thousand pounds for an investment in new phonotypes.⁷³ Work on the phonotypic alphabet continued, and with the cooperation of Figgins, the type founder, the founts were complete in their revised form in 1845.

⁷¹A.J. Ellis, "A Key to Phonotypy; or Printing by Sound," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (October 1844), 279.

⁷²Abercrombie MS.

⁷³Ibid.

Ellis continually had to make explanations to many people who questioned the practicality of the new system of representing sound in print. He reasoned with great cogency and zest. In the Phonotypic Journal he presented an interesting dialogue between himself and a sceptical group in which each party sets forth reasons to support his own views on the matter of phonotypy. Ellis spun a thread of clear and convincing analysis, though the conversation at times borders on the ludicrous. The stubborn opponent to phonotypy responds dramatically to the notion of such a system: "Preposterous! Chimerical!" Solemnly and patiently Ellis reproached him: "Hard words, hard words; and permit me to add, rather inconsiderately uttered." The attitude which Ellis was anxious to convey was one of buoyant optimism since phonetic printing was "one of the greatest helps in the general diffusion of education."⁷⁴

Ellis examined at length various schemes for vowel notation. He showed that phonography comprised the best system for dealing with open and closed sounds and observed that foreigners had the best chance to utter the correct English sounds through this system because of its compactness and its legibility. It followed, therefore, that phonotypy,

⁷⁴ A.J. Ellis, "A Colloquy on the Writing and Printing Reformation", Phonotypic Journal, 3 (November 1844), 307-311.

A COLLOQUY ON THE WRITING AND PRINTING REFORMATION.

He.—So I perceive you write short hand.

L.—Yes; and yet no—an ambiguous answer, I must own, and yet I know not how I could frame a better.

He.—Explain, explain.

L.—Methodically; first the yes, and then the no. I do write a short hand, because, instead of those cumbersome and ill-imagined strokes which you employ for the expression of your ideas, I content myself with a few geometrically constructed forms, which are just as easy to read, and far more easy to write. How singular it is that people should have gone on so many years endeavouring to form letters rapidly which were never meant for rapidity! True, they have, in some measure, altered the original shapes, to suit the onward spirit of the age, and, in the performances of some persons, the letters are, indeed, degraded into most shapeless monsters—curiatures of strokes—mere dreams of letters, rather than letters themselves, which their very framers are soon unable to decipher, and all to gain expedition, which, after all, is not gained to any great extent; while one of the most important objects in writing—simplicity—is irreparably lost. We have the old stone-cutter's figures yet, with only a few of the angles rounded off. We write from left to right, and all our letters are drawn downwards from right to left, so that our pen goes backwards every stroke it should go forwards. In short, such a heap of anomalies, absurdities, and perplexities as is presented by modern calligraphy could only have been invented in times when learning was meant to be the exclusive property of the few, and people who could write claimed the benefit of clergy, and escaped capital punishment. We live in better times, and, therefore, I hope we shall all write better and faster.

He.—I certainly recollect that it was an adage of my writing master that no one could write well and fast at the same time.

L.—That is simply owing to the complexity of the strokes employed.

He.—But, what would you substitute. The different systems of short hand which I have seen all labour under one great and apparently insurmountable defect; they

cannot be read with ease even after having been put by for a few days.

L.—This is, of course, due to their erroneous construction.

He.—Erroneous, indeed; for, if of what use is manuscript which cannot be easily read. We speak, in general conversation, much faster than the most practised reporter ever wrote, and that reading what has been written should be more troublesome than writing it, is intolerable.

L.—And yet this is continually the case with the long-hand system which you seem to believe, when written with any degree of rapidity.

He.—Nay, but our letters are perfectly legible, even when not quite accurately shaped; whereas, geometrical forms, such as short hand writers appear to use, are exceedingly difficult to form, with any thing approaching to accuracy.

L.—You are mistaken, if you think that it is at all more difficult to draw geometrical lines with sufficient accuracy to insure their legibility than your complex substitutes, with their store of superfluous parts. This is a point of practice, and the practice of all English short hand writers goes to prove that you are wrong. Not but what I recollect seeing the same objection urged in a German book on short hand; but I can assure you, from my own practice, that such is not the case. The geometrical forms are much simpler than any other, and are very readily struck by the hand, while the forms which words assume in consequence of the geometrical elements out of which they are constructed, in a great source of legibility, for the eye soon accustoms itself to read by the mere forms of words, and almost every word has, in a good system of short hand, its own peculiar form. But good systems of short hand are not in any abundance. I said just now that illegible systems were constructed on erroneous principles. It seems as if the inventors of short hand, believing that their systems could never become universal, and that manuscripts, to be legible, must exist in long hand, considered the question of legibility one of minor importance, and concentrated their efforts upon the production of a set of symbols by means of which they might be able to follow a speaker, trusting to

which rendered the sounds of phonography letter by letter, rather than through the curves and verticals devised by pitman, provided the necessary answer to many of the reading problems. Ellis did, however, show a predilection for drawing up large complex charts of symbols representing sounds which appear to have been of doubtful interest to the general reader.⁷⁵

Pitman considered himself fortunate that Ellis could reply when difficult phonetic queries arrived at his Bath Phonetic Institution. He was able to turn over such questions to Ellis, who expatiated at great length on such topics as concerned the number of full and stopped vowels. Pitman frequently would print the reply to the query in spite of its occasionally excessive length. Ellis welcomed the chance to develop his own theories before the public, but it disturbed him at not being able to hold interviews so both sides could say the sounds and words.⁷⁶

The Phonotypic Journal appeared monthly and contained a variety of articles dealing with the progress of the Spelling Reform throughout the British Isles. The greater portion of the forty pages usually comprising each issue was set in phonotypes, thereby providing ample opportunity

⁷⁵ A.J. Ellis, "On the Vowel Notation," Phonotypic Journal, 4 (January 1845), 18-19.

⁷⁶ A.J. Ellis, "On the Natural Vowel," Phonotypic Journal, 4 (January 1845), 59-66.

for the readers to gain practice in reading the new alphabet and also lending an official tone to the new orthography. Each issue included several articles by Isaac Pitman as well as the financial status of various affiliated groups which were organized in the cities and larger towns. There were also quotations from any newspapers which made mention of the Spelling Reform in its pages. The Phonotypic Journal also served as the forum for large numbers of Spelling Reform enthusiasts to contribute their views on phonetics and to give detailed accounts of their successes with phonotypy. The appearance of each issue was not particularly attractive because many of the pages contained a great many footnotes set in minuscule phonotypes. Often the text was difficult to read because of insufficient inking. The double columns entitled "Intelligence" with many proper names were particularly confusing to read because of the strange alphabet.

The Journal continued to receive more articles in the form of modified transliterations of familiar books. The popular writings looked out of place in the new alphabet. D'Israeli's Amenities of Literature was excerpted for this treatment, and Ellis followed this selection with some of his own observations on the literary merits of the work. He scoffed at the notion that only the "omnipotence of Parliament" could resolve the orthographical problems of

the country, and he enthusiastically extolled the progress of the Spelling Reform.⁷⁷

To give an indication of the practice these two reformers had in writing, Pitman noted that about three thousand pages of discussions conducted in phonetic transcription, including some in phonetic longhand, regarding the formation and use of a new alphabet had passed between Ellis and himself prior to May 1845.⁷⁸

At last in the first week of May 1845 Ellis entertained Pitman in his home in Dorking. The two remarkable men could now take notice of each other's pronunciations of the vowels and consonants. The meeting was a significant occasion for both of them inasmuch as their correspondence had been so extensive.⁷⁹

Occasionally Ellis' contributions to Phonotypic Journal were purely belletristic. He drew from his portfolio of Cambridge verses one which he had composed on August 26, 1837, the year he had been awarded his degree, in which he expressed his feelings at sunrise astride a horse at

⁷⁷A.J. Ellis, "Orthography and Orthoepey," Phonotypic Journal, 4 (June 1845), 115.

⁷⁸Isaac Pitman, "To the Readers," Phonotypic Journal, 8 (March 1849), 43.

⁷⁹Abercrombie MS.

Fulborne, Cambridge. He rendered the poem phonotypically for inclusion in Pitman's Journal. An aura faintly reminiscent of Coleridge's experience at Chamounix appears amid the pages containing discussions of vowel notations.⁸⁰ Ellis also composed brief anecdotes in phonotypic transcription about semi-heroic personalities who were involved in humorous situations or who had undertaken implausible ventures.⁸¹

It is difficult for us to realize the intensity of feeling shared by the advocates of the Spelling Reform. Ellis' Plea for Phonotypy⁸² aroused the enthusiasm and support of many people who believed that English spelling constituted an outrage. A reviewer wrote:

Phonographers! Shall these things continue?...
On you will rest the guilt of having possessed
the waters of literal truth and refusing to
hold your cup to the parched lips of your
neighbors; parched? aye, so parched that they
have not life enough to quiver a prayer for
relief.⁸³

⁸⁰ A.J. Ellis, "The Sunset of Saturday, 26th August, 1837, as Seen from Fulborne, Cambridge", Phonotypic Journal, 4 (October 1845), 232.

⁸¹ A.J. Ellis, "Baron Bücal," Phonotypic Journal, 4 (October 1845), 228.

⁸² A.J. Ellis, A Plea for Phonotypy and Phonography; or Speech-Printing and Speech-Writing (Bath: Pitman; London: S. Bagster and Sons, 1845).

⁸³ "Spelling Reform", rev. of A Plea for Phonotypy and Phonography; or Speech-Printing and Speech-Writing, by A.J. Ellis, Phonotypic Journal, 4 (July 1845), 132.

A PLEA
FOR
PHONOTYPY
AND
PHONOGRAPHY;

OR,
SPEECH-PRINTING AND SPEECH-WRITING.

BY
ALEXANDER JOHN ELLIS, B.A.,
FELLOW OF THE CAMBRIDGE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY, AND FORMERLY SCHOLAR
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
HONORARY MEMBER OF THE PHONOGRAPHIC CORRESPONDING SOCIETY; AUTHOR
OF THE "ALPHABET OF NATURE," ETC.

BATH:
PUBLISHED BY ISAAC PITMAN, AT THE PHONOGRAPHIC
INSTITUTION, 3, NELSON PLACE.
LONDON:
S. BAGSTER AND SONS, 13, PATERNOSTER ROW.
SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS, PHONOGRAPHIC LECTURERS, AND TEACHERS.

1845.

4. A.J. Ellis, A Plea for Phonotypy and Phonography, 1845:
Title Page

The anonymous reviewer of Ellis' Plea felt so affected by the work that he really believed that the proposal would bring about a drastic change in the orthographical situation of the 1840's.

While Ellis was in Dresden, Pitman undertook the arduous but money-saving task of doing his own printing at home. Ellis continued to provide weekly contributions from abroad as grist for the mill. With Ellis out of the country, Pitman simply could not refrain from making modifications of the completed phonotypic alphabet.⁸⁴ This, of course, shows the weakness of the system. Like an artist who keeps touching up a particular shade of color, so did Pitman change, at considerable cost, the shapes of the type fonts. Tactlessly he made the changes without seeking Ellis' advice on the value of such adjustments, and Ellis viewed this behavior with utter dismay.

It was especially disturbing for Ellis to learn about changes in the alphabet after he had just sent Pitman advice to the contrary. Changes were very tempting to Pitman. There is no doubt whatsoever that he wanted to obtain Ellis' full approbation in all these phonotypic endeavors. Impatiently Ellis snapped to Pitman from Dresden:

⁸⁴ Abercrombie MS.

"Your own indecision on the subject is so enormous!"⁸⁵

Pitman paid the price for his own independence, but had to accept Ellis' coldly censorious letters. Ellis anticipated any possible self-justification by Pitman in the determination to improve the alphabet and warned him not to make mention of the fact that the Phonetic Council went along with these notions.

Sharply Ellis indicated his grave disapproval of the changes in vowel symbols which would put phonotypy into the "greatest danger." The Dresden letter of March 17, 1846 was alarmingly negative in its tone especially in the light of Ellis' previous enthusiasms. Ellis was so discouraged that he told Pitman of his fears that phonotypy would never prevail. "You take up with the opinion of any beginner in phonetics rather than with mine." Ellis delivered an ultimatum: Pitman had to return to the alphabet agreed on the preceding Christmas. Ominously Ellis announced, "I can no longer consider myself your fellow worker."⁸⁶

Following this outburst, he noted that the fate of phonotypy depended on a response from Bath, Ellis calmly wrote in his next letter, "The alphabet just given is more

⁸⁵Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, March 17, 1846, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁸⁶Ibid.

mine than yours; the theory upon which it is constructed, I may say, entirely mine." Uncharacteristically, Ellis referred to his own education as having better fitted him for "advancing phonotypy." This uncharitable barb was painful, and to make matters worse, Ellis threatened to withhold more "assistance".⁸⁷

One of the earliest attempts of Ellis at classifying all the possible vowel and consonant sounds in European languages is extant at the University of Amsterdam. On March 30, 1846 while in Dresden, he attempted to formulate a chart of these sounds with English key words. In all probability this was an early attempt which he was to put aside for revision years later; however, at no time did he later make reference to this work. It is possible that the chart might have been devised in connection with the Spelling Reform which was occupying so much of Ellis' efforts during the 1840's.⁸⁸ By April 1846 tension existing between the two reformers had subsided. A conciliatory response arrived from Bath praising Ellis for his "admirably tempered letter". Ellis dashed off a brief note describing some recommended

⁸⁷Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, March 22, 1846, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁸⁸University of Amsterdam Library, Division of Manuscripts, "Table of English Sound Charts"--A.J. Ellis, March 30, 1846.

changes in vowel representation and cheerfully suggested that Pitman "skip" the material on foreign languages in the Appendix to the eighth edition of Phonography. Calm prevailed again.⁸⁹

Ellis strongly admonished the reformers of English spelling to advance The Cause. The days in Dresden gave Ellis ample opportunity to express his determination to see phonotypy accepted, and in the weekly contributions from Germany he championed its value with zest. While these encouragements were being sent to England, Ellis was diligently compiling a Phonotypic Dictionary which he hoped to bring out in conjunction with Pitman's own Phonographic Dictionary, containing classified lists of "all the words in the language, initially, finally, and syllabically."⁹⁰

Several years before this, Pitman's Old Testament had appeared in print in an earlier alphabetical scheme, or, in what Ellis called the "Old Notation." Now in January 1846 Ellis planned a revision in the new alphabet. This new scheme treated the short vowels in closed syllables as stopped. It be noted here that in the second edition of the New Testament (1849), which Ellis published, the phonetic compromises

⁸⁹ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, April 11, 1845, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

⁹⁰ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Paradise Lost: a Poem in Twelve Books by John Milton (London: Pitman, 1846).

TU JE REFORMURZ OV IUGLIE SPELIW,
 FONOGRAFURZ AND FONOTIPURZ,
 HUW AR MACIŲ A H4-WR TU JE TEMPL OV NOLEJ, --
 HIS FURST FONOTIPIC EDIEUN
 OV JE GRATEST WURC OV JE GRATEST POET
 DAT PROVIDENS HAZ REED UP TU BLES MANCIND,
 BE MACIŲ MENI OV JE
 'STATQTS' OV HEVN
 JRE 'SOUZ IN JE H3S OV JRE PILGRIMEJ,'
 IZ, W4R MUC RESPECT, PREZENTED B4
 JE PUBLIEUR.

FONETIC INSTITUEUN, B4T,
 NOVEMBER, 1846.

5. A.J. Ellis, ed., Paradise Lost, by John Milton, 1846
 ("Dedication," by Isaac Pitman)

which he made at that date were employed.

Propaganda for the Spelling Reform came from Dresden without any diminution of effort. Ellis brought out an account of the principles of phonotypy for the Journal's readers. It seems evident that a large number of the subscribers to that periodical must have been confused by the highly technical contributions which Ellis and Pitman provided. If the Reform were to be a success, a more accessible explanation had to be given lest the readers be overwhelmed by the phonetic virtuosity. Accordingly Ellis wrote "The Contrast: Phonotypy vs. Heterotypy".⁹¹ He adopted a light tone to serve his purposes. The advantages of the phonotypic scheme are stressed in the following example: "Hugh, you must hew down the yew trees where the ewes used to graze." This extreme example of the pitfalls of normal spelling was chosen by Ellis to show that it is possible for the neophyte reader to decode the phonotypic version of this sentence with a minimum of difficulty because the phonotypes render the idea readily accessible through the use of a small number of symbols representing the same sound.

⁹¹A.J. Ellis, "The Contrast: Phonotypy vs. Heterotypy", Phonotypic Journal, 5 (July 1846), 197-207.

Ellis also transcribed Wolsey's great speech from Shakespeare's Henry VIII (111, 2). He referred to regular spelling, "heterotypy" as the "curse of Babel."⁹² These views which he presented in The Contrast appeared as a separate penny tract in the hopes of furthering the advantages of phonotypy to the reading public.⁹³ The term "heterotypy" had already become sufficiently familiar to the newly formed organ of phonetic printing in America, Comstock's Phonetic Magazine. This employed the term in its prospectus to subscribers in 1846. There is a noticeable defiance towards the efforts made by Ellis and Pitman as well as a confident tone that the American organ would assume the leadership in phonetic reform:

Our Magazine shall therefore be
A foe to heterotypy.
Two alphabets we shall present:
One print, one shorthand. Our intent
Is, by the genius of the free
To beat John Bull's Phonography!⁹⁴

That same year Ellis published his little Primer for Children, a work surprisingly attractive in spite of its lack of illustrations. One very large phonotype appears on

⁹²Ibid., p. 207.

⁹³A.J. Ellis, The Contrast: Phonotypy vs. Heterotypy (Bath: Phonetic Institution, 1847).

⁹⁴"Prospectus," Comstock's Phonetic Magazine, June 12, 1846.

each of the nine pages preceding the exercises. Each letter shows a gracefulness of design which is not apparent in the regular size of the phonotypes. In this little book, the claims of phonotypy seem realizable. Although some of the letters are very strange, one can see the potential success of Ellis' ideas owing to the simplicity of presentation.⁹⁵ The following are on the opening page:



The same care and attention to the frustrations of the illiterate adult are apparent in Ellis' First Reading Book for Adults Who Have Never Been Taught to Read. Its hundreds of syllabic combinations provide the opportunity to proceed very slowly and to achieve some measure of immediate success. Ellis was certainly compassionate in his concern for the thousands of underprivileged adults who did not have the benefits and privileges of an education.⁹⁶ Victorian England made minimal educational provisions for

⁹⁵ A.J. Ellis, The Primer or First Phonotypic Book for Young Children (London: Pitman, 1846).

⁹⁶ A.J. Ellis, The Phonotypic Instructor or First Reading Book for Adults Who Have Never Been Taught to Read (London: Pitman, 1846).

Æ FONOTIPIC
INSTRUCTOR:

OR,

FURST REDIU BWC FOR ADULTS HW HAV
NEVUR BEN TGT TW RED.

OF ALECSANDUR JON ELLIS, B. A.

LUNDUN:

PUBLIST BÆ EZAC PITMAN, AT Æ FONETIC DESPO,
1, CWENZ HED PASEJ, FATURNOSTUR RO,
AND AT
Æ FONETIC INSTITUCEUN, 5, NELSON PLAS, BAT (BATH).
1846.

5

11	ev	av	av	ov	ov	uv	iv	ov	sv	uv
12	et	at	at	ot	ot	ut	it	ot	st	ut
13	ed	ad	ad	od	od	ud	id	od	sd	ud
14	es	as	as	os	os	us	is	os	ss	us
15	ez	az	az	oz	oz	uz	iz	oz	sz	uz
16	ej	aj	aj	oj	oj	uj	ij	oj	sj	uj
17	ez	az	az	oz	oz	uz	iz	oz	sz	uz
18	el	al	al	ol	ol	ul	il	ol	sl	ul
19	er	ar	ar	or	or	ur	ir	or	sr	ur
20	em	am	am	om	om	um	im	om	sm	um
21	en	an	an	on	on	un	in	on	sn	un

LESUN 3.

1	ip	ib	it	id	ig	ij	ic	ig	il	im
2	if	iv	it	id	is	iz	if	iz	in	ij
3	ep	eb	et	ed	eg	ej	ec	eg	el	em
4	ef	ev	et	ed	es	ez	ef	ez	en	ej
5	ap	ab	at	ad	ag	aj	ac	ag	al	am
6	af	av	at	ad	as	az	af	az	an	aj
7	op	ob	ot	od	og	oj	oc	og	ol	om
8	of	ov	ot	od	os	oz	of	oz	on	oj

its lower economic classes. Such a lesson book aroused great expectations among the proponents of spelling reform, and Ellis' work was guaranteed a wide distribution along with the other Pitman publications.

A great deal of correspondence from supporters of the Spelling Reform started flooding the office of Isaac Pitman. The Phonotypic Journal's subscribers needed to have their fears allayed, and Pitman announced that he and Ellis pledged themselves not to alter in the future the forms or usages of the phonotypic alphabet. Henceforth the publications would appear in accordance with the 1846 alphabet.⁹⁷

When Ellis and Pitman originally became associated towards the close of 1846, Ellis' "pecuniary cooperation" had not become a reality, and nothing went beyond a verbal understanding. The income from the phonography books went solely to Pitman whereas Ellis could only be concerned with the typic reforms and profits from their sale. Ellis was very prompt in making payments for all of the expensive founts for the various sized phonotypes. Each letter required five costly steel punches to be cut in order to have a large cap, a small cap, lower case, italic cap, and

⁹⁷ Isaac Pitman, "General Announcement," Phonotypic Journal, 5 (June 1846), 171.

lower case italic. New presses also had to be obtained. There was no question whatsoever that Ellis' financial support was a vital factor in the new endeavor.⁹⁸

Pitman was well aware that Ellis' "literary and social standing" contributed much to the respectability of the new printing office in Bath. Ellis could be counted on to have the requisite contacts for assuring success.⁹⁹ Each reformer was a man of strong convictions and was unwilling to alter his views on any point in favor of the other. The correspondence during this period reflects a growing state of tension between them which they tried to conceal under the guise of good manners and civility. An open breach was bound to occur.

Behind the scenes, though, Pitman was unhappy because Ellis seemed uncooperative and stubborn. Pitman was the one who had to cope with the operation of the business in all its aspects. In a complaining tone Pitman wrote to his brother Benn: "Mr. Ellis, though as mild and calm as possible in company, gets very pettish in his letters sometimes."¹⁰⁰ Perhaps the one thing that kept Pitman from

⁹⁸ Benn Pitman, "Sir Isaac Pitman and His Services to Phonography" (Extracts from Sir Isaac Pitman: His Life and Labours Told and Illustrated by Benn Pitman), U.S. Serial Set No. 4805. 58th Congress, 3rd Session, Document 5. Interior: Education, Vol. II, 1905, p. 2246.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Abercrombie MS.

breaking with Ellis, other than financial considerations, was that Ellis was the first enthusiast with a university degree to favor the Spelling Reform. He noted with a great deal of satisfaction Ellis' championing this cause because he always remained somewhat sensitive about his own lack of formal education.¹⁰¹

Ellis wisely took care to provide for the tastes of his audience. During February 1847 Ellis provided from Germany a transliteration of an anonymous short story called "The Rival" to please the female students of phonotypy. He prepared the story while at Franzenbad near Dresden. The selection is out of keeping with the taste and discrimination characteristic of Ellis' work. There is no improvement in a phonotypic rendition of such a line as "O Heavens, here is the confession of his weakness!!!"¹⁰²

Phonotypy also could be allied with Ellis' fascination with mathematics. In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of the new system of printing, Ellis composed a detailed historical article recounting the many attempts to square the circle. He was anxious to prove the worth of

¹⁰¹ Isaac Pitman, "On A.J. Ellis," Phonetic Journal, 49 (November 2, 1890), 574.

¹⁰² A.J. Ellis, transliterator, "The Rival," Phonotypic Journal, 6 (February 1847), 62-65.

the system to the readers; and though the presentation is most didactic, the reader quickly becomes accustomed to the new spellings. Now the reader with 'heterographic' difficulties could try to understand a mathematical explanation and analysis.¹⁰³

During his stay in Dresden Ellis ventured to phonotype special items of interest from the Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung for the edification of the English readers. First he translated the selection into English and followed this with a phonotypic transliteration. Typical of the kind of piece he sent Pitman for the Journal was an item describing the conversion of rapeseed into edible flour. In Dresden also Ellis had access to the Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung and brought the English readers up-to-date with the local German events. Ellis himself urged the famine-stricken districts of Ireland and Scotland to consider the possibilities inherent in the conversion process.¹⁰⁴

In order to experience the effect which the phonotypic alphabet made upon the readers of that time several

¹⁰³ A.J. Ellis, "Squaring the Circle", Phonotypic Journal, VI (April 1847), 97-104.

¹⁰⁴ A.J. Ellis, "Discovery of a New Cheap Wholesome, and Pleasant-tasted Bread Stuff", Phonotypic Journal, VI (June 1847), 159-62.

lines from the article on bread substitutes are presented. With a little practice the modern reader is able to make the transition from romanian to phonotypic spelling.

He foloij amnament iz translated from de "Jerman Universal Gazet"
(Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung,) ov 14t April, 1847:—

"He deet, partli rezultig from de potato dizze, wid hwiq almost ol
cuntris hav bin mor or les afflicted for de last fu yers, indast me tun turn
mj atenfan tes de discoveri ov sum subetans, not yet emplod, hwiq mjt
be converted intm at lest a parfal substitut for bred; and i considerd it
a neceseri condifun dat dis subetans sud be bot abundant and grp.

"After asceratin^g in a most number ov romanio subetanscz, i met

Ellis was always anxious to share his omnivorous reading with people, and serious works frequently provided interesting material for him to transliterate into phonotypes. On several occasions he referred to parts of Blackstone's Commentaries. In a series of clever phonotypic riddles he entertained those readers of the Journal who shared his fondness for humorous genealogical relationships and urged them to consult the great jurist's chapter on "Descent and Degrees of Consanguinity and Affinity."¹⁰⁵

German orthographic problems interested Ellis during his Dresden visit. A writer named Wolke had proposed that double letters and digraphs be discarded as part of the reform of German spelling. Statistical presentations always held the keenest interest for Ellis, who delighted in applying new techniques for collecting data to his own work

¹⁰⁵A.J. Ellis, "Degrees of Relationship," Phonotypic Journal, 6 (June 1847), 161-62.

if they had merit. Ellis was intrigued with Herr Wolke's figures regarding the effect of the useless German letters on the cost of "paper, inkstands, pens, and penknives." The total of twenty four million dollars a year arising from the use of unnecessary German letters made Ellis desirous of determining a similar calculation for English spelling. He came to the conclusion that the readers of phonotypic newspapers would be getting ten per cent more for their money.¹⁰⁶ His activities in Dresden were multifarious. For example, he was able to arrange for the insertion of an account of phonetic spelling in the Dresdener Album, an anthology culled from the best writers of that city by Fräulein Elfreda von Mühlenfels.¹⁰⁷

In November 1847 Ellis returned from Dresden and moved with his family to No. 4 Lansdowne Crescent, Bath, where he prepared to avail himself of Pitman's four experienced type setters at Nelson Place. Pitman, however, expected the money to go into a business run by Pitman and Ellis. The feeling between the two men was cordial, and Pitman received £230 for press and plant and £70 for "good

¹⁰⁶ A.J. Ellis, "Waste of Time and Money Occasioned by the Use of Heterotypy," Phonotypic Journal, 6 (June 1847), 149-52.

¹⁰⁷ A.J. Ellis, "Phonetic Intelligence," Phonotypic Journal, 7 (November 1848), 357.

will of the business."¹⁰⁸ In spite of Pitman's promises to the contrary, he again suggested further modifications of the alphabet. The "1847 Alphabet" was a source of much satisfaction to the members of the Phonographic Corresponding Society.

Ellis recognized, however, that by the close of 1847 he would have to dissociate himself completely from any future experiments and changes which Isaac Pitman would make by way of other versions of the alphabet. Ellis believed that it was no longer practical to keep changing the representation of certain sounds and that the progress of the Spelling Reform was being hindered by Pitman's determination still to improve the system.

A new opportunity to advance his own views in the direction that the Reform should take came to Ellis at this time, and he welcomed the chance to be in a position of authority to discourage Pitman's determination to modify phonotypy. As an editor of a phonotypic periodical Ellis' opinions would have to bear much more weight.

¹⁰⁸Abercrombie MS.

CHAPTER III

EVOLVING NEW PHONETIC CONCEPTS AND ASSUMING EDITORIAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE GROWTH OF THE READING REFORM (1848-50)

Major editorial responsibility for the organ of the Reading Reform brought Ellis to the forefront in the growth of the movement. Frequent opportunities developed for him to make contacts on the Continent in connection with his phonetic opinions, and he sincerely valued the ideas of American scholars who endorsed his system of phonotypy as the solution to eradicating that country's illiteracy also. Ellis set about preparing a phonotypic Bible in order to accommodate the spiritual needs of the uneducated populace as well as to afford the movement a greater degree of respectability and authority. As editor and publisher of a new phonotypic newspaper, he presented another vehicle for conveying the revised orthography, one which appealed to a wide range of interests. An unprecedented amount of phonotypic publishing took place during 1848-49 directed by Ellis and Pitman. Although strong differences of opinion existed between them regarding possible modifications of the phonotypic alphabets, the Reading Reform received further acceptance in Great Britain and the United States. The

events which occurred in connection with the growth of the Reform will be described here in detail.

The Phonetic Journal was chosen [as a name] because the intention of the Journal is to advocate phonetic spelling or the representation of words by symbols which answer to their elementary sounds without reference to the phonographic or phonotypic forms of these symbols in particular; and to furnish information on the progress of the Writing as well as of the Printing Reform.¹

This "Advertisement" in what would have been The Phonotypic Journal was of considerable importance. Pitman had relinquished the editorship of the periodical to Ellis now that the financial arrangement between the two of them had substantially altered. The theory of phonotypy had been refined and numerous phonetical discussions and experiments in phonetic script had appeared in the preceding six volumes of The Phonotypic Journal. Ellis wanted the new journal under his own direction to be a kind of reading book for those who had learned how to master the new alphabet.

¹A.J. Ellis, "Advertisement", Phonetic Journal, 7 (January 1848), 1-3. Though Ellis indicates that the volumes of The Phonetic Journal will not be numbered and they will only be known by the year of publication, the subsequent history of that periodical indicates it to have been of short duration and that when Pitman resumed the editorship of The Phonotypic Journal, he indicated its place in the sequence as Volume 8. In the Union List of Serials, Ellis' Phonetic Journal is designated as Volume 7 even though it would appear upon examination to be a new serial.

All kinds of completely unrelated topics, ranging from the philosophical through the educational, the humanistic, and the scientific interested the new editor in selecting his articles. This new undertaking afforded him an excellent opportunity of drawing upon his own resources as well as selecting extracts from English and foreign writers. Ellis wisely decided to avoid party politics and denominational themes which he knew could give offense to some of his readers. "The editor has no desire to make proselytes."² In order to make certain that the readers fully understood the part played by Isaac Pitman, Ellis stressed in the same "Advertisement" that it was Pitman who was the "Father of the Writing and Printing Reform." It must have seemed rather strange to Pitman to find himself now relegated to the background by Ellis, but time would soon reveal if the new arrangement was a good one.

Once again Ellis traced the history of the development of the new alphabet in his first contribution to the Phonetic Journal. Pitman was to concern himself mainly with matters relating to phonography. He tactfully emphasized that the contributions of the General Phonetic and Executive Councils, as well as the Phonographic

² Ibid., p. 2.

Corresponding Society, were basic to its development.³ Ellis was determined to have the support of as many interested parties as possible now that he was the editor of a phonotypic organ. The January 1847 alphabet would receive the full recognition that Ellis believed it deserved under his editorship in spite of Pitman's desire to modify it. Ellis was certain that the previous ones--January 1844, April 1844, June 1844, July 1844, August 1844, September 1844, October 1844, January 1845, June 1845, January 1846, April 1846, May 1846, June 1846, August 1846--were inferior to the January 1847 one.

In the "Advertisement" to his new periodical Ellis informed the readers that the alphabetic experiments were now considered to be concluded and that the result arrived at (i.e. the 1847 version) was satisfactory "to the inventors of the Phonetic Printing Alphabet."⁴ It appears that Ellis occasionally used the word "phonetic" in the same sense as "phonotypic" when referring to the alphabet. He confidently remarked that the style of spelling was so "nearly arranged that no subsequent change could be of any moment."⁵

³A.J. Ellis, "Origin and Use of the Phonetic Alphabet," Phonetic Journal, 7 (January 1848), 8.

⁴A.J. Ellis, "Advertisement," Phonetic Journal, 7 (January 1848), 9-14.

⁵Ibid., p. 2.

Ellis' preoccupation with statistics yielded some interesting information about the phonotypic letters. Pitman was responsible for 15 of the 34 new forms; Ellis devised 18; and a certain "Professor Clark" contributed 1.⁶ There was nothing petty about Pitman's response in the Journal to Ellis' notes. Pitman wrote, "In mere desk work he has far exceeded me, and it is only just that he is the joint inventor of the printing alphabet."⁷

During 1848 tension began to mount between the two associates. Pitman had been designated as "Director of the Writing Department" and would spend long hours answering queries from the public about phonography, whereas Ellis styled himself "Director of the Printing Department." Naturally, the constant daily contact, unlike their previous epistolary ones, resulted in friction. In commenting on the growing strain, Mary Abercrombie writes: "It generated an emotional charge beyond their control."⁸

Meanwhile Ellis labored ceaselessly on the Phonetic Journal, carefully noting all the press items forwarded him by the clipping services of articles pertaining to the Reform. News about the progress of the

⁶A.J. Ellis, "Origin and Use of the Phonetic Alphabet," Phonetic Journal, 7 (January 1848), 8.

⁷Abercrombie MS.

⁸Ibid.

Spelling Reform was reported in the Salisbury and Wiltshire Herald, the Aberdeen Herald, the Norfolk News, the Newcastle Guardian, the Exeter Flying Post, and the Weekly vindicator of Belfast. Ellis' name was now figuring widely in circles which shared the commitment to phonotypy.⁹

He now found that he required larger facilities than were afforded in his own quarters in Nelson Place for his printing activities. He moved in March 1848 to Albion Place in the Upper Bristol Road, Bath. Isaac Pitman agreed to the joint use of the new office and plant, from which place he could issue his "Intelligence" columns for the Journal.¹⁰

In May 1848 Ellis expanded considerably his earlier little work Plea for Phonotypy and Phonography; or Speech-Printing and Speech-Writing. Under the new title A Plea for Phonetic Spelling Ellis presented the refined thinking and modifications which he and other members of the Corresponding Society had been evolving since 1845.¹¹ In

⁹A.J. Ellis, "The Press and the Reform," Phonotypic Journal, 7 (March 1848), 99-100.

¹⁰Baker, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

¹¹A.J. Ellis, A Plea for Phonetic Spelling; or, the Necessity of Orthographic Reform (London: Pitman, 1848).

§ 65.

Concluding Appeal.

Our *Plea* is pled. We stand before a Jury of Teachers: our Judges, are Educationalists; our Audience, the People of Great Britain. Mothers and Schoolmasters of England! ye who know the misery to both Teacher and Taught, which *botrie* spelling almost invariably foment! Elevators of our Species! ye who know the awful amount of ignorance that prevails, and the inseparable connection which has been proved to exist between ignorance and crime! to You we appeal, in full confidence of a ready and favourable hearing. Add your voice to that of the Suffering People, that they may the more speedily and happily attain that ease in acquiring the rudiments of knowledge, which, now that they know the means of procuring it, can only be delayed, and not withheld. And may we all live to see this "consummation devoutly to be wished!"

43-0501—0126—0111.

8. A.J. Ellis, A Plea for Phonetic Spelling, 1848:
"Concluding Plea"

his revision of the earlier work Ellis was particularly rhetorical:

But as the carriage roads superseded the mule tracks, and have themselves been in turn superseded by the railways, the earlier and clumsier contrivance must always yield to the new and commodious invention. The heteric system has done its duty; it has had its day; it must be numbered with the things we reverence for the advantages they have bestowed upon us, and yield to the phonetic plan, as the last year's express gives way to the electric telegraph; and for the same reasons, the loss of time which its retention would necessitate.¹²

Ellis would sometimes get carried away with his enthusiasm for the Spelling Reform, and in the Plea for Phonetic Spelling, he lapses into bathos:

But the dumb! the dumb! those to whom a book is a great unsolvable mystery, of the things to wonder at, but not to touch--this is the class for whom we grieve.¹³

Because of the great number of useful papers on the Spelling Reform which appeared in Phonetic Journal for 1848, Ellis decided to arrange for the publication of those issues in book form for the price of five shillings. Nothing was too much trouble for him to do. With his customary efficiency for plotting data, he prepared a detailed analysis, geographically organized of the membership of the Phonographic Corresponding Society and computed that there was one member of the Society for 20.5 thousands of the people. He also

¹²Ibid., p. 53.

¹³Ibid., p. 68.

noted that there were many thousands of writers of phonographic shorthand who had never joined the group.¹⁴

In his editorial capacity Ellis was now in a position to cut off discussion on any phonetic problem which caused him dissatisfaction. For example, he had been struggling to interpret phonotypically some of the sounds which were peculiar to the Scottish Lowlands. Letters arrived frequently from the North, and Ellis grew weary of the attempts by the readers to settle points. With mounting acerbity he brought the matter to a close once and for all: "We can get no Englishman to give us an idea of it in speech and no Scotchman to give us an idea of it on paper."¹⁵

Ellis, however, had been gratified by the responses from the readers concerning the rendition in the June 1848 issue of Phonetic Journal of Burns' "Tam O'Shanter." He had utilized the phonotypic alphabet, and a lively discussion regarding the accuracy of the transcription of some of the Scottish words appeared in the following month. It seemed to Ellis that it was a successful attempt because it showed him that several Scotsmen living in different regions of the country were able to understand each other's dialects. Ellis had clearly demonstrated that phonotypes could provide,

¹⁴Ibid., p. 180.

¹⁵A.J. Ellis, "Notices to Correspondents," Phonetic Journal, 7 (June 1848), 198.

with the suggested corrections, a much more accurate written representation of the sounds "than would be given by many scotchmen."¹⁶ It is interesting to note here that at this time John Love of New Cumnock, Ayrshire, read to him Burns' "Duncan Gray." This was the first piece of dialect which Ellis wrote from dictation merely as an exercise in employing phonotypy.¹⁷

With undiminished optimism for his efforts, Ellis looked a century ahead to 1948 when he felt that his present confidence in phonotypy would be justified with the abolition of "useless" capital letters at the beginning of sentences. He agreed to their use in proper names only. He reasoned that small letters had a distinctness owing to their partly ascending above and descending below the line. He enjoyed raising questions about any possible aspect of phonotypy which could stimulate discussion and debate.¹⁸

Another matter came to Ellis' attention when Sir Robert H. Schomburgk (1804-65) read before the Ethnological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at its meeting in Swansea, August 18, 1848 a paper concerning his geographical and botanical explorations in

¹⁶ A.J. Ellis, "Note on the Pronunciation of Scotch", Phonetic Journal, 7 (July 1848), 228.

¹⁷ A.J. Ellis, "Second Report on Dialect Work", Proceedings of the Philological Society, 1886-88, p. xxii.

¹⁸ A.J. Ellis, "On the Use of Capital Letters," Phonetic Journal (July 1848), 222.

British Guiana. It also included a section on the language of that territory. The Victorian Age was a brilliant one for explorations, and the Royal Geographical Society encouraged that kind of study. Ellis was interested very much because Schomburgk had considered the usefulness that a phonetic alphabet possessed for transcribing a completely unfamiliar language.

Ellis did not approve of the Church Missionary Society's system of phonetic representation which Schomburgk had employed in presenting his vocabularies of the Guiana dialects. The alphabet was limited in its representation of vowel sounds. Ellis was most critical of the symbols for diphthongs and other "curious sounds" in those South American languages.¹⁹ Realizing with some modesty the possible inadequacies of his own work, Ellis invited the Church Missionary Society to remodel its phonetic system on the basis of his Ethnical Alphabet.²⁰

Ellis was continuing his scientific investigations into phonetics. His growing knowledge of the mechanics of human speech enabled him to write with greater authority. The phonetic studies comprise an intrinsic part of the Pitman-Ellis relationship, and they are inextricably bound up with

¹⁹ A.J. Ellis, "Ethnical Spelling," Phonetic Journal, 7 (December 1848), 388-92.

²⁰ A.J. Ellis, The Ethnical Alphabet; or, Alphabet of Nations: Being an Extension of Messrs. Pitman and Ellis' English Phonetic Alphabet (Bath: F. Pitman, 1848).

Examples.—The Lord's Prayer in ten Languages.

1. *Ancient Greek.—Eussian pronunciation.*
 Patir hemon, ho en tes urano, hagiostilo
 ta ektopa es; elieto he basilia es, genetho
 to telous es, hos en urano eji epi tes ges.
 Tuo arton hemon tou epiousa dos hmin
 semena, eji afes hemia ta offemata hemon,
 hos eji hemei offemata tes offetale hemon, eji
 hos penegete hmina je piramon, ala rusaie
 jama opo to poure, hosi es etia he basilia
 eji he dynamis, eji he doxa, je tes ejasas.
 Amen.

2. *Modern Greek.*
 Patir mia, o en tes uranis, es ejistis to
 domonias, es elis e vespouson, es ejias to
 hagiostilo ektis es tou uranou tato eji epi tes
 ges. Dos mia semena tou arton mia tou
 epimastia, es ejidrese ta skhmatia, ektis
 es mous ejektomizmen tus vspontasias
 mia. Ca ne nos vales es pousasia, oji
 skhmatismos apo tou ponirai; oti ejektis
 nos e vspila, es e deusias, es e doxa, es tus
 ejasas. Amen.

3. *Latin.—Etonian pronunciation.*
 Patir noster, eji ex in velle, supetistatur
 nomen tuum. Adveniat regnum tuum. Ejat
 voluntas tua, ejat in velle, et in terra. Parem
 aeternam ejctidiam de nobis hodie. Ej digne
 nobis debita nostra, ejat et nos dimittas
 debitoribus nostris. Et ne nos indigas in
 tentationem, sed libera nos a malo. Cuius
 tuum est regnum, potestas et gloria, in secula
 seculorum. Amen.

4. *Italian.*
 Padre nostro ca sai na gilli, seq unistidre
 el tuo nome, veggia el tuo regno, seq fortia la
 tua voluntà in terra come l'è in gilli. Danfige
 oggi el nostro peccà castellano; e remette
 e nostra debite, incomm agnora nos he mnestige
 e nostra agnora debitorum; e non indige
 in tentatione, ma liberage dal male; perche
 tuo è el regno, la potestà, e la gloria in
 sempiterno. Amen.

5. *Spanish.*
 Padre nuestro, en etias en los tialos:
 santificando sea tu nombre: veggia a nos tu
 reino: agna tu voluntad, qal en la tierra
 como en el tialo: el pea nuestro de cada dia
 depuola ca. E perdonaos nuestros deudas
 qal como nosotros perdonaos a nosotros

deudoras. E no nos dadas caia en tentacion;
 mas librados de mal: Para tuyo es el reino,
 e el poder, e la gloria por siempre. Amen.

6. *French.—(no accented syllables.)*
 Notre pèr, eji ex o velle, tou nos sea unistidre.
 Tou rian' velle. Ta voloutas sea fit oji oji
 lair eon o sile. Dos-am agnada notr' pou
 outidre. A na pardoa nos oiaia, eji nos
 pardonaia q no eji nous oia oiaia. A ne nous
 aidaia poud oji tentacion, ma deliv' nous du
 mal. Cui e tuq a le rian', la pouda, e la
 glori, o sile' di sile'. Amen.

7. *Anglo-Saxon.—Conjectural pronunciation.*
 Fader ure, tis tas s't en hiaf'um, se
 ten regn gahlagod. To-beccme tis roe.
 Gewar'de tis wile en s'tum, swa swa en
 hiaf'um. Ure dia'hwandian hiaf' sile
 us to-dia. And fergif' us ure gilla, swa
 swa we fergifod urem gilla'um. And na
 gelide tis us en cotunig, ne gah' us en s'tle:
 Soðlice.

8. *Danish.*
 Vor Fæder, dia was he e hialene! heligt
 verdt dit naa. Come dit regt; sea dia vilje,
 som e hialene, so-aa po tyden. Giv os e
 dag vort daglige hiaf, ou heligt os vor sind
 so som vt ou forlidge vort skæbener. Oa had
 os ioe i e fristide: men fra os fra det evet;
 te dit år regt, ou eruden, ou hieligheden e
 arighad. Amen.

9. *German.*
 Vater unser, dia du bist in himel. Gehilgt
 verdt dia regn. Dia rik come; dia vile geie,
 ve in himel diaa sk et arden. Waser tuekkes
 head gib uns horte. Fergib uns unsere juben,
 ut ver fergihen unsere jukliger. Fure una
 nikt in forzunk, modern wile una fra dia
 hiel. Den dia ist das rik, and de erud und
 de heiligt, in arighad. Amen.

10. *English.*
 O'r Father, hwic eji in hev'n; helod be di
 nam; di ejctum eum: di wi be dia on erf,
 as it is in hev'n. Giv us dia da da di bread,
 and fergiv us ur trespasses as we fergiv daz
 dot trespass aginst us; and lead us not inta
 temptaion, but deliver us from ev'l. For dia
 is di ejctum, and de pwer, and de glori, for
 ever and ever. Amen.

Copious information upon the subject of the *Phonetic Reform* is given in Mr. Alexander John Ellis's *Pin for Phonetic Spelling, or the Necessity of Orthographic Reform*; 2nd ed., pp. 158, demy octavo, price 1s. 6d.; and the whole theory of phonetic writing, with a practical universal alphabet, is furnished in the same author's *Elements of Phonetics*, price 6s. 6d., which is wholly printed in the phonetic character.

The following works are also recently printed phonetically—

The *Child's Phonetic Primer*, 2d. The *Teacher's Guide to the use of the Child's Phonetic Primer*, 4d. The *Secrets of the Mount*, 11d. The *Church Catechism*, 1d. *Cherry's Broom*, a Tale for Fanny Children, 1s.

The *Phonetic Journal*, 32 pages, demy fvo, monthly, 6d. The *Etymological Echo*, monthly, 11d. The *New Phonogram*, in two different editions, is in the press, and will be published early in 1848. A phonetic newspaper, under the name of the *Phonetic News*, will be published in January, 1849, and continued weekly.

Phonetic short hand is explained in Mr. Isaac Pitman's *Keynote*, 6d. *Manual of Phonography*, 1s. 6d. *Reporter's Book*, 3s., and its use exemplified in three short hand monthly articles, the *Star*, the *Correspondent*, and the *Reporter's Magazine*, price 2d. each.

All the above works are to be had of the publisher of this tract, Ford Pitman, Phonetic Depot, 1, Queen's Head Passage, Finsbury Lane, London.

PRINTED BY A. J. ELLIS, B.A., PHONETIC PRINTING OFFICE, RAFF.

the efforts at alphabetic reformation. At times the purely phonetic studies were in the ascendancy; at other times the phonotypic labors were in the forefront. Ellis could not separate himself from either activity.

It is difficult to reconstruct the methods which Ellis used in his phonetic investigations. His extensive correspondence and many articles provide almost no information on the matter for the years of association with Isaac Pitman. We do know that he was au courant with almost all the contemporary studies which his colleagues were making in other parts of the country, and his articles on phonetic subjects contain frequent reference to their various theories regarding speech sounds. He appears to have spent a great deal of time analyzing his own speech patterns as well as those of his contemporaries, noting down all individualities of pronunciation. Judging from the records we do possess of his investigations in other disciplines and the work he came to do later in connection with the study of the English dialects, it may be safely stated that he devoted a great deal of painstaking labor to his early phonetic studies and their application to the Spelling Reform.

When Ellis had published in the Supplements to the Phonotypic Journal his exposition of phonotypic printing in 1844-45 called The Alphabet of Nature, he was already becoming aware of his need to revise that work at a later time.

Though claiming to be a revision of his work, The Essentials of Phonetics is actually an entirely new work of 251 pages in which Ellis sets forth his complete theories of the science of phonetics.²¹ He devotes a large portion of the book to a very detailed analysis of the physiological basis of human speech. Throughout the text there are descriptions of experiments which the student of phonetics can make for himself in order to understand the operation of the human voice. Ellis stresses in this work the need for having an alphabet suitable for the "dullest intellect" in order to record the various sounds. In The Essentials of Phonetics more than one third of the work is given over to the presentation of a general phonetic alphabet, i.e., a scientific tool for transcribing sounds for all languages. The Alphabet of Nature had dealt primarily with the sounds of the English language.

In a very carefully prepared definition Ellis presents his analysis of the meaning of the term "phonetics" at the beginning of the work:

The Science of Phonetics embraces all that portion of the general science of acoustics which relates to the sounds produced by the organs of speech; or, in a more limited sense in which we propose to use the term, that portion of acoustics which relates to the significant sounds of language.²²

²¹A.J. Ellis, The Essentials of Phonetics; Containing the Theory of a Universal Alphabet Together with Its Practical Application as an Ethnical Alphabet to the Reduction of All Languages, Written or Unwritten, to One Uniform System of Writing with Numerous Examples ... (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

²²Ibid., p. 1.

If, widet dropig de vos, we proceed from q to e and dens tu q agin, we sud hav tñ transifunal effects, az e hox prodüt a fimal effect on de proceedig q , and an inifal effect on de proceedig q ; dis dubl effect ov an internalyet veel ma be cold its mediet effect.

§ 6.

TRANSIEUN FROM CONTINUANT TU VSEL.

In de abüs diagram, let de lijn $E\bar{A}$, $\bar{A}\bar{O}$, represent de durafun ov de configurafun e and e respectivil, and $\bar{A}\bar{A}$ be de tijn consued in paisig from de configurafun e to de configurafun e . De send ov de continuant e is entjrl du tu hwisper, and de send ov de veel e is entjrl du tu vos; har must darfor be a pont ov tijn (neglectig de durafun ov de midl-send descrijd in § 2, nr. 2) hwen de hwisper sases and de vos comences. Let de hwisper continu durig de tijn $E\bar{P}$, and de vos durig de tijn $P\bar{O}$. In de diagram, P hox ben plast betwén \bar{A} and \bar{A} , but it ma evidenti ocür at eni pont betwén E and \bar{O} , hwil de effect on de e wil be different acordig tu de posifun ov P . We prosid tu discüs dez different effects.

1. Hwisper Continuants.

Ferst, let de pont P li az in de diagram, betwén \bar{A} and \bar{A} . Den de effects on de e wil be, *ferst*, a hwisper herd tru de configurafun e , durig de tijn $E\bar{A}$, dat is, de continuant e ; *secundli*, a hwisper herd durig de tijn $\bar{A}\bar{P}$, tru a seriez ov configurafuns, ov hwig de limits ar—de configurafun e and sum unnon configurafun lijg betwén dät ov e and dät ov e , and dependig on de netwel leyt ov de tijn $\bar{A}\bar{P}$; *terdli*, de vos durig de tijn $P\bar{A}$, herd tru a seriez ov configurafuns ov hwig de ferst limit is de leyt limit ov de proceedig seriez, and de leyt limit is de configurafun e ; *fourthli*, de veel e . De secund and terd seriez ov sends, (hwig partli hwisper and partli vos,) hwig aris from de successun ov e to e , and de gain ov de hwisper ov e to de vos ov e , ma be cold de inifal effect ov e on e , or de fimal effect ov e on e . For de sho ov simplisiti, hwéver, we sal, hwen possib'l, elwes too ov de effect ov de non-veel upén de veel element, and dus sa, dat de secund and terd sends ar du tu, or constitut, de inifal effect ov e on e . In de cas ov § 5, in hwig bot elements wer vyele, or in a cas hwig we

10. A.J. Ellis, *Essentials of Phonetics*, 1848:
"Transition from Continuants to Vowel"

R.H. Robins indicates that the term phonetics is first recorded in the nineteenth century. He notes that the empirical attitude in British philosophy from Francis Bacon to David Hume, as well as the nature of English spelling, fostered a tradition that has been given the title of "the English school of phonetics."²³ The kind of work that Ellis was doing in connection with phonetics is comparable to what Robins had in mind when he observed that prior to the technology and equipment needed for analyzing sound waves "articulatory description was the only possible frame for an accurate and systematic classification."²⁴

It must be emphasized that Ellis was not writing in a vacuum in the mid-nineteenth century because his phonetic work drew on the progress of the allied fields of physiology and acoustics. Though many were interested in spelling reform, shorthand, and language teaching, there was considerable interest in the physiology of speech. C.R. Lepsius was working on his own Standard Alphabet, which appeared in 1855. Ellis was familiar with the work of C.T. Volney, who saw the importance of reliable transcription and transliteration as a result of the Egyption expedition by the French. L'alphabet Européen had appeared in 1818, and Ellis was familiar with Volney's theories about sounds.

²³ R.H. Robins, A Short History of Linguistics (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1967), pp. 117-19.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 141.

progress in phonetic investigation was also being made by Samuel Haldeman, whose work won the Trevelyan Prize for the quality of his researches in comparative philology. It was during the mid-nineteenth century that Alexander Melville Bell was at work on his own system of "Steno-Phonography". V.D. De Stains had brought out in 1842 his work on phonography which did not win the approval of Ellis. The authority upon the nature of vowels, according to Ellis, was Professor R. Willis of Caius College, Cambridge, whose work had appeared in the Transactions of the Cambridge Philosophical Society in 1830. Ellis, a member of that group, knew Willis personally and included a full account of the scientist's experiments in an appendix to Essentials of Phonetics. Ellis was very critical of the work which others had been doing in the preceding years and hoped that his Essentials of Phonetics would be clear and concise.

Ellis was aware of his own great powers of discrimination among language sounds and recognized the problems inherent in trying to reproduce them. As early as 1845 he admitted that much was to be learned from a study of the dialects of England.²⁵

In 1848 Ellis was very modest about his own qualifications for writing such a work, but felt obliged in his Essentials to reveal some autobiographical information which he preferred to have omitted. He was reticent about

²⁵ Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. viii.

his early life as a student. When he had been travelling about Italy and Sicily, he had a fine opportunity for observing the dialects of those places which led him to "attempt" the construction of a phonetic alphabet.

He acknowledged the influence of R.G. Latham's work The English Language on his own conception of the difference between 'long and stopped vowels'. With due consideration for the work of earlier phoneticists whose opinions he either accepted or disregarded, Ellis emphasized that the Essentials was principally based on all his own experiments and observations. The first fourteen pages of his work consisted of new material derived from Ellis' study of the way in which Germans pronounced the initial s before vowels. Having lived for three years in Dresden, Ellis profited from his conversations on the subject with Herr Senf, a Dresden teacher at the Rath und That Schule, who had arranged Gottlieb Schultze's series of Phonic Books issued by the Committee of Council in Saxony.²⁶ Ellis highly approved of this method.

Those years in Germany had also made Ellis very much aware of the characteristics of spoken High German. In Berlin and Vienna he heard a "notoriously bad" form, and furthermore, he found the common pronunciation of the middle classes, as well as that of the educated shop keepers and tradesmen, very disagreeable.²⁷ Ellis also had an opportunity

²⁶ Ibid., p. 235.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 114.

to converse with Sir Charles Wheatstone (1802-75), Professor of Natural Philosophy at King's College, London, who gave him some understanding of the Welsh ll.

The Essentials of Phonetics is a large work of 251 pages entirely printed in Ellis' phonotypical spelling. Though Pitman originally had devised phonotypy, Ellis had remodelled it drastically. He believed wholeheartedly in the value of the system and welcomed the use of the revised alphabet in his scholarly treatment of phonetics.

In Germany Ernst Brücke was not enthusiastic about the phonetic work which Ellis had done. He had written his Grundzüge for the use of the teachers of the deaf and dumb. He published his work under the auspices of the Royal Academy of Science in Vienna, and when he was about to bring out the last section of his work, he received the unwelcome news that Ellis' Essentials of Phonetics had been printed in a "strange symbolisation".

Grudgingly, Brücke admitted that he had received much valuable instruction from Ellis' work concerning foreign tongues. Inasmuch as Brücke had already developed his own system of characters, he indicated that he had no intention of abandoning his own system and adopting that of Ellis. Brücke preferred his own system, for it was "symmetrischer geordnet".²⁸ In the course of his Grundzüge he frequently

²⁸ Ernst Brücke, Grundzüge der Physiologie und Systematik der Sprachlaute für Linguisten und Taubstummlehrer (Wien: Carl Gerold's Sohn, 1876), pp. 1-2.

found fault with Ellis' vowel system.²⁹

The phonetic work in which Ellis involved himself with Pitman in the 1840's, along with his phonotypical printing of his own theories as set forth in The Essentials of Phonetics, holds a special interest in connection with the testamentary arrangements of the eminent dramatist and critic George Bernard Shaw, who wished to devote much of his estate to the cause of reformed spelling. We shall pause briefly in the present chronological account of Ellis' phonotypic-phonetic labors to look ahead at the relationship between Shaw's plans for his perfect alphabet and that 1848 work of Ellis which had made its appearance in early Victorian London. Ellis' involvement with Isaac Pitman will be resumed after examining the Ellis-Shaw aspects of the Spelling Reform.

One of the first references that we have in connection with Ellis concerns James Lecky (1856-90), a civil servant in the Exchequer, who introduced Shaw to Ellis in 1880. Lecky's own interest in musical theory and musical instruments had originally brought him in contact with Ellis, who was the authority on musical pitch in the 1870's, long after he had given up his association with Isaac Pitman.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid., p. 159.

³⁰ G.B. Shaw to M. Fells, October 24, 1880, in St. John Ervine, Bernard Shaw: His Life, Work, and Friends (London: Constable, 1956), p. 86.

On one occasion Shaw and the philologist Walter Skeat took the opportunity to "blow Alexander Ellis' trumpets and no doubt conveyed the impression that we were Titans of a by-gone age."³¹ Shaw always maintained a sincere respect for the abilities of A.J. Ellis and would always speak respectfully of his attainments.

Ellis' Essentials of Phonetics appeared to Shaw educationally and rationally sound. This was high praise from one whose criticism was notoriously barbed. Shaw felt that Ellis' "case" had been put over and over again by more or less skilled writers who were "ringing the changes on the anomalies and absurdities of our spelling."³²

In 1944 Bernard Shaw corresponded with Daniel Jones of the University of London regarding arrangements for financing any "promising" scheme for a new alphabet which would symbolize the 42 sounds listed by the phonetician Henry Sweet. Shaw became very familiar with the 48 sounds in Sweet's Primer of Spoken English in the 3rd edition of 1900, and he also had studied the 42 sounds which Sweet had enumerated in the 1908 Sounds of English. Professor Jones warned Shaw that many discrepancies regarding the interpretation of the correct number of diphthongs, particularly

³¹ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Shaw Correspondence 50549, Shaw to Skeat, February 11, 1911.

³² British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Shaw Correspondence 50555, Shaw to Jones, November 9, 1944, fols. 112-13.

"weakened" ones, would make it almost impossible for Shaw's executors to determine the "42 sounds listed by Sweet" for use in a new alphabet. Some of Sweet's descriptions implied certain sounds but failed to list them.

Daniel Jones went on to suggest with great conviction that the Ellis-Pitman scheme of 40 sounds was already completely adequate and constituted a more reliable list. He referred Shaw to page 40 of Ellis' Essentials of Phonetics and reminded him that the Ellis analysis was a compact method of spelling "for current purposes." Unlike Ellis' scheme, Henry Sweet's Romic alphabets had been designed for scientific linguistic investigations, as well as for the teaching of the pronunciation of English and foreign languages. Professor Jones purposely steered Shaw towards Ellis' work.³³

A month later another letter came to Shaw from University College, London. "I see more clearly than ever that your instructions, as at present formulated, cannot be carried out." Jones was still convinced that all that was needed for a practical orthography was a representation of Ellis' 40 sounds ("or 41. if provision is made for the Scottish ch of loch").

³³ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Shaw Correspondence 50555, Jones to Shaw, September 24, 1944, fols. 106-7.

In order to reinforce his opinions for Shaw, Dr. Jones made a calculation from the first paragraph on page 15 of Ellis' Essentials of Phonetics which he found contained 422 letters when written in Ellis' 40 letter alphabet.³⁴ It contained 457 letters when written with a 30 letter phonetic alphabet. There were 486 letters when written in "ordinary present day spelling." Jones computed that Ellis' 40 letter alphabet made a savings of over eleven per cent.³⁵

Returning once again to our consideration of Ellis' work in the 1840's, we are able to get a true picture of his breadth of interest during this time. He studied carefully many languages of Eastern Europe because they contained particular phonetic difficulties. He worked diligently at Russian, Slavonic, Croatian, and Servian sounds and carefully consulted the grammars and phonetic treatises of the 1820's and 1830's, which were mainly German ('verdeutscht'). These works required Ellis' closest attention and care.

He availed himself of the publication of a work in 1837 on universal phonetics by a Slavonic writer, Andrew Matoshek, Professor of Physics at Roseau, Hungary. In the Alphabetum et Orthographia Universalis, Matoshek had devised a system for indicating the sounds of all languages. Ellis

³⁴British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Shaw Correspondence 50555, Jones to Shaw, October 30, 1944, fols. 108-10.

³⁵Ibid.

was dismayed that an earlier attempt of this type had been made. He checked Matoshek's version of the Lord's Prayer with a Tauchnitz edition of the Russian Testament (1838). Ellis himself had not yet been able to work out the symbolical representations of Russian and Polish sounds. He then turned to Schmitt's Russische Sprachlehre (1831). Ellis carefully worked out the complicated but "inadequately" explained system of Wuk's Kleine Serbische Grammatik, Verdeutscht, und mit Einer Vorrede von Jacob Grimm (Leipzig, bei Reimer, 1824).³⁶

Ellis also had the opportunity of studying the Koranic pronunciation of Arabic from Schawan of Mount Lebanon, then Professor of Arabic at the College of Propaganda at Rome; Muhaseb of Beirut, Schawan's nephew; and Abdullah of Aleppo, Secretary to the Archbishop of Tripoli, who visited Ellis in 1842. He did not spend any time on the common pronunciation of the Arabian vowels. It may be noted that fifteen years later, in writing to the American philologist Samuel Haldeman, Ellis could vaguely recall the "goat-like bleating sounds" of some of the vowels which he had heard from his "first master Schawan's rendering of the sounds in that manner."³⁷ He also studied Gustavus Flügel's Corani

³⁶ Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, pp. 188-89.

³⁷ University of Pennsylvania, Department of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Ellis to Haldeman, July 5, 1859.

Textus Arabicus and J.H. Peterman's Brevis Linguae Arabicae Grammatica, which gave a "tolerable insight" into the construction of Arabic.³⁸

Ellis was most indebted at this time, however, to K.M. Rapp's Versuch Einer Physiologie der Sprache nebst Historischer Entwicklung Abendlandischen Idiome nach Physiologischen Grundsätzen (Stuttgart bei Cotta, 1836-41. 4 vols.).³⁹ He admired the "splendid" restoration of old pronunciations and the treatment of modern pronunciation in that work, but he differed from Rapp on many points in his own Essentials of Phonetics. Ellis urged every phonetician to become familiar with Rapp's work.

Such was the kind of scholar with whom Isaac Pitman had allied himself, one who surpassed the phonographer in every possible manner and whose erudition could well have been a source of gnawing jealousy to Pitman.

Ellis gave encouragement to the phonotypic activities taking place in America at that time. In Cincinnati, Elias Longley was editing the Phonetic Magazine, which made use of phonotypes similar to those employed in the Bath printing establishment. Ellis observed that the customary pronunciation in America and England was "nearer" than he had first believed. With satisfaction he noted that ultimately

³⁸ Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. 203.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 203.

one system of phonotypy might be adopted.⁴⁰

The printing shop was meticulously organized. The overseer of the printing office read every sheet, and Ellis would then read each sheet twice himself. Pitman also read each sheet once. An impressive amount of painstaking labor entered into the preparation of the issues of the Phonetic Journal.

One work which Ellis presented at this time was Herman Melville's Typee, which had appeared in America in 1846. Ellis was so taken with the exotic tale of the South Seas that he prepared a summary and commentary on the novel which appeared in serial form through several issues of the Phonetic Journal. Ellis informed his readers that he was offering them a "treat." He was fulfilling his obligation of presenting phonotypic works which would enable the readers to acquire practice, along with pleasure, in using the new alphabet.⁴¹

The demand for Ellis to participate at meetings during that year was heavy and it cut into his time considerably. The Birmingham Phonetic Society celebrated its Sixth Annual Phonetic Festival on September 13, 1848. Ellis saw with great satisfaction the shorthand placards

⁴⁰A.J. Ellis, "Literary Notice", Phonetic Journal, 7 (September 1848), 293-94.

⁴¹A.J. Ellis, transliterator-editor, "Melville's Typee," Phonetic Journal, 7 (September-October 1848), 265.

posted about the city enjoining the public to attend and reinforcing the importance of the occasion with the sustaining thought: "Truth is mighty and will prevail!"⁴² The meeting was held at the Corn Exchange where long speeches principally extolled the virtues of phonography and phonotypy.

Ellis was a main speaker during the conference, and the members of the Birmingham Phonetic Society enthusiastically received his observations. On that evening his function primarily was to encourage those people who were "pullers-down" rather than "builders-up" [sic]. Because he had been away from Britain for several years, he was a figure of special interest. In order to raise funds for the cause, an increasingly expensive one, Ellis was confident that even a "mechanic" could afford to pay a few pence, and he commended the generosity of the citizens of Birmingham.

When Ellis undertook the management of his own phonotypic printing office, he was able to draw upon the fund for experimentation which had been accruing from contributions received from interested parties in the efforts at spelling reform throughout the country. This fund was created to try out the various forms of the letters. It cost two hundred pounds for preparing the matrices and sixty pounds to fit up

⁴²A.J. Ellis, "Address to the Birmingham Sixth Phonetic Festival," Phonetic Journal, 7 (October 1848), 317-19.

the office. With the remainder of the original four hundred and fifty pounds he was able to issue some small phonotypic tracts for sale at half their cost.

The need to have additional matrices to cast phonotypes increased, and soon Ellis found that he had spent up to three hundred and fifty pounds on new molds for the letters in order to proceed. Ellis believed strongly that these matrices belonged to the public because of the public contributions. He wanted to order types directly from Figgins, the type founders, without an added cost assessed for the use of the matrices as well. By 1848 Ellis was able to work with five Roman and five italic founts, and he employed several trained compositors who could handle with great ease the phonotypes.

When Ellis announced to those present at the Sixth Phonetic Festival that he had just set the first twenty-one pages of the New Testament in phonotypy, he was greeted with loud cheers. "We can make the Gospels speak--literally speak, to numbers who never perhaps would have heard of them but for phonotypy."⁴³

Another exciting announcement which Ellis made to the gathering of phonographers and phonotypists in the Corn Exchange concerned his plans for publishing a weekly phonetic

⁴³ Ibid., p. 320.

newspaper. With much fervor he set out to convince them of the attendant benefits of such a publication. Ellis utilized every bit of information which came to his attention. From the Registrar General's Report for 1844-46 he learned that at marriage one man in three and one woman in two "signed the register with marks."⁴⁴ Phonotypy, in Ellis' opinion, offered the only solution to the frightful problem of illiteracy at that time.

Ellis' hopes for issuing a phonetic newspaper were coming nearer to fulfillment. He wanted to make sure that he was aware of any contributions of phonotypic interest, no matter how small and inconsequential they might seem to the contributor. He reminded his Birmingham audience: "No exertion, however trifling, is unworthy of being recorded in the infancy of our reform. The ocean consists of drops!"⁴⁵ Ellis' compositors would have to set the type directly from manuscript because there would be no time available to transcribe it first into phonotypic longhand.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 321.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ A. J. Ellis, "Notice to Our Subscribers," Phonetic Journal, 7 (October 1848), 326-27.

What had started out with high expectations was quietly destined to draw to a conclusion after one year's existence. Already by October 1848 Ellis was planning to abandon the Phonetic Journal and shift his enthusiasm to his proposed phonetic newspaper. This seemed to Ellis to be the best way of forwarding the Reform because it would silence the doubters who were always talking about "fancies, visions, and utopianisms."⁴⁷

Ellis about this time attended a meeting in Bath of that city's phonographers for the purpose of forming a phonetic society and gladly accepted the presidency of the new group. Isaac Pitman served as secretary. They went ahead with plans for conducting phonographic and phonotypic classes.⁴⁸

Progress on the phonotypic New Testament moved along slowly. Fifty more pages had been set. Ellis had spoken of its intended publication on many occasions, but it was not always possible for him to adhere to his schedules. The Reform, as it was now called, was making progress, and in Carmarthen, Wales, the schoolmaster David Reese inquired hopefully of Ellis concerning the publication of the New Testament. He believed that in the Welsh towns and villages

⁴⁷ Ibid. (November 1848), 353.

⁴⁸ A.J. Ellis, "Phonetic Intelligence," Phonetic Journal, 7 (November 1848), 356.

there were hundreds who awaited its appearance. The first three Gospels were already set in the large type edition; the small type pocket edition was completed by November 1848.⁴⁹

Ellis tried to anticipate every situation which would "further the Cause." He called upon readers of the Journal to urge the editors of newspapers all over the country to avail themselves of the special phonotypic founts of small brevier he had arranged to have cast so that they would be able to insert a small phonotypic paragraph in their papers weekly. Ellis indicated that he himself would mail the paragraphs already set and corrected to the newspapers. Of course, he hoped that the local phonographers would bear the expense. With great efficiency Ellis had prepared copies of a sample of phonotypy for those printers who would be willing to participate in this scheme.⁵⁰

Ellis had decided to give up his editorship. A year of such great responsibility was enough for him. "We do not close this Phonetic Journal with regret, but with joyful anticipation." He was satisfied because his labors during 1848 had finally paved the way for a weekly Phonetic News. Ellis' optimism was wonderfully high. His feelings were

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 359.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 362.

apparent in his recommendations to the Phonetic Journal's subscribers, whom he encouraged to send their copies of the Phonetic News to every person who might benefit from its contents.⁵¹

In 1849, therefore, the Phonetic News appeared as a twelve page paper similar in size and style to the newspapers of the time. It was printed in the 1847 alphabet and was issued every Saturday morning.⁵² It contained commentary on foreign affairs in letters written exclusively for the paper. Ellis also included original political articles concerning education, literature, science, and transcribed extracts from new books. Naturally there was ample space devoted in each issue to the progress of the Reform throughout the United Kingdom. The Phonetic News presented difficulties because Ellis had used an alphabet with 17 more letters in it. This required a large preliminary expenditure of capital and produced results which could not be duplicated elsewhere.⁵³

Isaac Pitman was disturbed at the expensive price of the newspaper, 4 1/2d, because of the paper tax. He knew he

⁵¹A.J. Ellis, "Notice to Our Subscribers," Phonetic Journal, 7 (December 1848), 401.

⁵²Baker, op. cit., p. 104.

⁵³A.J. Ellis, "Presidential Address-1881," Transactions of the Philological Society (1881), 296.

was about to be faced with the termination of his organ of communication on phonetic matters, his "Intelligence" section, with the demise of the Phonetic Journal. Henceforth he could only avail himself of the one column in the Phonetic News. Pitman read Ellis' proofs and took umbrage at the notion that phonography would not last unless phonotypes existed.⁵⁴

A humorous, though barbed attack, on spelling reform appeared many years later in the Cornhill Magazine of May 1876. Of course, Alexander Ellis became its prime target. The anonymous assailant referred to the poor spelling habits of the British public, because of the attempts to reform spelling. Ellis' Fonetik Nuz was dismissed scornfully as containing an orthography as little connected with the spelling of his day as has a "treatise on the digamma with the sources of the Nile."⁵⁵ By 1876 the memory of the dismal failure of the Phonetic News had long faded, but occasionally some ridicule was directed at its appearance. With his characteristic good manners Ellis responded to the badinage which had appeared in the Cornhill. He curtly reminded the editor that he was very much alive and the phrase "peas 2 iz hashes"

⁵⁴Abercrombie MS.

⁵⁵"Spelling", Cornhill Magazine (May 1876), p. 590.

(i.e. 'peace to his ashes') referred to the critic's!⁵⁶

The Phonetic News was also an object of ridicule for Punch. That magazine lost no time in deriding it as Fanatic Nuz. With humor it pointed out that the postman was likely to deliver valuable remittances to people who were not entitled to receive them. It also lamented the loss of dignity to those named Cholmondely because the phonotypic form "sank into Chumla!"⁵⁷ Erroneously Punch referred to the phonotypic printing as still appearing in 1879. It reported inaccurately that Fonetik Nuz was "still kicking against etymology and common sense."⁵⁸

Though Ellis' Phonetic News, which appeared for only one year, had its detractors who scoffed at the appearance of the publication, it also received, nonetheless, the endorsement of several distinguished scholars many years later. Max Müller of Oxford University remarked, "Let it not be supposed by men of the world that those who defend the principles of the Fonetik Nuz are only teetotalers and vegetarians, who

⁵⁶ A.J. Ellis, "The Cornhill Magazine on Phonotypy", Athenaeum, No. 2535 (May 27, 1876), p. 727.

⁵⁷ "The Phonetic Solution for Hard Names", Punch, 16 (1849), 84.

⁵⁸ "An Evergreen Vegetarian", Punch, 76 (1879), 61.

have never learned to spell."⁵⁹

James Spedding (1808-81), the great editor of Bacon's works, recalled thirty years after the appearance of Ellis' paper his own satisfaction at being able to read the accounts of the Hungarian War of 1849 in the Phonetic News with all the proper names spelled out in phonetic symbols.⁶⁰

In 1871 the Saturday Review commented on the great surprise which many felt when it was learned that the author of Early English Pronunciation⁶¹ was none other than the editor of the ridiculed Phonetic News. The Dean of Canterbury, Henry Alford (1810-71), later to become the first editor of the Contemporary Review, remarked that the title of the Fonetik Nuz resembled "Frantic Nuts."⁶²

Ellis was obliged to endure unflattering comments on this unusual journalistic production. He had laboured hard at the paper and chafed keenly under the ruthless attacks because of his strong beliefs in the goals of the Spelling Reform.

⁵⁹Max Müller, "On Spelling," Fortnightly Review, 19 (May 1876), 578.

⁶⁰James Spedding, "Teaching to Read," Nineteenth Century, June 1877, p. 644.

⁶¹"Early English Pronunciation," rev. of On Early English Pronunciation with Especial Reference to Shakspeare and Chaucer . . . , by A.J. Ellis (London: Philological Society, Asher and Co.; Early English Text Society, Trübner and Co., 1869-89) in Saturday Review, July 1, 1871, p. 19.

⁶²Ibid.

The Phonetic News proved to be a financial disaster for Ellis and was scheduled to cease publication after its fifteenth number. Its distribution had been mainly gratis owing to the 4 1/2d cost. Ellis found the obligations which he had undertaken too much for him to fulfill, and he began to suffer from one of his bouts of "nerves" which would regularly afflict him throughout his life. The acrimony between Pitman and Ellis now became more pronounced. Ellis' graciousness triumphed, though, in the farewell issue of the Phonetic News, and he paid tribute to Isaac Pitman, as well as the first lecturers on phonetic spelling, George Withers and Benn Pitman.⁶³ The Phonetic News had 2000 subscribers but would have required five times as many to prevent a loss. It ceased to exist on May 25, 1849.⁶⁴

In America Ellis' newspaper was admired. Longley and Brother, the Cincinnati publisher, brought out during the 1850's the Weekly Phonetic Advocate which resembled Ellis' Phonetic News in many ways. Among its advertisements for books are many of the same items which Ellis published, but there is no mention of his name along with them. Possibly Longley acted as a distributor for some of the Ellis phonotypic works.⁶⁵

⁶³Baker, op. cit., pp. 107-8.

⁶⁴Ellis, "The Cornhill Magazine on Phonotypy", p. 727.

⁶⁵The Weekly Phonetic Advocate, 5, No. 24 (January 15, 1853).

During this period when Ellis was involved with closing out the Phonetic Journal and was struggling with the Phonetic News, he was also providing literary material of high calibre for the students of English phonotypy in France and Germany. His edition of Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield included a key to the phonetic spellings with detailed explanations in both French and German. It would appear that Ellis was making plans for including Continental countries in the Spelling Reform.⁶⁶

Ellis now added a serial title at the head of his little pamphlets: "Ellis' Phonetic Instruction Books." A second edition of The Child's Phonetic Primer⁶⁷ appeared, along with a Teacher's Guide.⁶⁸ He provided a summary of the basic phonetic principles in this Teacher's Guide and information about the physical structure of the oral cavities.

In a spirit of playfulness and kindness towards children, Ellis published a phonotypically printed edition of some verses of his own: Original Nursery Rhymes, containing such cheerful lines as "Tom Trot an egg had got."⁶⁹ There

⁶⁶ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, The Vicar of Wakefield and Select Poems, by Oliver Goldsmith (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

⁶⁷ A.J. Ellis, The Child's Phonetic Primer or First Phonetic Reading Book, 2nd ed. (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

⁶⁸ A.J. Ellis, The Teacher's Guide to The Child's Phonetic Primer (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

⁶⁹ A.J. Ellis, Original Nursery Rhymes, Being an Attempt to Substitute Playful Sense for Serious Nonsense (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

was a ready market for such an inexpensive item, and Ellis could advance the Spelling Reform along very practical lines with this kind of book. Over fifteen years later Ellis published the Original Nursery Rhymes in regular spelling and was gratified because his son Edwin provided the illustrations for the little work.⁷⁰

One of the most popular of the books which Ellis brought out in this period was his phonotypic version of the Sermon on the Mount and the Two Parables of Our Lord.⁷¹ He was also hard at work completing the transcription of the New Testament. The availability of such a little work as the Sermon met with the full approval of many parents and clergymen whose doubts about the new alphabet were allayed by seeing it record familiar scriptural material. The phonotypic market was also ready for Ellis' version of A Catechism.⁷² He was giving the Cause an air of respectability through these publications, and his optimism was at its height.

⁷⁰ A.J. Ellis, Original Nursery Rhymes, Being an Attempt to Substitute Playful Sense for Serious Nonsense with Illustrations by Edwin Ellis (London: F. Pitman, 1865).

⁷¹ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, The Sermon on the Mount and Two Parables of Our Lord. Being St. Matthew, Chapters 5, 6, and 7; St. Luke, Chapter 10, Verses 25-37, and Chapter 18, Verses 9-14. According to the Authorised Version (London: F. Pitman, 1848).

⁷² A.J. Ellis, A Catechism; That Is to Say, an Instruction to Be Learned by Every Person Before He Is Brought to Be Confirmed by the Bishop. Reprinted from The Book of Common Prayer According to the Use of the Church of England (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

Ellis' phonotypic edition of the New Testament appeared in February 1849.⁷³ It was 320 pages, demy octavo, and set in a special large type which had been ordered for this edition. The price was kept low enough so that the three shillings and six pence would not be prohibitive for many people to own a copy. In addition to the customary edition of cloth boards there was one in "sprinkled sheep" and another in "embossed roan." Nowhere in the volume is there any regular English spelling. There are no headings prefixed to the chapters, but a very full list of contents is included. In his "Preface" Ellis indicates that he had followed the pronunciation uniformly adopted by clergymen in their sermons, but there was no attempt at restoring the pronunciation of the original translators. He noted that had he himself been writing a new translation of the Testament, he would have made an attempt at restoring the ancient Syriac, Greek, and Latin pronunciations of the proper names. A reward of three pence was offered for every misprint which could be discovered so that the stereotyped plate could be corrected and noted in the Phonetic News.⁷⁴

Ellis' work in phonotyping the New Testament received great praise from a special commission which had been

⁷³A.J. Ellis, transliterator, The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. ix-xi.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN.

Chapter 1.

1 In de beginnig woz de Wurd, and de Wurd woz wid God, and de Wurd woz God.

2 De sam woz in de beginnig wid God.

3 Ol tipz wer mad bi him; and widst him woz not eni tipz mad dat woz mad.

4 In him woz lijf; and de lijf woz de ljt ov men.

5 And de ljt jinet in dargenes, and de dargenes compréhended it not.

6 ¶ Har woz a man sent from God, huz nam [woz] Jon.

7 De sam cam for a witnes, tuu bar witnes ov de Ljt, dat ol [men] tru him mjt belév.

8 He woz not dát Ljt, but [woz sent] tuu bar witnes ov dát Ljt.

9 [Dát] woz de tru Ljt, hwig ljtet everi man dat cumet intus de wurd.

10 He woz in de wurd, and de wurd woz mad bi him, and de wurd nu him not.

11 He cam untuu hiz on, and hiz on resévd him not.

12 But oz meni az resévd him, tuu dém gav he pver tuu bréúm de sunz ov God, [ev'n] tuu dém dat belév on hiz nam:

13 Hwíg wer born, not ov blud, ner ov de wil ov de fles, ner ov de wil ov man, but ov God.

14 ¶ And de Wurd woz mad fles, and dweilt amán us, (and we behéld hiz glori, de glori az ov de onli begót'n ov de Fqder,) ful ov gras and trút.

15 ¶ Jon bar witnes ov him, and crjd, saig, Dis woz hf ov hum i spae, Hé dat cumet qfter me iz prelérđ befór me: for he woz befór me.

16 And ov hiz fulnes hav ol we resévd, and gras for gras.

17 For de lo woz giv'n bi Mozes, [but] gras and trút cam bi Jezus Crjst.

18 No man hat sen God at eni tjm; de onli begót'n Sun, hwig iz in de buzum ov de Fqder, he hat de-clárd [him].

19 ¶ And dis iz de record ov Jon, hwen de Jux sent prests and Levjts from Jerusalem tuu qse him, ¶ Hwú qrt ds.

20 And he confést, and demfd not; but confést, ¶ am not de Crjst.

21 And da qcet him, ¶ Hwot den. ¶ Art ds Eljās. And he set, ¶ am not. ¶ Art ds dát profet. And he qnsrd, No.

22 Den sed da untuu him, ¶ Hwú qrt ds; dat we ma giv on qnsr tuu dém dat sent us. ¶ Hwot saest ds ov dípslf.

23 He sed, ¶ [am] de vos ov wun crjg in de wildernes, Mac strát de wa ov de Lord, az sed de profet Ezas. [fx. 40, 3.]

24 And dá hwig wer sent wer ov de Farisez.

25 And da qcet him, and sed untuu him, ¶ Hwí baptizeet ds den, if ds be not dát Crjst, ner Eljās, neder dát profet.

26 Jon qnsrd dem, saig, ¶ baptjz wid woter: but dar standet wun amán u, hum ye no not;

organized by the State of Pennsylvania to reform spelling.⁷⁵ The New Testament was the most ambitious phonotypic work which Ellis had undertaken, and it was attracting the attention of many groups throughout England and abroad. At last the proposal which he had made to the Birmingham Phonetic Society had become a reality.

Pitman, meanwhile, was preparing to revive the Journal in order to take back the reins into his own hands. Ellis became alarmed at such an idea because he had sunk much of his own money into the expensive publishing venture, the Phonetic News. So much hinged upon the interpretation of the original agreement. Since Ellis had paid £70 for the "good will of the business", Pitman had been under the definite impression that he could start up his own press again at any time. After much negotiation and a refusal by Pitman to accept Ellis' offer of £100 of free press work, it was agreed that Pitman could print books no longer than eight pages demy octavo till the end of 1850.⁷⁶ This arrangement did not include the Phonetic Journal.

⁷⁵ Francis A. March, Thomas Chase, H.L. Wayland, Arthur Biddle, James W. Walk, and Samuel A. Boyle, Report of the Commission on Amended Orthography Authorized by the Legislature of Pennsylvania Appointed by Governor Beaver, October 24, 1887 (Harrisburg: Edwin K. Meyers, 1889).

⁷⁶ Abercrombie MS.

Ellis does not appear in the most favorable light if we examine his relationship with Pitman at this time. It would seem that with regard to the whole unfortunate matter of the press ownership that Ellis' impatience triumphed over his loyalty. He could not bear to have Pitman make further modifications of phonotypic symbols. An examination of Ellis' behavior throughout his life reveals an impatience and curtness with anyone who tried to obstruct him in his own pursuits.

Pitman went ahead and took matters into his own hands again. His enthusiasm was very high, and with a gesture of unexpected magnanimity, he acknowledged Ellis' contributions in defense of phonetic spelling. Ellis was indeed the "Commander-in-Chief of the serried lines of type phonetically disposed; how much more so now that he has given so lavishly of his own fortune!"⁷⁷

In March 1849 an announcement appeared in the newly-revived Phonotypic Journal setting forth Pitman's reason for its publication again. He indicated that it was required as the organ of the Phonetic Society. This had formerly been known as the Phonographic Corresponding Society, and its

⁷⁷ Isaac Pitman, "Revival of the 'Phonotypic Journal'," Phonotypic Journal, 8 (1849), 1-3.

efforts were to be devoted to the Writing and Printing Reform. Pitman indulged in no angry remarks about the lack of attention to the Society's concerns in Ellis' Phonetic News. He stressed that the two publications would not be in competition with each other.⁷⁸ The Journal again contained all those matters which Pitman felt were so essential: lists of contributors to the Phonetic Fund, titles and dates of periodicals that contained articles on the Reform, and lists of new members.

On another tack, Ellis undertook in April 1849 the publication of a "Romanic" monthly magazine, The Spelling Reformer "to advocate the Spelling Reform as a present means of educating the poor, by rendering the art of Romanic reading less laborious."⁷⁹ He ardently championed phonotypy's use in the schools. Then he announced in the last issue of The Phonetic News that all phonetic "intelligence" was to be sent to his own new publication rather than to the Phonotypic Journal. Ellis assured Pitman that there was no desire on his part to usurp any fame from "his many and great merits" and that the progress of the Spelling Reform had to take place in spite of an "apparent opposition."⁸⁰

⁷⁸Baker, op. cit., p. 107.

⁷⁹A.J. Ellis, The Spelling Reformer (London: Ellis, 1849).

⁸⁰Abercrombie MS.

Now that Pitman had resumed his editorship of the Phonotypic Journal since March, he, too, vigorously set out to catch a part of the market for easy phonotypic works and went ahead with orders for new founts of phonotypes. Ellis went right on with his printing arrangements and brought out a little book called Scripture Texts Systematically Arranged and Printed, a phonotypic rendering of Pastor Johann Thielisch's selections from the Bible. Originally that book had been licensed as an Austrian school book.⁸¹ Ellis retained the same choices but used the King James Version for his own publication.

In July 1849 Ellis journeyed to Manchester, where in the lecture theater of that city's Athenaeum the "friends and promulgators" of the Writing and Spelling Reform assembled. Ellis reminded the group that the first phonetic meeting in England had taken place there six years previously. In a highly rhetorical manner he said, "We are in danger of the conflagration of ignorance; we must allay it with the water of phoneticism!!!"⁸² On his visit to Manchester Ellis also went to the Phonetic Sunday School at Stockport, as well as

⁸¹A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Scripture Texts Systematically Arranged and Printed Phonetically for the Use of Schools (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁸²A.J. Ellis, "Address to the Phonetic Meeting at Manchester", Phonotypic Journal, 8 (1849), 65-69.

to the Mather Street Temperance Hall, where he saw the gratifying results of the foothold which phonotypy was clearly making.⁸³

Another year had already gone by since the great Birmingham Sixth Phonetic Festival. Though very busy with his various projects, Ellis took time to address that body again. By now Pitman was sufficiently mollified and sat on the platform with Ellis. With great satisfaction they both viewed the large numbers who shared their enthusiasm and held the same convictions. This time, however, Ellis made some remarks which to Pitman bordered on the heretical. He informed the four hundred visitors that the seven Festivals had been very useful for promoting a knowledge of shorthand, but that he was concerned lest they continue to be a repetition of "the old story of the Mountain and the Mouse". Ellis implied that only in phonotypy was there to be found a system which was valuable to the public at large.⁸⁴

In the 1849 issue of The Spelling Reformer Ellis reported that Benn Pitman had tallied the number of people in Manchester who had been taught in a few months to read and write phonetically and noted that 20,000 phonetic

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ A.J. Ellis, "Address to the Seventh Birmingham Phonetic Festival," Phonotypic Journal, 8 (1849), 107.

publications had been sold.⁸⁵

The twentieth-century German scholar Wilhelm Horn felt that phonotypy was difficult to read owing to the wide deviations from traditional spelling. He believed that the system probably would not have yielded a larger degree of success than it had in Ellis' own time.⁸⁶

Ellis prepared the first phonetic edition of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, a work which was a great favorite among large numbers of devout English in the mid-nineteenth century. Though many homes among the poor possessed only a Testament, Bunyan's classic frequently stood by its side. Ellis knew that there was a ready market for the great inspirational story.⁸⁷

Among the unusual items which Ellis prepared in connection with the Reform was a perpetual calendar containing all kinds of specific information such as computing in

⁸⁵ R.E. Zachrisson, Anglic: An International Language with a Survey of English Spelling Reform (Uppsala: Almqvist, 1932), 27.

⁸⁶ Wilhelm Horn, Laut und Leben: Englische Lautgeschichte der Neueren Zeit (1400-1950), Bearbeitet und Herausgegeben von Martin Lehnert, 2 vols. (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1954), p. 88.

⁸⁷ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, The Pilgrim's Progress From This World to That Which Is to Come: Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream, by John Bunyan (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

phonotypes the days of the week until the year 3901. Ellis seized every possible opportunity to bring his name to the forefront by a wide variety of publications.⁸⁸

Because the progress of the Reform was so encouraging, Ellis published guide lines for compositors who hopefully would be taking their place throughout the country to spread knowledge about ways of setting phonetic type. Modestly he stated that his own pronunciation, a "good and careful" one, could be safely followed. Pitman's own pronunciation frequently differed, and the lack of a formal education would show up in transcriptions. Ellis and Pitman argued heatedly in their correspondence on certain divergencies. Ellis was afraid, however, that changes, however minor, in his system would appear in specimens submitted to newspapers and warned that such liberties would injure the cause of the Spelling Reform. They would constitute a "personal injustice to Mr. Ellis."⁸⁹

Recognizing that the greatest possible demand for phonotypic works lay among the many clergy who conducted

⁸⁸ A.J. Ellis, A Perpetual Calendar for All Years A.D. (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁸⁹ A.J. Ellis, Phonotypic Spelling Rules as Employed by Alexander John Ellis, B.A. in His Phonetic Printing Office Collected for the Use of Phonetic Writers and Compositors Who Are Acquainted with the Old Spelling (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

schools throughout England, Ellis devised a little book which could serve as a groundwork upon which the teacher could build a course in religion, a major component of that age's schooling. Ellis adopted a sound pedagogical approach in First Ideas of Religion, in Conversations between a Mother and Her Child. He anticipated every question a child might ask concerning the notion of God and the Creation. Ellis scrupulously avoided "those mysterious doctrines of Christianity" which expressed doctrinal differences, and he aimed at satisfying all the various congregations.⁹⁰ Ellis was a shrewd businessman. There was probably a greater demand for this type of publication because increasingly larger numbers of people were becoming familiar with the phonotypic books.

His ingenuity in teaching phonotypic printing is evident in his methods of instruction in romanic or heterographic, i.e. regular spelling, once the student had become proficient in the new style. Ellis believed that the transition from reading phonetically to reading romanically could easily be achieved through the use of Latin and Greek selections which had been transliterated into English phonotypes. The purpose of this material was to sharpen

⁹⁰ A.J. Ellis, First Ideas of Religion, in Conversations between a Mother and Her Child (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

phonetic proficiency before making the transition. The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke, xv. 1-10) was rendered into Latin and Greek forms using phonotypic spelling in order to illustrate his method. He believed this to be a valuable approach because the classical languages contained all the sounds which were familiar to English ears; moreover, for the students the foreign combinations held no meaning which would detract from the teacher's assessment of their capabilities.⁹¹

Again utilizing selections from the New Testament, Ellis printed the passages side by side in phonotypy and heterography to enable the pupils to advance from the one typography into the other. This reverse kind of approach was made available in a pamphlet issued with the preceding work. Ellis called this supplement Romanic Exercises.⁹² He anticipated every kind of need and tried to forestall possible criticisms by planning his presentation with the closest attention given to details.

⁹¹ A.J. Ellis, Romanic Reading Explained to Phonetic Readers: Shewing How Any Adult Who Has Been Taught To Read Phonetically May Teach Himself to Read Romanically. With Advice to Teachers for Instructing Children (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁹² A.J. Ellis, Romanic Exercises for Phonetic Pupils Consisting of Passages from the New Testament in Both Romanic and Phonetic Spelling for the Purpose of Familiarizing Phonetic Readers with the Mysteries of Romanic Orthography (Bath: F. Pitman, 1849).

Ellis knew that people were familiar with The Book of Common Prayer, and he brought out a small booklet with phonotypic renditions of some of the prayers and collects.⁹³ No stone was left unturned in order to bring the Reform into as many homes as possible. Ellis was obliged to publish a second edition of the Collects. This time he added his own name to that of his publisher Fred Pitman, who heretofore had appeared as the sole publisher for other Ellis publications. Though Ellis set the types in his own printing establishment at 457 West Strand, London, Fred Pitman continued to act in the capacity of publisher.

Religious themes offered an inexhaustible source for making phonotypic transliterations. Since Ellis could not publish a complete phonetic edition of the Old Testament because of the enormous amount of time and labor it would entail, he compromised by choosing some of the more familiar narratives found in the Pentateuch. With true Victorian fastidiousness he availed himself of the limited scope of the little book "to avoid certain words and phrases which, it is universally agreed, had better be withheld from the perusal

⁹³ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Collects and Select Prayers Taken from The Book of Common Prayer (London: A.J. Ellis and F. Pitman, 1849).

of children in any book whatsoever."⁹⁴ The phonotypic version of the stories is divided into paragraphs and omits the customary chapters and verses. Though Ellis aimed at providing children with suitable material for learning how to read, he also kept in mind the needs of his adult readers.

Special editions of literary classics were also prepared in phonotypy. Samuel Johnson's Rasselas⁹⁵ and John Gay's Fables were made available for the "grey-headed men who have been engaged for years in the instruction of youth and have become ardent disciples."⁹⁶

Even Shakespeare's plays appeared in phonotypic dress, and Ellis welcomed the chance for these new readers to become familiar with one "so worthy". He was aware that such a phonetic presentation could affect some of the rhymes and puns. Ellis felt himself to be on firm ground because the Elizabethan orthography was so inconsistent that the plays of Shakespeare could not be limited by any fixed ways of spelling the language. In his introduction to The Tempest,

⁹⁴ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Bible Histories from the Books of Moses Printed Phonetically in the Words of the Authorized Version (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁹⁵ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Rasselas and Selected Poems, by Samuel Johnson (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁹⁶ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Fables, by John Gay (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

Æ HISTORI OV ÆZAC AND JACUB.

And Abraham woz old, and wel stric'n in aj : and Æ-Lord had blest Abraham in el tiþz. And Abraham sed untu hiz eldest servant ov hiz hss, dat ruлд over el dat he had : "Æ wil mac ðe swar bi Æ-Lord, ðe God ov hev'n, and ðe God ov ðe ert, dat ðs falt not tac a wif untu mj sun ov ðe deterz ov ðe Cánaanþs, amúy hum i dwel : but ðs falt go untu mj cuntri, and tu mj cindred, and tac a wif untu mj sun Æzac."

And ðe servant sed untu him : "Peradvéntur ðe wuman wil not be wiliþ tu folo me untu ðis land : i must i nedz briþ ði sun agén untu ðe land from hwens ðs camest."

And Abraham sed untu him : "Bewár ðs ðat ðs briþ not mj sun ðider agén. Æ-Lord God ov hev'n, hwiþ tac me from mj fqderz hss, and from ðe land ov mj cindred, and hwiþ spac untu me, and ðat swar untu me, seiþ : 'Untu ði sed wil i giv ðis land ;' he šal send hiz anjel befór ðe, and ðs falt tac a wif untu mj sun from ðens. And if ðe wuman wil not be wiliþ tu folo ðe, ðen ðs falt be cler from ðis mj ot : onli briþ not mj sun ðider agén." And ðe servant swar tu him consérniþ ðát mater.

12. A.J. Ellis, *Bible Stories*, 1849:
"The History of Isaac and Jacob"

Ellis wrote, "Shakespeare's edition was a phonetic one!" He used Knight and Collier's editions of the plays and removed all "gross words unfit for young readers or the family circle."⁹⁷ The introductions mention plans to issue twenty-four similar phonetic editions of Shakespeare but only The Tempest and Macbeth⁹⁸ appeared. At this time Ellis was bringing out approximately three hundred pages each year.

Ellis was never content to stay too long at any one place and was the kind of person who did not like to confine himself to labours that had no end in sight. He was preparing to bring his affairs in Bath to a close and was arranging for a long visit to Bristol. He closed down his press at 1 Albion Place in October 1849 and sent all his phonotypic founts to another printer, Savill and Edwards in London. His nerves were in poor condition, and he decided to take a vacation at Weston-super-mare. Pitman was elated by the turn of events and believed, prematurely, that his contract with Ellis had come to an end. There appeared to be no reason why he could not continue all phonetic publications under his own name. Ellis promptly informed Pitman of his

⁹⁷ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, The Tempest, by William Shakespeare (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

⁹⁸ A.J. Ellis, transliterator, Macbeth, by William Shakespeare (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

PERSUNZ REPRESENTED.

Duynan, cing ov Scotland. *his suuz.*
 Malcum,
 Donalban,
 Macbeth,
 Bagoe,
 Macduff,
 Lennox,
 Flece,
 Meneth,
 Agnes,
 Calade,
 Fleace, eun tun Bagoe.
 Syard, eul ov Nortumberland, jeneral ov de Inglij furcece.
 Yng Seerd, his sun.
 Sef'n, an ofiser atending on Macbeth.
 Sun tun Macbeth.
 An Inglij doctur. A scooc doctur.
 A soljer. A portor. An old man.

Ladi Macbeth.
 Ladi Macbeth.
 Jent'wuman atending on Ladi Macbeth.
 Macbeth, and tre Wigce.

Lords, Jent'wuman, Ofisers, Soljers, Marderers,
 Atendants, and Messenjers.
 A Guest ov Bagoe, and several after Aperijans.

SEN.—*In de end ov de Fort Act, in Ingland; trm
 de rest ov de Pla, in Scotland.*

MACBETH.

ACT I.

SEN 1.—*An op'n plas. Tander and ljtayg.
 Enter tre Wigce.*

- 1 *Ferst Wig.* ¶ Hwen ful we tre met agin,
 in tander, ljtayg, or in ran.
- 2 *Secund Wig.* Hwen de hurli-barli'z dun,
 hwen de bat'l'z lost and wun.
- 3 *Terd Wig.* Stát wil be ar de set ov sun.
- 4 *Ferst Wig.* ¶ Hwar de plas.
- 5 *Secund Wig.* Upin de hat.
- 6 *Terd Wig.* Har tu met wid Macbeth.
- 7 *Ferst Wig.* ¶ eum, Gramscleis!
- 8 *Gl.* Paduo colz.—Anón.—
 Far iz fsl, and fsl iz far:
 huver trua de fog and filti ar. [Wigce vanisf.]

SEN 2.—*A Camp ner Forc. Aldrum soldin.
 Enter cing Duynan, Malcum, Donalban, Lennox,
 wid Atendants, metig a Medig Soljer.*

- 1 *Duyn.* ¶ Hiwt bladi man iz dát. He ean repért,
 az semet bj his pjlt, ov de revult
 de myst eist.
- 2 *Mal.* His iz de sarjant,
 hu, lje a gad and hardi soljer, fot
 'genst mj captiviti.—Hál, Bray fremd!
 Sa tu de cing de nolej ov de brot,
 az ds didst lev it.

1 *Gramscleis, de nam for a col.*
 2 *Paduo, de nam for a tod.*

mistake. He wrote sternly: "The agreement into which I entered with you this year remains in full force."⁹⁹

Resuming the printing of primers and special editions of reputable children's authors such as the highly moral stories of Mrs. Letitia Barbauld, Pitman increased his efforts to gain the leadership which Ellis had taken in printing phonotypic works. Pitman eagerly returned to his own labors on the Phonotypic Journal in December 1849 but continued the name it had carried under Ellis' editorship, the Phonetic Journal.

Ellis was now in a state of complete nervous exhaustion, and Pitman announced that until the close of 1850 he would follow the spelling principles which Ellis had earlier established.¹⁰⁰ The December 1849 issue of The Phonetic Friend would be discontinued following its January number.¹⁰¹

On January 18, 1850 Ellis also discontinued The Spelling Reformer because his health prevented him from doing any writing for more than half an hour at a time. For three

⁹⁹Abercrombie MS.

¹⁰⁰Baker, op. cit., p. 109.

¹⁰¹"Announcement," Phonetic Journal, 9 (January 1850),

months Ellis gave up all work related to phonetics and said that he would not 'excogitate' any further. He was resting so that his brain could resume its "pristine state."¹⁰²

Shortly afterwards Ellis recovered from his nervous exhaustion and was planning new publications in an alphabet which he devised himself. Problems arose because a fire destroyed the phonetic type in the London printing office to which he had earlier sent the founts.¹⁰³

The other side of the coin has to be carefully examined. Occasionally there would appear sharp criticism against Ellis. For example, The Preston Pilot of September 21, 1850 presented a leading article on the subject, in which the Vicar of Preston expressed views which were diametrically opposed to those of the Reform. With great relish, he quoted a pedagogical solution to the failure of pupils to learn spelling which a certain Dr. Parr had recommended and with which he was in full accord. Ellis received the full salvo: "Flogging has made many scholars, and flogging has made gentlemen; and, sir, it is owing to the want of flogging that

¹⁰²A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Phonetic Journal, 9 (May 1850).

¹⁰³Baker, op. cit., p. 110.

you are neither one nor the other!"¹⁰⁴

By October 1850 Ellis responded to the invitation of the Preston Pilot's editor and made a few observations of his own about the "flagellatory extravagances" of Dr. Parr as well as those of the Vicar of Preston. Ellis was not in agreement with the paper's editorial criticisms of phonetic spelling, and he attempted to refute those views. He offered as supportive evidence his own experience, when he saw his six year old daughter read McCulloch's Third Reading Book with ease because of her having learned only the phonotypic alphabet.¹⁰⁵

At this time he was beset with a number of other problems. Subscriptions to The Spelling Reformer were still arriving after Ellis had already abandoned the enterprise. The situation was complicated by the fact that he had recently started a Lecturers Fund. He, therefore, decided that the "monies" from what he had termed the 'London Experiment' would now be applied so that this fund could pay a lecturer to conduct a daily class, visit schools, and purchase books as well as other necessities. By this time Ellis had taken up

¹⁰⁴ Editor (The Preston Pilot), The Phonetic Journal, 9 (September 1850), 242.

¹⁰⁵ A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor of 'The Preston Pilot'," The Phonetic Journal, 9 (September 1850), 243.

residence at 7 Apsley Place, Redland, Bristol.¹⁰⁶

Ellis appreciated the warm invitation to join in the Eighth Annual Birmingham Phonetic Festival, and though on physician's orders he was unable to attend, he was, on the whole, pleased with the Reform's progress. Ellis honored Birmingham as the "Cradle of Phonetic Printing."¹⁰⁷ Isaac Pitman's obsession with making changes in the phonetic alphabet became almost intolerable to Ellis because it seemed harmful to all their efforts. Ellis wrote to Pitman's brother and bemoaned Isaac's haste in the preparation of The Lord's Prayer in the phonotypic version. Ellis remembered that Pitman had agreed publicly in the first enthusiasm to abide by the decision of the Phonetic Council, and now Pitman was already going his own way without regard to it. Ellis did not want to involve himself in the affairs of the Council because he distrusted Pitman's proposed role in its business. He wrote to Benn Pitman as follows: "This was the principal reason, but, of course, one which I could not make public."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 118.

¹⁰⁷ A.J. Ellis, "Letter to Mr. Francis Reilly, Secretary of the Committee for Conducting the Birmingham Phonetic Festival, September 30, 1850," The Phonetic Journal, 9 (September 1850), 235.

¹⁰⁸ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Benn Pitman, October 22, 1850, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

Benn Pitman watched with amazement Ellis' progress in the Spelling Reform. An hour's daily instruction for two or three months helped many to read with tolerable accuracy and fluency. Benn Pitman wrote, "Even the ignorant and reformed drunkards benefited from phonotypy."¹⁰⁹

Benn Pitman was critical of his brother's efforts to revise the 1847 alphabet so that the vowels could have a European value through slightly modifying the symbols which had proved so successful with their English values. Benn Pitman believed that the phonetic system should be universal and regarded the existing phonotypic alphabet as an "error".¹¹⁰

Ellis' indignation arising from these persistent modifications of the phonotypic alphabet was expressed in a strong letter to Benn Pitman. Ellis was aghast at the appearance of the alphabet, which looked to him like "a fool's motley, half Latinistic, half English, half Isaacish--if such a thing must have three halves!" Contemptuously he dismissed the "trash" and refused to have his intellect "insulted" by such work.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Benn Pitman, op. cit., p. 2446.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 2447.

¹¹¹ Benn Pitman, Sir Isaac Pitman: His Life and Labours (Cincinnati: Benn Pitman), 1902, p. 149.

Ellis and Benn Pitman continued to correspond regularly. The latter was shocked at his brother's attempts to "minify" Ellis' sacrifices for the Reform. Having vehemently expressed his opinion, Ellis did not say anything further in his letters which would detract in the slightest from Isaac's stature. It alarmed Benn Pitman to see that some of Ellis' publications were rendered obsolete when the proposed changes were adopted.¹¹²

For the American market Ellis prepared a revision of two of his most successful works, Phonetic Spelling Familiarly Explained¹¹³ and The Teacher's Guide to Phonetic Reading.¹¹⁴ He arranged for Longley and Brother, a thriving Cincinnati printing firm, which was becoming known for its competence with unorthodox founts, to publish the combined edition of those works in a cheap paper format known as Guide to Phonetic Reading for the Use of Teachers and Private Learners.¹¹⁵ Ellis hoped that this edition would make it possible for the poorest to use the new system of reading.

¹¹²Benn Pitman, Sir Isaac Pitman and His Services to Phonography, p. 2447.

¹¹³A.J. Ellis, Phonetic Spelling Familiarly Explained for the Use of Romanic Readers with Numerous Examples (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

¹¹⁴A.J. Ellis, The Teacher's Guide to Phonetic Reading (London: F. Pitman, 1849).

¹¹⁵A.J. Ellis, Guide to Phonetic Reading for the Use of Teachers and Private Learners (Cincinnati: Longley and Brothers, 1850).

CHAPTER IV

EXTENDING THE READING REFORM THROUGHOUT GREAT BRITAIN AND DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVE SYSTEMS FOR AMENDING ORTHOGRAPHY (1851-88)

The Reading Reform underwent periods of rapid growth during 1851-88. Such diverse organizations as the Ohio Phonetic Association, the Swinton Pauper Schools, and the College of Preceptors endorsed the work which Ellis was championing. He was obliged, nonetheless, to ignore the unwelcome demands from many quarters that he make revisions in the phonotypic alphabet. Ellis visited a number of Scottish institutions in order to assess the progress of the movement in the Edinburgh environs. Regrettably, both Ellis and Pitman had become estranged to the point where plans were under consideration for pursuing courses of action exclusive of one another. Meanwhile, Ellis, whose abilities as a first-rate philologist were acknowledged throughout the Continent, was busy exchanging theoretical views on language with some of the most distinguished scholars of the time--Max Müller, Francis A. March, and Sir John Herschel. Further attempts of Ellis to modify the English alphabet resulted in his systems of Glossic, Dimid'iun, and Europik.

Those events arising in connection with the expansion of the Reform will be the subject of the following remarks.

Exeter Hall, consecrated to "Christian and philanthropic meetings," was popular with many London societies and groups whose aims were widely diverse. The Friends of the Writing and Printing Reform gathered there on September 1, 1851 in Minor Hall, the smaller of its two rooms. Alexander Ellis, its chief speaker, received much enthusiastic cheering and approbation for his previous contributions to the Cause. On this occasion he graciously singled out its noteworthy adherents, particularly praising the novelist Maria Edgeworth, a warm advocate of phonetic reform.¹

At the same time that the enthusiasm for phonetic revolution was high in London, far away in Ohio there were many others who believed they, too, could resolve the difficult problem of enabling the uneducated to learn how to read. The Ohio Phonetic Association met at the close of December 1851 and praised Ellis' work in England. The mere mention of his name on the floor of the meeting aroused a high degree of excitement because the effort at spelling reform was being undertaken "scientifically."²

¹A.J. Ellis, "The London Phonetic Meeting," Phonetic Journal, 10 (September 1851), 192-93.

²L.A. Hine, Lecture on the Spelling Reform at the First Meeting of the Ohio Phonetic Association, Columbus, Ohio, December 310, 1851 (Cincinnati, 1851), p. 3.

Ellis approved of the work which Benn Pitman was doing in 1852 at the Pauper School at Swinton, near Manchester, where fifty of the dullest students were finally achieving success through the reformed alphabet. Ellis also closely followed the work done "with brilliant and deserved success" at the Glasgow Bridewell and at the Sheffield Phonetic School for Adults.³

Ellis' correspondence with Isaac Pitman at this time does not reveal the strain in their relationship. He calmly offered Pitman the lease of the former printing facilities on Albion Place and the terms were financially attractive. With tongue in cheek, he pointed out to Pitman its advantageous location, especially its garden where Pitman "could cultivate his dinners."⁴

Pitman urged members of the Phonetic Council to use some of their own experimental notations in contributions submitted for publication in spite of Ellis' objections. Plans were made for the Phonetic Journal to contain a series of fresh alphabets.

Charles Cayley, a member of the Council, submitted a "Cosmopolitan Alphabet" which Ellis immediately condemned because the title was misleading. Ellis saw a Latin and Greek

³ Letter, Ellis to Benn Pitman, January 3, 1852 in Maurice Harrison, The Story of the Initial Teaching Alphabet (New York: Pitman, 1964), p. 34.

⁴ Abercrombie MS.

basis in only a part of Europe. He suggested wryly that Chinese and Arabic would be much more "cosmopolitan" and reminded the readers of the Journal that the public wanted results because it had become wearied with the processes of constructing these new alphabets.⁵

By October 1852 Ellis had become highly critical towards Isaac Pitman's Phonetic Journal. He wrote to Benn Pitman sarcastically about the appearance of the monthly magazine: "The Changeling seems its best name and very like a miserable changeling it looks. Your brother has done his worst for the Reform."⁶

In 1853 Ellis abandoned his attempts to set up a Reading Reform Association. The Phonetic Council had not been particularly receptive to the formation of a rival organization within the Spelling Reform. Ellis, however, had viewed it as a compliment to the Reform and intended to promote romanized reading by using the 1847 alphabet. It was at this time that he started to study the possibilities of alphabets that did not contain non-Roman letters.⁷

⁵A.J. Ellis, "Observations on the So-Called 'New Phonetic Alphabet, a Cosmopolitan Basis' with Reasons for Retaining the Alphabet of the Phonetic News", Phonetic Journal, 11 (March 1852), 90-91.

⁶Benn Pitman, "Sir Isaac Pitman and His Services to Phonography." (Extracts from Sir Isaac Pitman: His Life and Labors, by Benn Pitman). U.S. Serial Set No. 4805. 58th Congress, 3rd Session. House Documents. Document 5. Interior: Education. Vol. 2, 1905, p. 2447.

⁷Abercrombie MS.

At times he could be sternly dispassionate and grimly precise. In 1854 Pitman was casting about for someone of the highest repute to take the leadership of his new Phonetic Society. Because he didn't want people to think that he and Ellis were at variance personally, owing to the different opinions they held on phonetics, Pitman unfortunately asked Ellis to become its president. Ellis immediately took offense at the invitation and informed Pitman that he wanted nothing to do with a society of "your own creation and upholding." Caustically reminding Pitman that George Dawson was nominally its president, Ellis said that he had not been aware that the position was "vacant."⁸ Pitman's feeble attempt to soothe the implacable Ellis was a dismal failure. It is all the more surprising that Pitman printed Ellis' unpleasant letter in the Journal.

Throughout his shorthand correspondence Ellis adhered to the 9th edition of Pitman's Phonography in anything that required the use of that system of writing.⁹ Phonotypy was Ellis' prime concern during the years of association with Pitman. Nevertheless, he did revise one very small

⁸A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Phonetic Journal, 13 (September 1854), 299.

⁹Baker, op. cit., p. 130.

phonographic work by James Drake. In 1854 Ellis re-edited the collection of phonographic phrases in foreign languages and supplied phonotypic equivalents to help those unacquainted with the various European expressions.¹⁰

Prior to his departure for Edinburgh several matters of interest came to his attention. He learned of the series of four meetings termed "Alphabetic Conferences" held on January 25 and 30 and February 1 and 4 at the home of the Prussian ambassador to England, Chevalier Christian Karl von Bunsen (1791-1860). A group of distinguished scholars including Sir John Herschel, Sir Charles Trevelyan (an old friend of Isaac Pitman), Dr. Max Müller, and Professor Karl Lepsius concluded that the basis of an alphabet which would be used throughout the world, particularly by missionaries, needed to be philological, but the "physiological system should be checked and reduced by linguistic observation." The group determined that Roman types would have to serve as the basis for the graphic system, and diacritical marks would supply the deficiencies. Some of the scholars present at the Chevalier's home proposed their own versions of an alphabet. Ellis, who had given so much effort to problems like this,

¹⁰A.J. Ellis, ed., The Anglo-Foreign Word Book or Phonographer's Guide to the Pronunciation, Derivation, and Simplification of Those Numerous French, Latin, German, and Italian Words Which Are Now in Frequent Use in English Arranged by James Drake (London: F. Pitman, 1854).

had not been invited to participate. Years later he disapprovingly observed that on the basis of the extant report, the scholars were not prepared to handle "so delicate, difficult, and complex a subject."¹¹

Just before he left with his family for Edinburgh in August 1854 to study the progress of the Reading Reform, he accepted an offer to teach for a day a class employing the phonetic system at the Home and Colonial Schools in Gray's Inn Road, London. Its headmaster, a certain Mr. Dunning, extended the invitation to Ellis, whom he believed to be the best authority in the field. The invitation gratified Ellis because the school was distinguished by the patronage of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

Ellis addressed its "most advanced female students in training" on August 13 and 14, 1854. He spoke before three hundred young ladies in the large Infant School Room, where he lectured on the "Physiology of Speech as an Instrument of Education." It is pleasant to read of Ellis' circulating afterwards among the "females" who were chatting gaily with

¹¹A.J. Ellis, "On Glossic, a New System of English Spelling Proposed for Concurrent Use in order to Remedy the Defects without Detracting from the Value of Our Present Orthography", Transactions of the Philological Society (1870-71), p. 103.

one another at tea. Ellis was always a gregarious person. He had just turned forty and enjoyed all the social amenities.¹²

While he was residing at Corstophine, Edinburgh, Ellis also accepted Sheriff Watson's invitation to visit the Lower Denburn Infant School in Aberdeen. The phonetic system used in that institution had elicited favorable comment from Ellis, who shared along with the people operating the school, the latest thinking about the Reform in England and America.¹³

It was the humanitarian aspects of this school's goals which appealed to Ellis' high moral sense. Two weeks after his visit there, he wrote a public letter to Sheriff Watson in which he praised the effort to uplift the social conditions of the poorest waifs in the city. Commenting on what he saw, Ellis wrote, "Little mites that could scarcely get off their forms without tumbling on their noses manfully made their way through unknown words by a mere knowledge of the phonetic letters!" Ellis was very happy about the staff's attitude and felt that he was seeing the rewards for his many years of labor. He was also shown Sheriff Watson's additional educational enterprise for older students, the Female School

¹²"Intelligence," Phonetic Journal, 13 (October 1854), 344.

¹³A.J. Ellis to Sheriff Watson, July 10, 1854, Phonetic Journal, 13 (October 1854), 344.

of Industry, in which the students made the transition from phonetic to romanian reading. In Ellis' opinion not enough time was allowed to make this shift.¹⁴

While he was in Edinburgh, Ellis read the Ethnological Report of Charles Mansfield to the Philological Society containing information about the use of a large number of phonetic characters adapted from those employed in the 1847 alphabet. The language of the Payagwás, a South American Indian tribe near the Paraguay River, offered transcription problems, but Mansfield's use of Ellis' phonetic alphabet had helped to solve them.¹⁵

Ellis had been thinking about a plan for publishing a "Manual of Latinic Writing" to enable phoneticians in all countries "to converse conveniently in writing concerning the sounds of speech." In preparation for this work, he published The Latinic Alphabet,¹⁶ a work dealing with symbolizing the principal European and Asiatic sounds. He chose the Latin alphabet because it provided symbols with which all philologists were familiar, and he described the inverting of some of the letters so as to utilize all the

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 345.

¹⁵ Charles B. Mansfield, "A Few Payagwá Words and Some Account of the Payagwás with Remarks by Robert Gordon Latham," Transactions of the Philological Society (1854), p. 229.

¹⁶ A.J. Ellis, The Latinic Alphabet (London: F. Pitman, 1854).

possibilities of the printers' founts. He employed the term "metagraphy" to designate the transcription of European and Asiatic sounds through the use of the Latin type founts in order to retain as much as possible of the original orthography.

While in Edinburgh, he continued work on a universal alphabet based on an ordinary fount of Roman or italic letters and expanded his Latinic Alphabet in a contribution to the Reports of the British Association for its Glasgow meeting in April 1855. The aim of the alphabet was to assist geographers and ethnologists.¹⁷ In his Travellers' Digraphic Alphabet Ellis renounced all copyright and requested literary journals and newspapers to reprint the alphabet in their pages. It differed slightly from his Latinic Alphabet, but Ellis took advantage of a change of title in order to disseminate his newest alphabet.¹⁸

In this alphabet Ellis used two or more letters to represent phonemes. The combinations or digraphs, did not

¹⁷A.J. Ellis, "On a Universal Alphabet with Ordinary Letters for the Use of Geographers, Ethnologists, etc." Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 185 (September 19, 1855), 143.

¹⁸A.J. Ellis, Travellers' Digraphic Alphabet of Ordinary Types for Approximating to the Sounds of All Languages (London: F. Pitman, 1856).

possess the separate sound values of the monographic characters of which they are made up. Each digraph behaves as a single character. Ellis indicates that he has chosen this term "because two or more letters are systematically employed to represent single sounds." For example Ellis uses kh in the German dach; ao as in Italian poco; ly as in the Spanish ll.

While he was busy designing alphabets for travellers and philologists, he was working on the general introduction to the American Phonetic Dictionary of the English Language designed by Nathaniel Storrs and compiled by Dan S. Smalley in 1855 in Cincinnati. In this first work of its kind, the phonetic alphabet consisted of slight modifications of some of Pitman's symbols. The dictionary had been devised by Benn Pitman, Elias Longley, and A.J. Ellis. The bequest of a Boston school principal, Storrs, made possible its publication.¹⁹

Ellis' introduction to the work contains a succinct account of the work's phonetic principles and the early struggles of the Spelling Reform. Storrs, who was impressed with Ellis' "philanthropy and ample means," was delighted to have the assistance of his "gifted mind." Rather prematurely

¹⁹ A.J. Ellis, "Introduction" to The American Phonetic Dictionary of the English Language, Adapted to the Present State of Literature and Science, with Pronouncing Vocabularies of Classical, Scriptural and Geographical Names, by N. Storrs, compiled by D.S. Smalley (Cincinnati: Longley, 1855).

Ellis observed that the complete spelling reform was now a reality and piously intoned "Esto perpetua!"²⁰

In July 1855 Ellis assured readers of Phonetic Journal that after twelve years he still had a great interest in the movement because of its social implications, at the same time emphasizing that the problem lay not in the existence of an "a priori" orthography but rather in the all-pervading ignorance concerning the nature of speech. He stressed that only the 1847 alphabet adequately helped with the Reading Reform because the transition to romanized reading could be made from its phonetic forms with greater ease. "I do not insist on the use of phonetic books one moment longer than is necessary for the acquirement of romanized spelling."²¹ Considering that Pitman was determined to go beyond Ellis' ideas, it is surprising to find him willing to print the entire statement which Ellis provided on the subject.

An expanded form of The Traveller's Alphabet was issued as Universal Digraphic Alphabet in 1856.²² The four

²⁰ Ibid., p. xxxviii.

²¹ A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor", Phonetic Journal XIV (July 1855), p. 30.

²² A.J. Ellis, Universal Digraphic Alphabet Composed of Ordinary Types for Accurately Exhibiting the Pronunciation of All Language (Edinburgh: Seton, 1856).

page publication is a tour de force of compression, in which it is possible to see the foundation of his future Palaeotype, the phonetic notational system for his study On Early English Pronunciation.

Ellis constructed an interesting comparative table of his "Digraphic", "Latinic", and "Suggested Panethnic" alphabets along with Max Müller's "Missionary" and Lepsius' "Linguistic" alphabets. He now had consolidated his efforts with the various alphabets in a twenty-five page study titled Universal Writing and Printing.²³ While Ellis was working on the proofs of the Universal Alphabet, he sent them to Sir John Herschel of the Royal Society for his opinion. He also hoped that the modified Traveller's Alphabet would make an impression on Sir John, who was in a position to endorse the work.

An examination of this alphabet shows Ellis' extraordinary ability to manipulate the resources of the Roman alphabet in such a way as to provide for the representation of very unusual sounds. For example, we find llh designating the whispered ll in the Polish "barred or dental l"; gH designating the "Sanskrit post-aspirate or as

²³ A.J. Ellis, Universal Writing and Printing, with Ordinary Letters for the Use of Missionaries, Comparative Philologists, Linguists, and Phonologists ... (Edinburgh: Seton, 1856).

in the English 'loghouse'." There are 233 symbols in this alphabet as a result of placing commas in various positions alongside the letters, using hyphens and inverting capital letters with italicized lower case letters to form special digraphs.

He confidently offered to supply Herschel with additional copies of The Traveller's Alphabet for distribution among his associates. Ellis stressed that he himself was bearing the expenses of printing the work. He wrote, "I am publishing for the public good--to my own loss, of course."²⁴

This 1856 work was later acknowledged by J. Baudouin de Courtenay, Professor at the University of Moscow, as a satisfactory means of determining a difference between sounds and phonemes. He called attention in his bibliography for the Kazan' students to Ellis' work.²⁵

During the time Ellis spent in Edinburgh he had the opportunity of sharing his enthusiasm for the Reading Reform with those people who were in a position to advance his point of view. He met George Combe, a Scottish school inspector,

²⁴Royal Society of London. Herschel Correspondence 39, Ellis to Herschel, April 9, 1856.

²⁵Roman Jakobson, "The Kazan' School of Polish Linguistics and Its Place in the International Development of Phonology" in Selected Writings, II (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 224.

who proved to be very helpful in introducing Ellis to some valuable contacts. In reply to a letter from Combe about the method of teaching reading from phonotypic materials, Ellis regretted that Scottish educators had not been receptive to such an approach. Ellis was able to report on the progress of phonotypy at the Town Mission School of Haddington. Combe received the report gratefully.²⁶

In addition progress was made after a year's experimenting in Lower Denburn, a community near Aberdeen; yet Ellis had to be cautious lest his own enthusiasm have the opposite effect. He did, however, advise Combe that he had never known the system to fail. He wrote, "There should be absolutely no difficulty in teaching a mode of reading which admits of no exceptions to its rules."²⁷ Ellis was perfectly candid on this point in his remarks to Combe. He admitted that on one occasion where a headmistress had shown a "want of interest", the experiment had failed. He was always honest in the statements concerning the Reform.

Ellis encountered several irritating situations in Edinburgh. For example, at the United Industrial Schools he

²⁶ National Library of Scotland, Manuscript Collections, MS 7353, fol. 120, Ellis to Combe, November 14, 1856.

²⁷ Ibid.

was fortunate in enlisting the help of the School Committee's chairman, Major Mair, in making the experiment. Lord Dunfermline, however, "quashed" the attempt and Ellis learned that the Committee objected to phonetic spelling and reading "on religious grounds!" It disturbed Ellis to find that the willing teacher did not have the support of the Committee.²⁸

There were additional problems arising for Ellis in Bath at this time. With the strongest disfavor, Ellis viewed Pitman's intention again in 1858 to make drastic changes in his system of phonography. Ellis could not see the point in making changes in the interpretation of the vowel system because phonography had become more and more a "system of mere shorthand."²⁹ He could not believe that a reporter who had become accustomed to his old habits would stand to gain by a change.

Ellis became very sensitive with regard to Pitman's aggravating habit of writing to other phonographers for advice. Worst of all, Pitman had been granting them permission to print works in phonetic type. Ellis was shocked that Pitman had conceived the idea of putting questions about possible changes to a public vote via his Journal rather than to seek such advice from private friends. Accusingly he asked, "How

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Pitman Family Papers, Ellis to Pitman, August 29, 1858, transcribed by Mary Abercrombie.

much is the opinion of those who voted with you worth?"³⁰
 Only a strained courtesy existed between them after fifteen years of close association.

During the early part of 1859 Ellis busied himself with the study of the phonetics of Hindustani because he found it to be a great challenge to symbolize the sounds of that language. Sharing his concerns with Sir John Herschel at the Royal Society, he could not make up his mind as to whether some of the unfamiliar non-European sounds ought to be represented with Roman letters. All kinds of possibilities occurred to Ellis. "It is very easy to write down an alphabet which could be used; the question is, should it be used?"³¹

So much hope and energy had been expended by Ellis on the reform of English spelling through the use of phonotypes over the course of fifteen years of association with Isaac Pitman. The relationship had now become an unrewarding thing to Ellis, and it was already becoming evident that his own activities would have to take another direction if he was to proceed without having to accede to the opposing views which Pitman persisted in retaining. The recording of sounds through the use of the printer's founts continued to fascinate Ellis because it offered new and greater scope for his developing

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Royal Society of London, Herschel Correspondence, Ellis to Herschel, March 1, 1859.

scholarly interests.

The most significant date in the years of activity following Ellis' contributions to the development of phonotypy with Pitman was December 7, 1866 when the Philological Society received with amazement the sound notational system, which he called "Palaeotype". This was designed to record with complete fidelity, he believed, every possible nuance of the human voice by means of the "old types" of the existing founts which ordinary printers had for their regular use. It is an extraordinary system to record all minute distinctions occurring in human speech. In order to write his history of the pronunciation of the English Language, On Early English Pronunciation, Ellis required an accurate tool for indicating all the phonetic variants over the course of the centuries. This system of Palaeotype, which he developed towards the close of his years of association with Pitman, was employed throughout the five volumes of that study. Its merits, shortcomings, and general reception will be later discussed in connection with his philological investigations in the historical development of the English language. Ellis' works with Isaac Pitman were, in a sense, preliminary to the major philological studies which occupied the remainder of his life.

In 1869 the Philological Society decided to take upon itself the responsibility for improving English orthography, and its Council, aided by Danby P. Fry, the original

spearhead to the effort, appointed a committee to study the problem. A.J. Ellis, Richard Morris, Joseph Payne, and Russell Martineau, as well as H.B. Wheatley and J.A.H. Murray, who joined them later, tried to deal with the many problems arising from any attempts at reform spelling.

Ellis attentively followed Fry's paper "On the Improvement of English Orthography" delivered on May 6, 1870 before the Philological Society, and he was dismayed to hear him urge the need for a two class system in which "Latin and Latin-spelt Greek words" were not changed into a phonetic spelling.³²

On November 4 and 18, 1870 the members of the Philological Society held discussions on two views which had been set forth at the Committee's meetings. Two of Ellis' resolutions were passed at the meeting of November 18.³³ First of all, there would be no recommendation by the Philological Society for a reform of English spelling, and second, there should be a complete investigation into the history of English spelling. However, no one really cared to involve himself in such an effort other than Ellis. He hoped that there would be individual papers prepared on the subject

³²A.J. Ellis, "Annual Address to the Philological Society Delivered on Friday 20 May, 1881", TPS (1880-81), 252.

³³"Philological Society", Athenaeum, No. 2246, November 12, 1870, p. 630.

even if there was no committee effort.³⁴

Though Ellis was on the most cordial terms with those who shared his zeal to reform nineteenth century English spelling, he was not receptive to views opposed to his own. He became angry particularly when he learned of those people who propounded their own new schemes and who did not hesitate to draw upon his own achievements while at the same time denigrating parts of his work to their own advantage.

F.G. Fleay's Victorian Alphabet made use of Ellis' treatment of French derivatives with a "minimum of change." The work criticized Ellis for having rendered words derived from Latin in the revised spelling. Fleay was appalled at such "monstrosities" as 'loakoamoativ,' 'feinel', and 'proanunsiashun'.³⁵ Fleay's little book was published at his own cost and is likely to have reached a small audience. This was the kind of work against which Ellis would have fulminated.

In April 1870 Ellis outlined his Glossic notation before the Philological Society of London.³⁶ It was an

³⁴"Philological Society", Athenaeum, No. 2248, November 26, 1870, p. 693.

³⁵F.G. Fleay, The Victorian Alphabet Founded on History and Etymology and More Nearly Approximating to Our Present Orthography Than Any Other Reformed System Yet Proposed (n.d., n.p.), p. 3.

³⁶Ellis, "On Glossic," p. 1.

expansion of his Glossotype, created two years earlier, and it plays a vital part with respect to his investigations of the sounds of the provincial dialects. In many respects it resembles Ellis and Pitman's phonotypic alphabets with special additions which render possible the variations found in dialects. Glossic brought Ellis into close contact with eager amateurs of the English Dialect Society. It was to figure considerably in the fifth volume of Early English Pronunciation.

During the next few years Ellis worked primarily at mathematical studies and the first papers on historical philology. In 1874 he was still on poor terms with Isaac Pitman because of their difference of opinion about the phonotypic alphabets. When a reference was made about Pitman as the "Inventor of Phonetics", Ellis noted in a letter written possibly to Richard Weymouth, the philologist, "I. P. is a very long way indeed from being the inventor of a science of which he knows very little!"³⁷ This particular letter is significant inasmuch as Ellis' true feelings at this point are revealed.

With intense interest Ellis followed the renewed efforts of the American Philological Society to work towards spelling reform in 1875. Led by Professor Francis A. March

³⁷ Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, A.J. Ellis to Richard Weymouth (?), March 14, 1874.

of Lafayette College, a group of distinguished scholars, including Professors William Dwight Whitney of Yale, J. Hammond Trumbull of Trinity College, Francis J. Child of Harvard and Samuel Haldeman of Pennsylvania, considered those same problems which the London Philological Society continued to raise among the membership without success.³⁸

Max Müller, Professor of Sanscrit at Oxford, held Ellis in the highest regard for having labored "more devotedly" than anyone else. He was willing to discount the complaints of those who were afraid that etymologies would be swept away by phonetic spellings. His highly-regarded opinion supported Ellis' desire to assure the happiness of millions as opposed to saving a "few etymological souvenirs."³⁹

Attempts to chronicle the events of the Spelling Reform appeared sporadically in the pages of Pitman's Journal. He would print the full text of such a history accompanied by his own acerbic observations about the writer's accuracy. By 1877 Pitman and Ellis were no longer holding any kind of contact with one another. The following incident clearly shows how the friendship deteriorated.

J.B. Rundell braved the wrath of Isaac Pitman and submitted a history of the movement in which he said that it

³⁸A.J. Ellis, On Orthography in Relation to Etymology and Literature. A Lecture Delivered before the College of Preceptors, 14 November 1877 (London: C.F. Hodgson, 1878), pp. 6-7.

³⁹Max Müller, "On Spelling", Fortnightly Review, 19 (May 1876), 556-79.

was Ellis who had started the Phonetic Society.⁴⁰ Pitman promptly stated in a footnote to Rundell's article that 169 members had been enrolled in that group prior to the time when he had first received Ellis' letter containing an offer of assistance in 1843.

In that same footnote Pitman coldly rebuked Rundell by saying that it was never safe to write a history of what had happened concerning events "before you were born ... without access to trustworthy documents." Pitman had always remained hypersensitive to any reference which could possibly place Ellis in a favourable light.

A decided contradiction exists regarding Pitman's sensitive feelings and his willingness to permit Rundell to express his views about Ellis. The appearance of Glossic seven years earlier was the basis for Rundell's startling comparison. He pictures Ellis as having chartered a vessel of his own which could easily be repaired at any port (printing office) in the world, whereas Pitman's bark, though not wrecked, contained machinery whose use had not become general. He also pointed out that Pitman's latest alphabetic scheme utilized a plan "curiously like Glossic" as a stepping stone to phonotypy.⁴¹

⁴⁰ J.B. Rundell, "The Spelling Reform's History", *Phonetic Journal*, 36 (February 1877), 51-52.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

Pitman could no longer hide his animosity towards Ellis under the guise of civility. In that same footnote to Rundell's history, Pitman recalled he had heard that author properly acknowledge that he (Pitman) had better served the cause by having "manfully held his corner of the field than Ellis had by looking on from the other side of the hedge."⁴² Pitman insisted that he himself was fully capable of judging of what is practical. In a wistful tone, nonetheless, Pitman indicated that Ellis would be welcomed back after an absence of twenty-eight years, but noted that "hope so long deferred makes the heart rather sick."⁴³

By this time Henry Sweet shared Ellis' view that any spelling changes were unlikely to occur any more now that the nineteenth century had arrived and that English orthography had indeed become fixed. Ellis had abandoned phonotypy and was busy with the phonetic systems of Palaeotype and Glossic. Sweet stated in the Academy that the creation of an alphabet requiring unusual type faces would necessitate great expenditures of money and yield little that was satisfactory. Sweet had already given much thought to the possible directions which spelling changes needed to take in order to be effective, but he was worried lest similarities of

⁴²Ibid., p. 52.

⁴³Ibid.

appearance found in a phonetic alphabet would only lead readers to identify it with the old spelling.⁴⁴

For over thirty years James Spedding, the great Baconian scholar, had been a supporter of Ellis' phonetic spelling, and when a lengthy discussion on the subject appeared in many issues of the Academy, he, too, presented his views. He acknowledge the soundness of Ellis' arguments and his ability "to produce reasons out of the depths of phonetic science."⁴⁵

Unwittingly Spedding found himself listening to sounds that ordinarily would go unnoticed in everyday speech. Ellis' phonetic spellings had to be considered as exact representations of the spoken words. Spedding, however, was not satisfied with the phonetic spellings serving as good "directions" for those who were learning how to speak. He was very critical of the fine distinctions which Ellis included in the system of phonotypy and preferred that only a minimal alteration in the appearance of the normal spelling ought to be permitted.

In another letter to the Academy, Spedding questioned Ellis' view that the Government ought to give its sanction

⁴⁴ Henry Sweet, "To the Editor," Academy, 11 (February 24, 1877), 163.

⁴⁵ James Spedding, "To the Editor," Academy, 11 (June 2, 1877), 489-90.

to a new spelling system for use in subsidized schools and in Civil Service examinations. He was concerned whether or not Parliament would have to provide for hiring clerks who knew Glossic as well as "Nomic" in order to handle incoming correspondence.⁴⁶

Ellis, of course, responded vigorously to some of the questions which were being raised about the practicality of some of his proposals. He was familiar with the Board of Civil Service Examiners, a body that had not published its own views about standard spelling, but which, unfortunately, "plucked" more young men for spelling than for anything else. Ellis, therefore, proposed that the Board utilize in its list of required words parallel forms, one in the normal spelling and one in his reformed spelling. Parents still insisted that the schools see to it that their children were made familiar with the Civil Service entrance spelling requirements. Ellis was very bothered by such an attitude because employment was a vital issue to the public. It would be hard to gain official acceptance for phonotypy. Getting the Civil Service Board to accept his point of view was a matter of "excessive difficulty."⁴⁷

⁴⁶James Spedding, "To the Editor," Academy, 11 (June 9, 1877), 514.

⁴⁷A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Academy, 11 (June 16, 1877), 535.

On March 9, 1878 Ellis presented a paper before the Philological Society on "Engytype, a New Approximative System of Phonetic Writing for Philological Purposes",⁴⁸ a system designed for philologists who, although unwilling to take the trouble of studying the "science of speech sounds", were yet often in want of a readily printed means of representing "deviations from the usual power of the letters." He was referring to the pronunciation of the letters rather than to the spelling of them. No capitals were used but their presence is indicated by a prefixed period. The letters represent several shades of sound, which are distinguished when necessary by accents, as ä in man, a in ask, a in father, à a "deep Scotch sound". Ellis tries to show the range from the closest to the most open form. In this system the long vowels are doubled. The r is not written when not pronounced. Varieties of consonants are indicated also by accents, apostrophes, or turned accents and turned commas, or the mark for degrees (°) as in r', r°, . It appears that the precise use of such marks is left to the writer of Engytype to assign at any time. There is great freedom in its application.⁴⁹

⁴⁸Engytype or "approximative printing," from *ἐγγύς*, 'near'.

⁴⁹A.J. Ellis, On Orthography in Relation to Etymology and Literature. A Lecture Delivered before the College of Preceptors, 14 November, 1877 (London: C.F. Hodgson, 1878), p. 26.

Ellis believed that Engytype would preserve the acoustical relationships "to the eye."⁵⁰ Just how effective the system proved to be is not known nor do we know how many philologists adopted Engytype, for nothing further is heard of the system.

Towards the close of 1879 Clement Ingleby requested Ellis to procure for him a copy of the 1877 Spelling Reform Conference Report. By then Ellis had forgotten the details of what had occurred on that occasion, but Ellis did recall that E. Jones of Liverpool had brought forward the idea of reviving Chaucerian orthography, a matter with which Ellis was particularly conversant owing to his Early English Pronunciation studies then in progress. Ellis observed that the faulty knowledge of Chaucerian, Spenserian, and Shakespearean orthography was only a poor guide for following Mr. Jones' suggestion.⁵¹

Similar to Ellis' Glossic was E. Jones' "Analogical Spelling" based on forty symbols, fifteen of them digraphs of Roman characters. Ellis believed that such a system was not satisfactory and that Glossic also was not sufficiently similar to heterographic spelling. He went to work on a new system of spelling which he designated as "Dimid'iun" which

⁵⁰"Philological Society," Athenaeum, No. 2628, March 9, 1878, p. 320.

⁵¹Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Ingleby, November 24, 1879.

appears to be very similar to that of Glossic. Basic to both systems was the idea of utilizing Roman founts. Ellis' zeal was beginning to abate. He resigned himself to compromise, saying, "Haaf a loaf iz beter than noh bread! Regewlait withowt revolewshuneizing."⁵² This time Ellis presented a simple system, though it represented a great compromise with his previous principles.

He bravely alluded to his "great and painful" past experiences in spelling reform. It was distressing for him to renounce a purely phonetic alphabet. Glossic had been the first step away with its use of many digraphs, and Dimid'iun or "haafway speling" was the second.⁵³ A startling title page appeared on the work. In order to show the alphabet's possibilities, each of the twenty-five lines is set in a different fount to show the applicability of Dimid'iun for "Advurtizments, Handbilz, Poasterz, Sein'bordz, Shop-naimz and jenerul Jobing, az wel as Ordinery bouk-wurk and manewscript".

On first examination the title page appears to be a farce but Ellis was completely serious in this final effort

⁵²A.J. Ellis, Dimid'iun Spelling or Half of What Is Needed. A Suggestion for a Systematic Revision of Our Present Unsystematic Orthography, Submitted to the Consideration of the Spelling Reform Association, the Philological Society, and Others Interested in Education and Philology (London: Author, 1880), p. 2.

⁵³Ibid.

PROOF UNDER RIVIZHUN. STRICTLY PREIVEE. NOT TOU BI
NOHYST IN ENY PEEMODICUL. NOT ISHEWD BEY THE
SPELING RIFORM ASOHSIAISHUN.

*Comenicaishun respectfouly sollicitd from and how see a copy of
these pages, rith, if possib, in this Speling, as the best means of testing
its egien, and adrest tou thi Awthter, at 25 Argyl Road, Kensington,
W. And wiche comenicaishuns wil bi cairfouly studi'd, but ohing tou
the Awthterz numerous engagements, it wil not jeneraly bi possibl tou
send a ripley.*

DIMID'IUN SPELING

OR

HAAF OV WHOT IZ NEEDED.

A SUJESCHUN FOR A SISTIMATIC RIVIZHUN OV OWR
PREZENT UNSISTIMATIC ORTHOGRAPHY,

SUBMITED TOU the CONSIDERAISHUN OF the SPELING RIFORM ASOHSIAISHUN,
THE FILOLOJICUL SOSEYTTY,

AND UTHERZ INTERESTED IN EDWCAISHUN AND FILOLOJ.

By ALEXAANDER JON ELIS, B.A., F.R.S., F.S.A.,

A Yels-President of the Speling Riform Aschishun,

A VES-PREZIDENT (FORMERLY PREZIDENT) OF THE FILOLOJICUL SOSEYTY,

Formerly wain of the Vels-Presidents of the Colij as Printfiers,

AWTHTER OF "VELY ENGLES PRONUNSHIANCE," "QWO'NTITATIV PRONUNSHIANCE
OV LATH," "Engglish, Deyenishun and Helens PRONUNSHIANCE OV GREEK,"

"PRONUNSHIANCE FOR SINGERZ,"

"Speech in Engg," "Alfabet or Naltesz," "Eenshals or Fonetiz," "Reading Aloud,"

"Eti Enggishun st Enggishet,"

"A PLEN FOR FONETIC SPELING," ETSIETERA.

Editor and Propreyttr of "The Fonetiz News."

MOTO.

LATIN (DIMIDIUM FACTI QUI BENE COEPIT HABET).

Engglish Latin, Dimidium factey quoy beeny recipit habet.

Engglish: Eetel bign'a Iz haaf dun.

*Nota Beeny.—Thi abov' text is printed in a graft varreptil of Penny
Telp, tou shoh the immediat applicability of Dimid'ion Speling tou wai per-
puses of English Advertisements, Handbills, Posters, Signboards, Shop-
names, and journal Jobbing, as well as ordinary book-work and manuscript.*

in the direction of spelling reform. He sent a letter to Fleay, the author of The Victorian Alphabet, offering him twenty-five copies of the page proofs of the paper on the Dimid'iun alphabet with its italic and ornate copper-plate script title page. He hoped that Fleay would arrange to have the copies distributed to the members of the Education Society. The appearance of the paper was sure to evoke mirth and even ridicule from Ellis' uncharitable detractors.⁵⁴

The subject of spelling reform was receiving much attention from others also. Ellis was familiar with the responsibilities and goals of the Philological Society stated in the Memorandum of the Association of the London Philological Society, January 2, 1879 prior to its incorporation. This document indicated that the Society purported "to investigate and to promote the study and knowledge of the structure, the affinities, and the history of languages ... the doing all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects."⁵⁵ Ellis reasoned that on such a basis the attempt to alter English orthography was not so much a philological-literary one but rather a "great

⁵⁴ Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Fleay, March 14, 1880.

⁵⁵ A.J. Ellis, "Tenth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 20th May, 1881", TPS (1880-81), 275.

social act." In his eyes this could only be done with the help of the government though he acknowledged that social reform was not in keeping with the objects of a scientific society. Referring to social reform, he said, "It is to be deprecated and avoided". By 1880 even Ellis viewed spelling reformers as political agitators who were involved with matters of greater scope than the "Irish Land Law or British Free-Trade and Protection."⁵⁶

The responsibility which the Philological Society felt towards incidental spelling reform was not completely forgotten by 1880. Henry Sweet undertook the task of drawing up more proposals in that direction on July 9 and 16, 1880. During the summer of that year Ellis used Thomas Hallam as a sounding board for his own misgivings about Sweet and Murray's suggestions about spelling changes. Restoring older spellings and omitting silent etymologically useless letters were among their ideas which Ellis rejected in principle. He prophesied, "The scheme will be a failure, but I have no time to say why."⁵⁷

After three November meetings the Philological Society "approved" the changes which were proposed, and,

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Ellis to Hallam, July 10, 1880.

accordingly its little pamphlet appeared bearing the title "Partial Corrections of English Spellings". Ellis continued to protest vigorously though as chairman he was obliged to abstain from voting. He was critical of the members present when the vote was taken and questioned privately their competence on the matter. Ellis admired Sweet and Murray and would have preferred leaving the spelling decisions up to their judgment. He especially regretted limiting the polling to those present rather than to the whole Society.⁵⁸

F.J. Furnivall accepted Ellis' criticisms of the "Partial Spelling Reforms" with good grace. Ellis felt that something drastic had to be done immediately about the spelling compromises and offered more suggestions about orthography for their consideration. It must have been frustrating to him to have to accept Furnivall's placid acceptance of the situation: "As in the English Constitution, reforms must be gradual; just as corruptions have been."⁵⁹

With exquisite courtesy Dr. Murray reminded the Philological Society that it was indeed unfortunate that Ellis had not gone along with the Society's steps taken in

⁵⁸"Philological Society", Athenaeum, 1880 (November 27, 1880. No. 2770), p. 713.

⁵⁹Ellis, "Tenth Annual Address", pp. 273-74.

the direction of spelling reform and that although he had championed Ellis' Glossic back in 1870, not one step towards the realization of that spelling proposal had been made. Murray said to the Philological Society, "It was a pleasant vision, but its unsubstantial fabric has long been apparent."⁶⁰ Murray could sanction only gradual progress in 1881 and was bewildered by Ellis who was "running at once concurrentem, concourant, and 'concurrent' ... and long may he be spared to run!"

English orthography seemed to Ellis in many respects similar to that of Chinese inasmuch as it employed many words as pure thought-symbols or ideographs rather than as symbols. He emphasized his point by indicating that Queen Victoria could easily have been taught to read aloud a page of the King Alfred translation of Gregory's Pastoral Care in such a way that its author would have understood her, but the Anglo-Saxon king would have been unable to read intelligibly a page of Queen Victoria's indeographically written Highland Tour.⁶¹

⁶⁰James A.H. Murray, "Concluding Remarks" in A.J. Ellis 'Tenth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 20th of May, 1881', " Transactions of the Philological Society, 1880-81, pp. 320-21. [This quotation is a play on the Latin, French, and English forms of the verb 'run'.]

⁶¹Ibid., p. 277.

Several months after he had delivered his address to the Philological Society in May 1881, he privately circulated a copy of a reprint of his remarks (carefully deleting the sanctimonious remarks of Furnivall and Murray) on the nature of the Spelling Reform which he had presented on that occasion. He again stressed his disapproval of the solution to change gradually the spelling of thousands of words and to leave others untouched. He warned that unless his own views were adopted, the English Spelling Reform would continue to be "what it has hitherto been from the time of Orrmin, a mere literary dream."⁶² Nothing seemed to daunt Ellis completely. His financial independence was still making it possible to circulate, at his own expense, those views which he held with conviction on phonetic spelling. He refused to consider moderate changes and said, "I don't believe in piecemeal changes of spelling!"⁶³

He indulged again the luxury of publishing another of his phonetic schemes. These large single sheets were costly

⁶² A.J. Ellis, English Spelling Reform: Its Social Character and the Conditions for Its Realisation, with a Postscript on Orthoepey ... Extracted, with the Exception of the Postscript, from the Annual Address to the Philological Society Delivered on Friday 20 May 1881 and Printed at Length in the "Transactions of the Philological Society for 1880-1", pp. 252-319 (Hertford: Stephen Austin and Sons, 1881).

⁶³ Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Ingleby, November 24, 1879.

to print because they necessitated great care and time in the composing room of the print shop. He was optimistic about his Europik Alfabet [sic], which he distributed for possible consideration by the English Spelling Reform Association in 1881. The system used the Latin vowels as its basis and provided no new consonants. He called it the "Europic", a contraction of the Greek Europaic to "avoid the usual 'European' and to suggest that the basis is not insular."⁶⁴

One next hears of Ellis' activities in the Spelling Reform Association Bulletin, published in New York in 1885. This gave an account of the movement in North America and Great Britain. In the American publication there was mention of James Lecky, the Secretary of the English Spelling Reform Association, who announced the adoption of an "Old Letter Philological Alphabet", a reduction of Ellis' Palaeotype and Sweet's Romic combined with an alphabet utilizing a system called "Dr. Hunter's Indian Government Spelling."⁶⁵

Several years later in 1887 when Ellis' old friend Melville Bell was lecturing at both Johns Hopkins and Oxford,

⁶⁴A.J. Ellis, The Europic Alphabet (IUROP.IK ALFABET) (London: W.R. Evans, 1881).

⁶⁵"Announcements", Spelling Reform Association Bulletin, No. 20, August 1885, p. 20.

he once more approved of Ellis' system of phonotypy because it enabled learners to read in a very short space of time, owing to the easy transition from phonotypy to romanian. Bell always remained generous in his feelings towards Ellis.⁶⁶

Ellis kept up his correspondence sporadically with Benn Pitman in America. Other interests, mathematical and philological, had been taking up all his energies. The Spelling Reform was a thing of the past for Ellis in the last years of his life. In 1888 he received an invitation from Benn Pitman to reissue the Plea in an American edition, an undertaking which meant that Ellis would be obliged to modify and bring up-to-date many of the points which he had earlier made. He evidently agreed to the request, but he was wearing down emotionally and physically. Early English Pronunciation was still a great burden on him. Benn Pitman hoped that the Plea would be ready in a few months, but Ellis was not able to carry out the plan.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Alexander Melville Bell, University Lectures on Phonetics Delivered in Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A., and Oxford University, England, with an Appendix on the Phonetics of Roman Letters (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887), pp. 7-8.

⁶⁷ University of Pennsylvania, Manuscript Collections, Benn Pitman to S. Haldeman, November 27, 1888.

There was no further contact with Isaac Pitman in the last part of Ellis' life. When Ellis died in 1890, Pitman realized how swiftly the years had flown by since their long association had begun back in 1843. Now that Ellis had died, the animosity which Pitman felt had vanished, Pitman indicated that he still had much to do. His remarks in a special "Notice" in the Phonetic Journal about Ellis' "removal to the other life" reflect a genuine distress on his part.⁶⁸

During the first part of his life Ellis' chief interest had been the reformation of the orthography of the English language. He spent a large part of his own financial resources in furthering the cause of new alphabets to enable the public to enjoy the benefits of the education which was the privilege of the middle class and upper echelons of British society. Ellis was prompted to these efforts by a genuine desire to improve the lot of the ignorant, and he must be considered among the benefactors of the age. What he attempted to do was almost an impossibility, but an examination of his productions during the years of association with Isaac Pitman shows a remarkable determination and conviction to bring simple literacy to the masses. After the 1870's his interests moved in other directions, and he

⁶⁸ Isaac Pitman, "Notice", Phonetic Journal, 49 (November 2, 1890), p. 574.

achieved great recognition for his efforts in mathematics, physics, and historical philology; nevertheless, the years with Pitman were productive and worthwhile. Perhaps Ellis had indeed found the solution for eradicating illiteracy for coming generations, but educational reform has always been suspect and slow to gain acceptance. Archer Wilde considered Ellis and Pitman's phonotypic efforts "plucky and heroic even though they were a brilliant failure."⁶⁹ That may well be the case, but the vision and optimism of these two reformers merit our admiration.

⁶⁹Archer Wilde, Sounds and Signs: A Criticism of the Alphabet with Suggestions for Reform (London: Constable and Co., 1914), p. 46.

CHAPTER V

DEVELOPING ORIGINAL MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS AND ATTAINING RECOGNITION WITHIN THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

Having examined at length Ellis' treatment of symbols for representing his conceptions of a suitable orthography, we shall now consider another dimension of his scholarship. A thorough training in mathematics encouraged him to develop original ideas in that discipline. An early interest in the work of Martin Ohm resulted in plans for translating the extensive writings of that author. The preparation of popular mathematical explanations in phonotypic format in connection with the Reading Reform was undertaken by Ellis in the course of a visit to Dresden. He participated in the affairs of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and delivered original work before the Royal Society of London, the most distinguished scientific body in Great Britain. His chief mathematical work was a purely theoretical exposition entitled "Stigmatics." The algebraical analogues of geometry occupied much of his time along with work on the mathematics of logical relations. Ellis'

prominence as a mathematician led the Meteorological Department to enlist his aid in preparing a complex set of barometric computations. His enthusiasm for the discipline expressed itself in a number of biographical studies in connection with the early proposers of logarithms. Let us now look in detail at the events which occurred in connection with his mathematical endeavors. The following remarks will consider only in general terms his mathematical achievements rather than providing an analysis of this work along technical lines.

Mathematics held the greatest interest for Ellis from his earliest days at Eton. When he was approximately ten years old, his father had taught him Euclid. All his life he valued the privilege of having learned his algebra from the Reverend John Hewlett's translation of the Elements of Algebra by the great Leonhard Euler (1707-83), one of the founders of the science of pure mathematics. This extraordinary Swiss scholar had written over eighty large volumes including his remarkable calculus of variants. Because this mathematician was one of the most astonishing figures of history, Ellis proudly remarked that "it was something to have begun algebra under the guidance of a

mathematician like Euler.¹ Ellis realized many years later, however, that such work was of minimal profit to him because Euler's exposition of infinity, surds, negatives, and imaginaries appeared to be defective.

As a first year student at Cambridge, Ellis studied the 1830 edition of Dean Peacock's Algebra, a work which inspired him to come to the conclusion that the imaginary concepts could actually be shown geometrically. His close friend at school, Duncan Farquharson Gregory, provided him with the idea that operation, rather than quantity, determined the true meaning of algebraics. Ellis read voluminously in the new mathematical works which were currently appearing throughout England and on the Continent. For example, Martin Ohm's nine volumes of writings arrived from Berlin over a period of nineteen years (1833-52). The series had been named Versuch eines vollkommen consequenten Systems der Mathematik. Ellis was particularly interested in Der Geist der mathematischen Analysis und ihr Verhältniss zur Schule (1842).

¹A.J. Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry in a Series of Rough Notes, Forming Five Tracts:-I. Euclid's Conception of Ratio and Proportion..II. "Carnot's Principle" for Limits.. III. The Laws of Tensors, or the Algebra of Proportion.. IV. The Laws of Clinants, or the Algebra of Similar Triangles Lying upon the Same Plane.. V. Stigmatic Geometry, or the Correspondence of Points in a Plane (London: Hodgson, 1874), Appendix III, p. 81.

Immediately Ellis set about translating this difficult work and hoped to have the support of the publisher Parker. He found it was, however, necessary to procure the endorsements of several eminent mathematicians before Parker would proceed with the printing of what Ellis had planned to be the first in the series of Ohm translations.

Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1788-1856), the Scottish philosopher who was distinguished for his theories on the association of ideas, as well as those concerning unconscious mental modifications, received a long letter from Ellis accompanying the translation of Ohm designated as The Spirit of Mathematical Analysis and Its Relation to a Logical System. Twelve years later Ellis became personally acquainted with Hamilton when he attended a meeting of the British Association in Glasgow in 1855. He assured Hamilton that the translation of the work he offered for his endorsement was unburdened with trivial matter, particularly since it was directed at mathematicians rather than at students. He hoped that Hamilton might be "induced to peruse it."

Tactfully asking Hamilton's advice on how to proceed with a complete series of translations of Ohm's work, Ellis broached the matter of endorsement and depicted himself as being enthusiastic about the idea. He acknowledged that there would be no remuneration for himself

in such an effort and boldly reminded the great scientist that it was of prime importance for him to assist in the advancement of science.

Though Parker, the London publisher, had half intimated that there was a chance of undertaking the project providing the endorsements were forthcoming, it appears that Ellis was gravely concerned lest Parker's failure to do so would possibly involve him in an awkward situation. He was aware that in writing to Hamilton he had taken a "great liberty."²

Hamilton firmly but coldly informed Ellis that since Ohm's conclusions on the nature of algebra differed considerably from his own, he was reluctant to praise the Berlin scientist's philosophical and logical methods. Nevertheless, to Hamilton's credit, his fine scientific objectivity triumphed, and he did not allow his personal prejudices towards Ohm to prevent his giving Ellis the requested approval for going ahead with the translation of the series and at the same time authorizing him to indicate to Parker that he endorsed Ellis' project.³

The necessity of having to procure in advance several endorsements from eminent people in the mathematical

²University of Dublin, Trinity College, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Hamilton, May 15, 1843.

³University of Dublin, Trinity College, Manuscript Collections, Hamilton to Ellis, May 18, 1843.

field in order to satisfy Parker was a thoroughly distasteful matter for Ellis, who found himself in the position of seeking a patron for his undertaking. The possibility of receiving an unflattering and demoralizing rejection bothered him very much.

Ellis slightly knew the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and wrote to the unapproachable William Whewell (1794-1866). This was the man who later was to institute the triposes in both moral science and natural science at Cambridge. Ellis courteously explained how important he considered such an endorsement of the Ohm translations.⁴ It was a delicate situation to ask for approval from so distinguished a figure because the request savored a little of commercial overtones, and Ellis had to exercise the greatest discretion.

The answer to Ellis' request must have been favorable because Parker did bring out the Ellis-Ohm work at the end of 1843. As often is the case with many grandly conceived plans, Ellis did not publish any more of Ohm's writings although he did translate many sections out of nearly thirty volumes of the German scholar's writings. The only other work of Ohm which he translated in its entirety was The Spirit of the Differential and

⁴Trinity College (Cambridge), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Whewell, May 16, 1843.

Integral Calculus with a New and More Fundamental Theorie of Definite Integrals. (Erlangen 1846). For years after receiving his own B.A. in 1837 Ellis worked on some of these studies. One can safely assume he had read all the major mathematical giants: Lagrange, Lacroix, Newton, etc. because in all his papers there are a great many references to vast quantities of related reading, and in all probability he took care to acquire the strongest background in mathematics in the same manner he prepared himself for all of the disciplines which interested him.

The years 1846-49 were bad ones for Ellis because he suffered frequent periods of exhaustion owing to his studies in phonetics. During that period he set aside all work on mathematics, but while he was making his recovery he read for diversion Augustus De Morgan's Trigonometry and Double Algebra (1849). De Morgan was the Professor of Mathematics at University College (London), where he had developed the new logic of relations. It was De Morgan who advocated decimal coinage. In the following years Ellis entered into a long correspondence with that scholar regarding the possibility that Ohm had ignored the problem of incommensurables and imaginaries, a subject which continued to plague Ellis for years to come.

In 1847 when he was in Dresden, Ellis prepared for Pitman's Phonotypic Journal an informal and entertaining

article on the subject of measuring the cubical feet of a sphere, cone, and cylinder. What is particularly noteworthy about the little study is that he wrote his explanation in phonotypic symbols and demonstrated the usefulness of the reformed alphabet in connection with a subject employing the extensive use of numerals within the text.⁵

Ellis considered "Stigmatics" his chief mathematical work. In the Appendix to Algebra Identified with Geometry, he presents an account of his discovery of this branch of mathematics. In 1853 he resided at Redland, Bristol, where on Palm Sunday, March 20, he "awoke suddenly with a conception of algebra as a measure of quantity--the germ of the algebra of proportion." He travelled extensively in Britain that year and later recalled his walk along the Yorkshire seacoast near Scarborough on August 13, 1853 during which time he mentally arranged the ideas of this new mathematics.

Ellis often refers to his journal in which he noted that he had made a real discovery--the true theory of analytical geometry. This is one of the very few times he alludes to keeping such a journal. Though he knew that he had yet to do a great deal of work towards developing his notion, he continued to be pleased with the idea of having

⁵A.J. Ellis, "On the Rule for Finding the Cubical Contents of a Sphere, a Cone, and a Cylinder", Phonotypic Journal, 6 (September 1947), pp. 259-61.

been able to trace his thought processes from the very moment of its conception. Years later in the Appendix to Algebra Identified with Geometry (1874) he set forth his expanding interpretation of analytical geometry in which Descartes's "is only its simplest case."⁶

The Twenty-fifth Meeting of the British Association was at Glasgow in September 1855. Ellis had been working for over two years on his "historical discovery" [sic] concerning the theory of analytical geometry, and his determination to publish his theories led him to deliver at that meeting his paper "On a More General Theory of Analytical Geometry, Including the Cartesian as a Particular Case."⁷ In it he showed that geometrical representation could be done for all cases of impossible roots of equations "with one, two, or three unknown expressions."

George Salmon (1819-1904), later Regius Professor of Divinity at Trinity College, Dublin (1866-88) published his Treatise on Higher Plane Curves in 1852; however, Ellis felt dissatisfied with its conclusions. This work led him

⁶Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, Appendix III, pp. 82-84.

⁷A.J. Ellis, "On a More General Theory of Analytical Geometry Including the Cartesian as a Particular Case," Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, Held at Glasgow in September 1855 (London: John Murray, 1856), Part 2, pp. 5-7.

to proceed further inasmuch as the Irish mathematician's views were not adequately presented; nevertheless, Ellis felt that they were unusually original, and he was desirous of conveying to his fellow mathematicians his own latest theories. In 1859 he once again addressed himself to the stern Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, the Reverend William Whewell. He informed him that he had reason to believe that he had devised a general method in analytical geometry which made all imaginary points and intersections geometrically describable. His ideas would form a definite part of the picture making up "real" analytical geometry.⁸ In all probability Ellis was anxious to disseminate among influential groups his new views, and he displayed characteristic impatience when waiting for a response from those privileged to read his papers prior to publication or presentation before a learned body.

Ellis was of the opinion that his mathematical contributions might gain for him that most coveted of honors, a Fellowship in the Royal Society of London. In 1859 he wrote to the renowned astronomer Sir John Herschel, asking him to sign the necessary form of proposal:

⁸Trinity College (Cambridge), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Whewell, February 28, 1859.

"You are aware that I have been pursuing one branch of science (phonetics) and have also dealt with another (mathematics) in which I have obtained some novel results opening out the theory of "imaginary" analytical geometry into the world of reality."⁹ It must have been distasteful for Ellis to be obliged to request this kind of accommodation but he would not permit anything to deflect him from attaining his goal.

Unfortunately the Reverend Whewell had refused to sign the proposal form, and Ellis wrote again to that obdurate Master at his own college, patiently pointing out to him that though he had not expected him to have had personal knowledge of his fitness to become a member of the Royal Society, he had rather thought that a general knowledge could have sufficed on the "testimonials."¹⁰ It was a thoroughly unpleasant situation. Several other concerns arose at this time. In the first place Ellis was worried about the education of his young son whose health did not admit of his being sent away to school. Ellis had

⁹Royal Society of London, Manuscript Collections, H.S. 7.40. Ellis to Herschel, February 24, 1859.

¹⁰Trinity College (Cambridge), Manuscript Collections, Add. MS (a203, fol. 63), Ellis to Whewell, February 28, 1859.

at this time made friends with Samuel Haldeman of the University of Pennsylvania, the author of one of the studies of reformed spelling, Analytical Orthography. He extended an invitation to Ellis inviting him to teach in the United States. Ellis had been forwarding to Haldeman copies of his Royal Society testimonials which he was beginning to collect. However, he had to educate his ill son for at least a year. It seemed to Ellis to be a wonderful thing for him to travel to America, but it was not to be considered at all.¹¹ He was in a state of uncertainty, and had it not been for his financial independence, he could not have looked towards his future other than with much uncertainty.

Ellis diligently labored on his mathematical theories. Now he felt sufficiently confident of delivering three papers arising from his dissatisfaction with the Salmon Treatise on Higher Plane Curves before the august Royal Society. In the first, "On the Laws of Operation and Systematisation of Mathematics, 20 May, 1859" he attempted to "assign the strict limits and connection of the mathematical sciences."¹² Ellis dealt with such

¹¹University of Pennsylvania, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Haldeman, July 5, 1859.

¹²A.J. Ellis, "On the Laws of Operation and the Systematisation of Mathematics," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 10 (1859), 85-94.

topics as the laws of integers and fractions.

Though he was convinced that he had resolved many problems in this new conception of algebraical coordinate geometry, his second paper on May 22, 1860 before the Royal Society, "On Scalar and Clinant Algebraical Coordinate Geometry" indicated that he felt that the entire subject would require further consideration and labor by future and abler mathematicians.¹³ His third paper on the subject was delivered in two parts before the Royal Society: "On an Application of the Theory of Scalar and Clinant Radical Loci" (March 14 and June 20, 1861).¹⁴

He continued struggling with the highly theoretical conception of the nature of analytical geometry, but it disturbed him to conclude that after all the labor he had expended upon three Royal Society papers, he still had not provided a direct explanation of the relations between pairs of points on a straight line and pairs of rays which issue from a common point.

¹³ A.J. Ellis, "On Scalar and Clinant Algebraical and Coordinate Geometry, Introducing a New and More General Theory of Analytical Geometry, Including the Received as a Particular Case and Explaining 'Imaginary Points', 'Intersections', and 'Lines', May 22, 1860", Proceedings of the Royal Society, 10 (1859-60), pp. 415-26.

¹⁴ A.J. Ellis, "On an Application of the Theory of Scalar and Clinant Radical Loci, March 14 and June 20, 1861," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 11 (1860-62), pp. 141-2, 393-402.

Michel Chasles (1793-1880), Professor of Advanced Geometry at the Sorbonne, had published his Géométrie Supérieure in 1852, and Ellis based much of the thinking in his own earlier papers upon the French mathematician's studies. To his great dismay, Ellis realized that some of Chasles's notation resulted in "positively erroneous views"¹⁵ on imaginary tangents. He knew that he was now obliged to revise drastically some of his own opinions owing to the errors in Chasles's work. Accordingly, Ellis delivered a new paper before the Royal Society on February 26, 1863 on clinant geometry.

In employing in his mathematical papers language which could be clearly understood, Ellis was exacting. Inasmuch as he was dealing with abstractions whose limitations were very difficult to determine, he appears to have had great trouble in defining his purposes in the introductory remarks to his unpublished paper "On Clinants"¹⁶ in which he had to view former theories as only particular cases. This necessitated his having to set ambitious sights in the development of new general theories.

¹⁵Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, Appendix III, p. 83.

¹⁶A.J. Ellis, "On Clinant Geometry as a Means of Expressing the General Relations of Points in a Plane, Realizing Imaginaries, Reconciling Ordinary Algebra with Plane Geometry, and Extending the Theories of Anharmonic Ratios, February 26, 1863" (Royal Society Library, Manuscript Collections, AP 45.3), pp. 1-2.

Ellis first introduced the term "Stigmatic" in this latest paper arising from the errors in Chasles' work. He used it in connection with his discussion of geometrical constructions for imaginary intersections of real straight lines with real circles. The following year Ellis attended sessions of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Bath, where he read his newest paper "On Stigmatics."¹⁷

The records in the Royal Society indicate that Ellis received certification as a candidate for election, and on June 2, 1864 his name was added to the list of that body's illustrious scientists.¹⁸ Sixteen years after having been made a Fellow of the Royal Society, he accepted nomination as a member of its Council though at that time he was so overwhelmed with the demands of other work that he felt misgivings about his ability to serve in that capacity.¹⁹

Ellis' personality also reveals itself with regard to his opinions on special honorary designations conferred

¹⁷A.J. Ellis, "On Stigmatics," Report of the Thirty-fourth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Held at Bath in September 1864. Part 2 'Notices and Abstracts'" (London: John Murray, 1864), p. 1.

¹⁸Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (Vol. 10 #55), "Certification for Election."

¹⁹Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (M.C. 12. 112), Ellis to ?, November 5, 1880.

by various learned bodies for use after the recipient's name. He had evaluated the quality of those marks of favor and admitted confidentially to his closest associate Thomas Hallam that he held little value for the F.S.A. (Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries) "though it wasn't easy to guess the ballot there."²⁰ Only the Royal Society's honor really meant anything to him because just fifteen were elected every year from among more than fifty candidates, and the great care which was taken by the nominating committee in connection with his election remained a source of lasting satisfaction to him.

A year after his election to the Royal Society, Ellis was sufficiently confident about his latest mathematical conceptions to present two very long papers before the other Fellows. In "Introductory Memoir on Plane Stigmatics, April 1865" and "Second Memoir on Plane Stigmatics, June 7, 1866" he set forth in great detail the results of many years' study. The first paper attempted to "furnish a new and extremely simple method of denoting relations of length and direction" in geometrical investigations.²¹ The second paper on the

²⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 426), Ellis to Hallam, February 27, 1887.

²¹A.J. Ellis, "Introductory Memoir on Plane Stigmatics," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 14 (1865), 176-78.

subject dealt with modes of representing these relationships in a simplified manner.²²

With such distinguished associates among the Fellows of the Royal Society, Ellis was readily elected to the London Mathematical Society on June 19, 1865, serving on its Council during the sessions 1866-68. Once again he addressed the British Association for the Advancement of Science when it met at Nottingham in 1866.²³ On this occasion he employed large diagrams in order to show what he called the "imaginaries" in his theory. This time he was fortunate in meeting Henry John Stephen Smith (1826-83), the leading authority of his day on the theory of numbers, who was then devoting himself to a study of elliptic functions. He pointed out to Ellis that some of the stigmatic nomenclature was misleading: stigmatic point, stigmatic line, stigmatic circle for stigmal, primal, cyclal. These were in error because they were not points, lines, or circles. Ellis preferred to keep the Cartesian term stigma for the directions of the abscissa and ordinate in the old algebraical geometry. In Stigmatics he had given geometrical constructions for "imaginary intersections of real straight

²²A.J. Ellis, "Second Memoir on Plane Stigmatics," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 15 (1866), 192-203.

²³A.J. Ellis, "On Plane Stigmatics," Report of the Thirty-sixth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Held at Nottingham in August 1866 ("Notices and Abstracts of Miscellaneous Communications to the Sections"), London: John Murray, 1866, p. 1.

lines with real circles."²⁴ The term "stigmatic" had been used in such constructions.

Ellis' philological propensities had led him to study the North American Indian incorporative system of speech. He therefore worked out an additional system of terms for his stigmatic geometrical work using abbreviations or distinctive syllables.²⁵ In Stigmatics Ellis found his greatest satisfaction because he believed he had found something of genuine value. He knew that he had to revise once again the stigmatic nomenclature in order to avoid ambiguous usages because he felt that scientific words required either a Latin or Greek foundation in order to be converted into any European language.²⁶

He looked upon the record he kept of his development of this stigmatic geometry as an historical one. He was well aware that he could have erred in laying claim to "complete originality" for stigmatic geometry because some trace of the conception conceivably could have been in existence and consequently invited all scholars to bring to his attention any references to such a theory.²⁷

²⁴Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, Appendix III, p. 83.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., p. 84.

²⁷Ibid., "Preliminary Matter".

On April 25, 1872 Ellis presented a paper before the Royal Society titled "Contributions to Formal Logic." In this study he indicated that the material was entirely original and contained the "least possible restatement of former theories."²⁸ It dealt with deductive reasoning, the calculus of logical relations, and treated syllogisms in an exhaustive analysis. Ellis realized that the paper was very difficult to understand, and he took much care to remove every unnecessary word from the paper.²⁹ Though the paper is highly verbal, its complex mathematical approach warrants its placement by the Royal Society among Ellis's mathematical papers.

The demands of Early English Pronunciation were extremely pressing upon Ellis in the seventies, but he continued to work on his mathematical papers in spite of the deadlines of the Philological Society which had to be met. On March 20, 1873 he delivered another paper before the Royal Society titled "On the Algebraical Analogues of Logical Relations."³⁰ Ellis was especially interested in the

²⁸Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (R.S.A.P. 54.7), Ellis, "Contributions to Formal Logic", Read April 25, 1872.

²⁹Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (M.C. 9. 349), Ellis to ?, March 21, 1872.

³⁰Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (AP 55.5), Ellis, "On the Algebraical Analogues of Logical Relations."

writings of the English mathematician George Boole (1815-64), Professor at Queen's College, Cork. This scientist had elaborated his method of applying mathematics to logic in his work The Investigation of the Laws of Thought in Which Are Founded the Mathematical Theories of Logic and Probabilities (1854). Ellis' paper on the algebraical analogues of logic attempted an examination of the nature and extent of this presumed analogy. He concluded that there is a fundamental difference between algebra and logic inasmuch as algebra admits of 0 and 1 and logic admits of three phases: none, all, and some. The latter may include in its meaning all but not none.³¹

The symbolism of sounds, numbers, and operations pervaded all of Ellis' thoughts. His fascination with mathematics is definitely related to his work with phonotypy, universal language, and his systems of phonetic notation. Boole is a direct descendant of Leibnitz, the seventeenth century scientist who discovered symbolic logic and who encouraged the development of a technique, "a sort of universal language whose symbols and special vocabulary can direct reasoning in such a way that errors, except those of fact, will be like mistakes in computation and merely a result

³¹"Royal Society," Nature, 9 (November 9, 1873), 75.

of failure to apply the rules correctly."³²

This kind of Leibnitzean thinking is reflected in Ellis' efforts to create an ethnical alphabet and the uniform representational system of Palaeotype. He would have agreed that the shortcomings of his various attempts could perhaps be attributed to a failure to follow his description and direction. It must be emphasized, however, that Ellis knew that it was very difficult to describe sounds accurately in spite of precise directions.

In order to get an accurate picture of the meticulous care which Ellis lavished on his mathematical papers, a few remarks are in order here concerning their physical appearance. In the archives of the Royal Society are those papers in his own handwriting which he delivered before that body. They are written in an exquisitely elegant script on faintly-ruled legal size pages. Remarkably there are no erasures or emendations on the hundreds of pages. He was a perfectionist in preparing these papers for the Royal Society's archives. Ellis was proficient in evolving an unlimited number of new symbols, both in his phonotypic efforts and in his later Palaeotype. He knew that he was able to cope with the intricacies of strange notational systems. These complex manuscripts give no indication of the great

³²Edna E. Kramer, The Nature and Growth of Modern Mathematics (New York: Hawthorn, 1970), p. 101.

number of computations and rough drafts which he drew up prior to their final draft. Ellis prided himself on his membership in the Royal Society. The amount of care he devoted to them surpassed, for example, the kind of preparation he was wont to make for a publisher.

Ellis was careful to associate himself with learned bodies which advanced those interests in which he engaged. The Association for the Improvement of Geometrical Teaching was formed in 1870. Towards the close of 1872 Ellis became a member, and in 1873 attended for the first time its Annual Meeting, thereafter becoming a regular attendant until June 1886.³³

On January 13, 1874 a sub-committee of this society, including Ellis, placed before the membership several approaches for teaching proportion; the group requested the members to give their opinions of their ideas by March 31. Ellis no longer was willing to retain Euclid's method, and he felt obliged to publish accounts of his own researches concerning proportion, a subject to which he had devoted considerable attention for many years. Since the suggestions by the sub-committee were confidential, Ellis had to divide his remarks into two parts. He sent around to the sub-committee

³³"A.J. Ellis," Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society, 21 (1891), 458.

"Rough Notes on Proportion" privately.³⁴ Nine papers were submitted to the Geometric Society. Ellis was of the opinion that they were all essential to an understanding of his own work. He also received a request to borrow a copy of "Rough Notes" but could not oblige because the paper had been included as one of the nine other papers submitted to the members of the sub-committee.³⁵ He was always scrupulously careful to observe the proprieties and obligations of membership.

In 1874 Ellis published the second part of his work called Algebra Identified with Geometry in a "Series of Rough Notes Forming Five Tracts." This was the culmination of twenty years of investigation. Grandly he proclaimed that his ambition was "to present the arsenal of mathematics with a new arm of precision."³⁶

The problems related to abstract algebra were of great interest to Ellis. A set of postulates is said to be consistent if there exists an interpretation of the undefined terms which converts all the postulates into true

³⁴Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, "Preliminary Notice".

³⁵Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to ?, May 14, 1874.

³⁶Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, "Preliminary Notice".

statements.³⁷ Ellis preferred an approach to mathematics in which the postulates completely differed from the rules of classical algebra as had been developed by George Peacock (1791-1858), Duncan Gregory (1813-1844), Augustus De Morgan (1806-1871) and George Boole (1815-1864).

From this flexible system of "purifying" [sic] algebra,³⁸ it was a short step for Ellis to work with numbers usually called "imaginary quantities" that could actually become geometrically visible. Gratefully Ellis acknowledged the influence of Duncan Gregory for having given him the germ of the conception of operation, as opposed to quantity, as the correct meaning of algebraical expressions. Ellis also took great pains to point out that only that part of plane geometry involving the relations of similar triangles could be converted by commutative algebra. Solid geometry required additional conceptions. He emphasized that he had named his latest work Algebra Identified with Geometry and not Geometry Identified with Algebra.³⁹

Other scholars regarded Ellis' exposition of his latest theories with some reservation. The invention of an algebra which tried to give real meaning to the imaginaries

³⁷Kramer, op. cit., p. 7.

³⁸Ellis, Algebra Identified with Geometry, Appendix III, p. 81.

³⁹Ibid., p. 84.

of ordinary algebra prompted the editor of Ellis' collected sermons, Thomas Hill, to observe that the human mind could go not only beyond the limits of its own imagination but "beyond the capacity of any symbols which it can devise."⁴⁰

Ellis never lost an opportunity to read in public his own papers, and though he had finished his algebraic-geometrical work On April 1, 1874, he welcomed the chance of communicating to one hundred and fifty mathematicians of the Association for the Improvement of Geometric Teaching this result of twenty years' thought. He regretted that he had allowed himself practically no time to make additional revisions before addressing the group.⁴¹

On the whole Ellis was very pleased with the evolution of his conceptions in his latest book and wrote his friend Thomas Hallam that it contained in its eighty-four pages "heaps upon heaps of manuscripts boiled down."⁴² Reverend Frederick Gard Fleay (1831-1909), of the Skipton Grammar School (Yorkshire), a serious Shakespearean scholar,

⁴⁰ Thomas Hill, ed., "Mr. Ellis' South Place Chapel Sermons," Unitarian Review, August 1876, pp. 134-35.

⁴¹ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 4, 1874.

⁴² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 221), Ellis to Hallam, June 3, 1874.

appears to have shared some of Ellis' mathematical interests. They were acquaintances of long standing. Another edition of Algebra Identified with Geometry was in preparation in 1877, and Ellis assigned Fleay the task of correcting misprints. He suggested that Fleay read Chasles' Géométrie Supérieure, in spite of its inaccurate notations; and he warned him that there would be trouble in locating a copy since it had been out of print "of late years."⁴³

In 1878 Ellis addressed the College of Preceptors on the same problem concerning the teaching of proportion. He still was not satisfied with the "Syllabus" issued by the Association for the Improvement of Geometrical Teaching. In his lecture he pointed out the great harm done to boys by their masters in teaching the fifth definition of the fifth book of Euclid.⁴⁴ The lecture "How to Teach Proportion without Reference to Commensurability" showed that no difficulty whatsoever existed in teaching proportion. The lecture actually was an expansion of the opening section of Algebra Identified with Geometry. Ellis provided some practical hints in working with pupils struggling with some

⁴³Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Fleay, May 16, 1877.

⁴⁴"Recent Scientific Literature," Academy, 14 (August 24, 1878), p. 198.

of the geometrical abstractions. The audience received his remarks so favorably that he was induced by several of the teachers present to publish them.⁴⁵

When it came to developing his mathematical investigations, Ellis did not hesitate to provide for the needs of the general public. It had been the same way when he was working on behalf of the illiterate during the years of association with Isaac Pitman. Though he was impressed by the brilliant mathematics in such books as Michel Chasles's Traité de Géométrie Supérieure (Paris 1852) and Julius Plücker's Theorie der algebraischen Curven (Bonn 1839) which had enabled him to develop some original and complex operations, he also had great faith in the ability of the average English family to make a practical use of mathematical skills developed through home study. Believing that most arithmetic books were valueless because they did not provide enough problems and answers, in 1855 he published Self-Proving Examples in the First Four Rules of Arithmetic which aimed to serve the needs of "pupils, masters, and governesses."⁴⁶ Ellis also considered in this work the needs of

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ A.J. Ellis, Self-Proving Examples in the First Four Rules of Arithmetic, Simple and Compound, Especially Adapted for Self-Practice as Well as School or Family Use: Allowing the Teacher to Set Innumerable Examples Simultaneously and to Verify the Results at Sight without Permitting the Pupils to Foresee and Therefore Force the Answer... (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1855), pp. i-vi.

SELF-PROVING EXAMPLES

IN THE FOUR FIRST RULES OF

ARITHMETIC,

SIMPLE & COMPOUND,

ESPECIALLY ADAPTED

FOR SELF-PRACTICE AS WELL AS SCHOOL OR
FAMILY USE:

ALLOWING THE TEACHER TO SET INNUMERABLE EXAMPLES SIMULTANEOUSLY,
AND TO VERIFY THE RESULTS AT SOON, WITHOUT PERMITTING THE
PUPILS TO FORGER AND THEREFORE "FORCE THE ANSWER."

TO WHICH ARE ADDED, EXAMPLES IN

CONTRACTED DIVISION, SQUARE AND CUBE ROOT,

AS SELF-PRACTICE FOR ADVANCED COMPUTERS,

WITH AN EXPLANATION OF GUY'S AND HORNER'S RULES.

BY

ALEXANDER J. ELLIS, B.A.

FORMERLY SCHOLAR OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1855.

the economically comfortable upper classes who required material "well-adapted in private families." Ellis regarded common arithmetic as indispensable, and he displayed his practical concern by assisting the adult or youth who needed preparation to work in a business.

He admired De Morgan's Companion to the Almanack (1844) and decided to bring out his own Self-Proving Examples, which guaranteed success to anyone who faithfully worked for six months with the rules in that little work. He also tried in this work to meet the needs of the advanced student and offered for private study material for extracting square and cube roots. It was a work with which Ellis was greatly satisfied, and he received many compliments because it contained lucid and useful explanations of the basic mathematical operations.

The scholarly Ellis did not forget even those who were "perfect idiots in figures." He produced a little pamphlet with the wonderful title Arithmetical Crutches for Limping Calculators (1883), a work showing clever and novel ways of performing the basic arithmetical computations with several devices such as a sliding piece of paper which would assist the "limping calculator without occupying any tremendously long time."⁴⁷

⁴⁷A.J. Ellis, Arithmetical Crutches for Limping Calculators (London: C.F. Hodgson, 1883), pp. 3-4.

At the meetings of the London Mathematical Society Ellis would occasionally respond to the challenges which non-members would offer in the way of recreational computational problems. The Society heard from interested scholars who enjoyed testing the acumen of the nation's most distinguished mathematicians. Ellis and Samuel Haldeman shared a delight in solving literary problems which required involved mathematical skills.

Haldeman offered a problem which intrigued Ellis so much that he gladly presented it for the consideration of his mathematical colleagues: If the number of rhymed stanzas is given, how could one determine how many variations of rhyme could be admitted supposing that no line could be left without a rhyme?

Haldeman indicated that with respect to seven-line stanzas, he had observed in actual use twenty-eight variations. Ellis was fascinated by his American colleague's consideration of the fourteen line sonnet stanzas with their "rich" possibilities. Haldeman had figured out with Ellis that the seven-line stanzas offered two hundred and twenty varieties. It was, however, the greater problem of working out all kinds of possibilities with other rhymed stanzas which Ellis brought to the attention of the London Mathematical Society in order to oblige scholars in other

disciplines.⁴⁸

Ellis was interested by the barometer and liked to experiment with various methods of measuring the pressure of the atmosphere. Friedrich Wilhelm Bessel (1784-1846), the astronomer, had recently developed a formula for measuring heights from observations on the barometer. Ellis admired Bessel's work, and he delivered a paper before the Royal Society on March 26, 1863, in which he had simplified the complex tables compiled by Bessel. In his paper Ellis gave the height of the barometer in English inches, the stations in English feet, and the temperatures in degrees Fahrenheit which were calculated to seven decimal places.

Ellis titled his paper "On a Simple Formula and Practical Rule for Calculating Heights Barometrically without Logarithms."⁴⁹

There is extant an interesting letter which reveals the extensive network of Victorian scholarly contacts of which Ellis was part. Admiral Robert Fitzroy (1805-65), naval commander of Darwin's Beagle, as well as former

⁴⁸ "Miscellaneous," Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society, 4 (March 14, 1872), 92.

⁴⁹ A.J. Ellis, "On a Simple Formula and Practical Rule for Calculating Heights Barometrically without Logarithms," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 12 (1862-63), 511-17.

Governor of New Zealand, in 1854 was chief of the government's Meteorological Department, where he had inaugurated a system of storm warnings and established the first weather forecasts. Ellis received a communication from Fitzroy inviting him to publish his simplification of Bessel's hypsometric tables. They were to be part of a series of meteorological papers for use by the Board of Trade in the event that the Royal Society should consider that type of material unsuitable for its Transactions or Proceedings. It appears that the Committee did not consider them to be quite appropriate; accordingly, Ellis planned to accept Fitzroy's offer.⁵⁰ The Royal Society cooperatively arranged for the Ellis paper to be transferred to the Board of Trade.⁵¹

Fortuitously Ellis also became involved in bibliographical investigations of a mathematical nature, which led him to discover a valuable and practically unknown early study of logarithms. A London bookseller had placed an advertisement at the conclusion of a book of Napier's Twelve Place Logarithmic Tables which Ellis had purchased. It contained a brief reference to the "petite table de Flower"

⁵⁰Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (MC 6. 318), Ellis to ?, April 27, 1863.

⁵¹Royal Society, Manuscript Collections (AP 45.3), Miscellaneous Ellis Papers.

worked out to twenty places.⁵² In spite of problems in finding the book, Ellis successfully tracked it down to the library of University College (London).

As a result of his search Ellis brought to light again Robert Flower's work The Radix (1771). In an article appearing in the Academy, Ellis set him alongside Henry Briggs (1556-1631), Professor of Geometry at Gresham College, London, as one of the simplifiers of John Napier's conception.

The satisfaction he derived in finding this unknown scholar was typical of all of Ellis' endeavors. It brought him into lengthy correspondence with Continental scholars. He enjoyed this investigation a great deal and forwarded a full account of his search to his friend Thomas Hallam in Manchester. Ellis was not trying to be boastful over his accomplishments but Hallam's desire for recognition required continual satisfaction. In all likelihood Ellis was flattered by the immense interest which Hallam unflaggingly exhibited.⁵³

Ellis' investigation of Robert Flower brought him into communication with Peter Gray, author of Tables for the

⁵² A.J. Ellis, "Robert Flower, The Logarithmist (1771)" Academy, 4 (October 20, 1877), 386-87.

⁵³ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 384), Ellis to Hallam, June 15, 1878.

Formation of Logarithms and Anti-logarithms to Twenty-four or Less Number of Places (1876). Ellis analyzed Flower's Radix and compared Flower's process with that of Henry Briggs, whose work on the decimal system is universally used. Ellis traced the re-discovery of Flower's work, paying tribute to the writing-master of Bishop's Stortford, whose originality, combined with valuable method, has been overshadowed by Briggs in England.⁵⁴

The contacts with his Alma Mater, Trinity College (Cant.), afforded Ellis frequent association with leading members of that college. He knew personally James Whitbread Lee Glaisher (1848-1928), soon to become President of the London Mathematical Society (1884-86) and President of the Royal Astronomical Society (1886-88, 1901-03). Ellis was working on another paper for the Royal Society dealing with logarithms. He had come across a published reference to a system of computation by Pineto in St. Petersburg and wrote directly to Glaisher, the leading British mathematician, in order to locate the book. This comfortable familiarity with the principal scholars of his age always opened many avenues of research for Ellis. He secured prompt answers to queries which, in turn, led to further discoveries. He was a

⁵⁴A.J. Ellis, "Robert Flower, the Logarithmist (1771)" Academy, 13 (April 20, 1878), 347-48.

prominent figure in the distinguished community of British scholars.⁵⁵

Proudly he read before the Royal Society two additional papers on new methods of calculating the logarithms, yet he did not allow the demands of his Early English Pronunciation to deter him from his intense mathematical interests; however, by 1882 Ellis started to become fearful that he would not complete the dialect survey. He forced himself to put aside all mathematical research. The London Mathematical Society rarely saw him at its meetings, and his son Tristie observed the stacks of incomplete mathematical studies which his father had started earlier mounting in the library. This original thinker, who had come to grips with measuring the immeasurable, no longer had time in which he could further develop his theories. Time was swiftly passing, and the Palaeotyped dialect slips continued to arrive in ever-increasing amounts with each delivery of the daily mail. He had to abandon his stigmatics for the shadings of Yorkshire and Hebridean dialects. He had accomplished for plane geometry substantially what Hamilton at the same time had been doing for solid geometry by his quaternions.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Brown University, John Hays Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Glaisher, January 11, 1881.

⁵⁶Hill, op. cit., p. 134.

The Royal Society's collection of Ellis' mathematical manuscripts contains many intricately folded plates which he had prepared to accompany his explanations. They show the fine work upon which he had devoted untold hours of labor. Among the many plates which Ellis drew with precision is a beautifully executed octahedron along with a paper on solid geometry. This figure is expressive of the many aspects of his life's work. Mathematics is only one of the planes among the many comprising this man's extraordinary career. Although his contemporaries valued the extent of his learning and dedication in furthering that science, twentieth century treatments of the history of mathematics have not acknowledged at all the role he played in nineteenth century mathematical investigation.

CHAPTER VI

DETERMINING A SYSTEM OF EVEN TEMPERAMENT AND ESTABLISHING THE PITCH OF NON-EUROPEAN INSTRUMENTS

The science of acoustics appealed greatly to Ellis throughout his life, and its application in his investigations in phonetics and physics was of major importance to him. He directed an impressive effort towards establishing the true pitch of musical instruments as a result of his personal association with Europe's most distinguished physicist, Hermann von Helmholtz. Ellis' own scientific work led him to modify and diverge sharply from the studies of Helmholtz. Ellis set forth an expansion of Helmholtz's Tonempfindungen in the translation he prepared for English readers. He was instrumental in bringing Helmholtz's theories to the attention of young Alexander Graham Bell, thereby also playing a role in the development of the telephone. Ellis' work with the American physicist was mutually helpful in connection with the measurement of pitch by means of various tonometers. With the assistance of Alfred Hipkins, Ellis measured the pitch of several hundred organs throughout Great Britain in order to establish a method to tune a keyboard instrument for the most accurate pitch. Ellis' experiments employing the

reed and fork tonometers were exhaustive. Distinguished figures of the period like Aristide Cavallé-Coll and Lord Rayleigh recognized the value of Ellis' work. In addition to his investigations of pitch with the standard keyboard instruments of Europe, Ellis experimented with the scales of non-Western ones in order to determine their pitch. We shall now describe in detail the events occurring during the course of the more than fourteen years that Ellis devoted to the study of musical pitch. Nowhere in the writings of Ellis is there any indication of his views with regard to the aesthetics of music. Whether he preferred Beethoven to Bach or chose the recitatives of Gluck over the choral grandeurs of Mendelssohn is not part of the record. This is all the more surprising because there are hundreds of pages in his correspondence and in his printed works dealing with musical pitch. Only its scientific implications appear to have held interest for him. Ellis was a man whose letters show an elegance and refinement in all matters. A cultivated gentleman par excellence with everyone, he figured prominently in the affairs of the London Musical Association where concern about the pitch of the human voice and all kinds of instruments was of serious consequence. Music was acquiring a scientific importance that brought it in line with the expanding research in European physics. He utilized his great mathematical skills in making the scientific aspect of

music a subject of deep scholarly consideration. Similarly Ellis evinced little interest in his writings with respect to the critical aspects of literature; language as the result of physical factors developed over historical periods was the only significant area which captured all his attention. Bullokar, not Boswell; Bosanquet, not Beethoven--basically his was a preference for the scientific rather than the aesthetic.

The scientists of the Royal Society were accustomed to hear A.J. Ellis deliver mathematical papers at the monthly meetings; however, he was also becoming well-known in different circles since he had been working upon experiments for arriving at the accurate pitch of tuned instruments. Preliminary to the following remarks concerning Ellis' researches in the physics of music, it is interesting to note that he played an important rôle in the work of Alexander Graham Bell in connection with the discovery of the telephone. The writings of that most eminent of European physicists, Hermann von Helmholtz, were so significant that it was Ellis who brought reports of these acoustical experiments to the young scientist's attention.

The musical scale which Bell believed he had discovered in the English vowels led him to enlist Ellis' assistance in the extraordinary experiments to transmit the human voice over a wire. The years which Ellis devoted to

his studies in musical pitch must take into account his work in the Bell-Helmholtz researches. Alexander Graham Bell, the son of Ellis' old friend Melville Bell, was interested in the transmission of articulate speech. It was natural for Ellis to know intimately young Graham Bell, whose developing scientific abilities were a source of gratification to his father's friends. Ellis felt genuine affection for the eager eighteen year old scientist. In 1865 Ellis had arranged an invitation for Melville Bell and his son to have dinner at Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte's elegant London town house, a home with all the splendors of a Parisian salon. Young Bell always remembered that evening when he had accompanied Ellis and his father to His Highness' dining room where the footmen stood behind each guest's chair to attend to his every desire. Ellis knew that his young friend would view such an occasion as a fine opportunity to meet the distinguished Basque scholar, one well-known for his labors in recording dialectal sounds in various European countries.

At that time the fifty-two year old Prince was transferring the idiomatic version of the Song of Solomon into twenty-four English dialects as well as four Lowland ones. Ellis and Prince Bonaparte were highly intrigued with the possibilities for recording these dialects by employing Melville Bell's Visible Speech. Possibly this non-romanian system was an "inspired response to Bonaparte's passion for

recording these dialects."¹ Ellis' friendship with Bonaparte enabled him to further the success which Melville Bell was enjoying in London. Ellis was pleased to assist; accordingly, the younger Bell had a fine opportunity to meet some of the principal philologists of the day.

Believing that whispered vowel sounds have a particular pitch of their own and that certain vowels whispered in succession resulted in a musical scale, Bell and his father entered into a series of experiments in the winter of 1866 for the determination of each vowel's natural pitch, only to find that some vowels had two pitches, one owing to the air's resonance in the mouth and the other, to the air in the cavity behind the tongue comprising the pharynx and larynx. Graham Bell believed he had solved the problem by use of a vibrating tuning fork in front of the mouth "while the positions of the vocal organs for the various vowel sounds were silently taken."²

He found that the fork was reinforced by a particular vowel position. The tones seemed to be characteristic of the different vowels with the pitches which were the same as

¹Katherine Mackenzie, Alexander Graham Bell: The Man Who Contracted Space (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), pp. 40-41.

²George B. Prescott, The Speaking Telephone, Talking Phonograph and Other Novelties (New York: Appelton, 1878), p. 42.

the resonance tones formed in the mouth's changing cavities depending on the vowel.³ As soon as Bell made his discovery about the musical tones accompanying the sound of this voice, he immediately communicated with the old family friend, A.J. Ellis, who was extremely interested in his young friend's work.

The response of the elder phonetician was sadly discouraging to the young scientist who learned to his dismay that his labours already had been anticipated. Ellis wrote, "I find you are exactly repeating Helmholtz's experiments [1855] for determining the musical tones of the vowels."⁴

Ellis had studied music theory under Professor Donaldson of Edinburgh, also a physicist of considerable reputation. When the Sanscritist Max Müller suggested that Ellis investigate Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen by Hermann von Helmholtz, the Professor of Physiology at Heidelberg, in order to obtain a better understanding of vowel production, Ellis found that his own training, which had made him critical of existing theoretical works, had prepared him well for the theories which the German physicist

³Alexander Graham Bell, "Prehistoric Telephone Days," National Geographic, 41 (March 1922), 231-32.

⁴Ellis to A.G. Bell, March 31, 1865 in Robert V. Bruce, Alexander Graham Bell and the Conquest of Solitude (New York: Little, Brown, 1973), p. 47.

later propounded.⁵

Ernst Chladni (1756-1824) had studied the vibrations of strings and rods by means of sand figures, and brought out in 1802, his Die Akustik, the standard work on the subject. Sir John Herschel's treatise on sound in the Encyclopaedia Metropolitana supplemented Chladni's views. Helmholtz published in 1863 the results of eight years' investigations in acoustical science, Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik. It was a work which presented new theories on the nature of musical sounds.

When he was at the University of Berlin, Helmholtz was the most eminent of the large scholarly circle there. He was addressed as "Excellenz von Helmholtz" and approached with deep bows.⁶

Graham Bell was disappointed at Ellis' news, but was willing to receive from him a copy of Helmholtz's work on tones. Because Bell couldn't read German, he planned to discuss the entire matter with Ellis in London. The meeting resulted in a pleasant day because Ellis discussed Helmholtz and translated passages for him. Bell's latest biographer,

⁵"Notices of Fellows Deceased: A.J. Ellis," Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, 49 (1891), iii.

⁶Barbara Lovell Cline, The Questioners: Physicists and the Quantum Theory (New York: Crowell, 1965), p. 39.

Robert Bruce, is of the opinion that Ellis did not have a truly sound knowledge of the properties of electricity.⁷ Ellis carefully explained to Bell the operation of the German physicist's apparatus. At Ellis' urging, Bell procured a copy of Helmholtz's book and proceeded to study sound and electricity. He was inspired to pursue the possibilities of vibrating a tuning fork by the "intermittent attraction of an electro-magnet" and then applying the principle to the production of creating musical sounds.⁸

It is interesting to record that Helmholtz briefly visited London in April 1864 and honored Ellis by accompanying him to the Tonic Sol-Fa College on Tottenham Court Road to evaluate the results attained in tests in the music sight-reading classes. John Curwen, who directed the school according to his own theories, had also directed Ellis in attempts at further modification of the school's approach to sight singing. This visit to the Tonic Sol-Fa College led Helmholtz and Ellis into a scientific analysis of the acoustical effects of making a variety of tuning forks vibrate. Their friendship was strengthened by this rare opportunity for a brief visit.⁹

⁷ Bruce, op. cit., pp. 48-51.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ John Spencer Curwen, Memorials of John Curwen Compiled by His Son with a Chapter on His Home Life by His Daughter Mrs. Banks (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1882), p. 159.

Helmholtz's work reveals a dazzling knowledge of physics. He had utilized the theories of Fourier in the representation of complex sound waves constructed from a series of sine curves which could be analyzed mathematically. He had also used Fourier's resonators in conjunction with objects such as tuning forks and stretched strings which vibrated sympathetically with these sounding bodies. Ohm's theory held that the ear performs this function and separates the harmonic components. Helmholtz investigated the ear's role as a resonating mechanism, and gave an explanation of the process of hearing. Helmholtz dealt with the part played by the microscopic rods or fibres of Corti discovered in 1851, each consisting in separate fibre, in order to account for consonances, dissonances and the formation of scales.¹⁰

Ellis believed that it was impossible to depend with certainty on the likelihood of hearing the same intonation twice, and he called attention to Helmholtz's confirmation of this fact.¹¹ Though Ellis recognized that historically the piano keyboard had determined musical scales he did

¹⁰ Russell Kahl, ed., Selected Writings of Hermann von Helmholtz (Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 1971), pp. xxviii-ix.

¹¹ A.J. Ellis, translator, On the Sensations of Tone as a Physiological Basis for the Theory of Music, by Hermann von Helmholtz (London: Longman & Co., 1875), p. 433.

realize that a trained cathedral choir, as well as the instruments of a string quartet, provided a more accurate scale than was possible even with a keyboard tuned by A.J. Hipkins of Broadwood's.¹² Ellis was so confident about the significance of Helmholtz's discoveries that he undertook the English translation of the Tonempfindungen almost as a labor of love. In 1872 John Tyndall, the eminent scientist, had advised the publisher Longmans to bring out a translation of that work because it would be an "honor to their house."¹³ The company was not willing to engage in such an unprofitable venture, but it issued Helmholtz's Populäre Vorträge, with an introduction by John Tyndall. By the time that this collection of scientific essays was about to be published, Longmans changed its mind and arranged for Ellis to translate the Tonempfindungen in its entirety.

Ellis' interest in Helmholtz's theories is of the highest importance; there is a definite link between Ellis' acoustical work and his studies in phonetics. This led ultimately to his crowning achievement, the study of English dialects. Ellis readily acknowledged his indebtedness to

¹²Llewellyn L. Lloyd and Hugh Boyle, Intervals, Scales, and Temperaments (London: Macdonald, 1963), pp. 106-07.

¹³Hermann von Helmholtz, Popular Lectures on Scientific Subjects, tr. E. Atkinson with Introduction by Professor Tyndall (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1873), p. xvi.

Helmholtz's explanations of pitch and resonance, and his descriptions of the mechanism and actions of the organs of hearing. By undertaking this work of translation, Ellis performed a vital service to British scholars.

He was able to translate approximately forty-eight pages of the complex study a week, and by September 19, 1874 there were 176 pages already in type though the enormous task of the remaining four hundred pages still awaited his attention. It was discouraging work because it was sometimes difficult to find suitable corresponding scientific terms in English.¹⁴ Not only was the Tonempfindungen inordinately difficult but also the problems were increased by the errors resulting from the German printer's excessive negligence. It was Ellis' conviction that it was the "greatest existing book on the science which underlies music."¹⁵ It was this view which sustained him during the arduous days of translation.

As the Helmholtz translation slowly progressed, Ellis carefully re-examined each German sentence in order to explain all difficulties and to improve his own phrasing.

¹⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43), Ellis to Hallam, September 19, 1874.

¹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43), Ellis to Hallam, January 13, 1875.

He was absolutely sure that the Tonempfindungen was mandatory reading for all candidates who were working towards the attainment of musical degrees. His aim was to remove the countless difficulties that such students were likely to encounter.¹⁶

An examination of the Ellis translation reveals his meticulous attention to all of Helmholtz's main points. Ellis amplified the translation of the work with such elaborate and copious notations in connection with his own researches that the English version is in many respects a new and original work. One hundred and sixty pages out of the 848 are completely new.¹⁷

One reviewer criticized Ellis' rendering of the Helmholtz title On the Sensations of Musical Tones because the English reader did not get the same idea that a German reader got from the original. In order to support his claim of mistranslation on the part of Ellis, he noted that Ellis had mistakenly given the English equivalent of the title of Hanslick's Musikalisch Schöne as On the Musically Beautiful rather than the correct The Beautiful in Music. Helmholtz's principal concept of "overtone", i.e. the additional notes

¹⁶Ellis, Preface to Helmholtz, 2nd ed., p. i.

¹⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43), Ellis to Hallam, August 22, 1875.

or fractional vibrations sounded above the fundamental when a string vibrates, in the translation became "upper partial tones." The reviewer felt that the Ellis translation of such a phrase was "clumsy and a blot."¹⁸

Immediately Ellis responded to the hostile criticism because he felt he should defend his refusal to employ the word "overtones". He gave a detailed account of his reasons which would have been of great value had they been included in the original preface to the Helmholtz translation. Furthermore the selection of an appropriate title had long been to him a matter of concern but he remained adamant in his choice. He resented the imputation of carelessness on his part and angrily observed that he had been motivated by a desire for scientific accuracy. The word "tone" meant to Ellis a musical quality of sound, and he pointed out that Helmholtz and later Tyndall, had not differentiated consistently between a simple or a compound tone. Ellis sharply admonished the reviewer, saying that the word "overtone" had been incorrectly used in speaking of the "overtones" of a pianoforte string. Ellis was always worried lest there be confusion in the minds of readers to whom the subject of acoustics was unfamiliar. It was his feeling that the

¹⁸"Music", rev. of Helmholtz's The Sensations of Musical Tones, translated by A.J. Ellis, Nature, 12 (September 23, 1875), 449-52.

protest was required in order to clarify the term.¹⁹

In 1881 Ellis and Helmholtz met once more when the latter visited London to deliver the Faraday Lecture before the Chemical Society. Regarding the scientist's refusal to accept only that which his eyes actually saw, Helmholtz remarked to Ellis that if an optician were to send him a lens as faulty as the best human eye, he would return it as slovenly work. Ellis himself commented to Helmholtz that the same criticism applied to the ear and the speech organs.²⁰

The translation of the Tonempfindungen brought Ellis into contact with Alfred Marshall Mayer (1836-97), the distinguished American physicist. The eminent men of British science welcomed him when he visited England in 1873. In addition to Ellis he met Tyndall, Wheatstone, Spottiswoode, Bosanquet, and Lord Rayleigh.²¹ Mayer was gratified that Ellis had been complimentary towards his labors on sound and was delighted to receive a personal copy of the Helmholtz

¹⁹A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Nature, 12 (September 20, 1875), 475.

²⁰Moncure D. Conway, Autobiography: Memories and Experiences, Vol. 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), p. 341, note.

²¹Alfred G. Mayer and Robert S. Woodward, "Biographical Memoir of Alfred Marshall Mayer, 1836-97," Biographical Memoirs of the National Academy of Science, 8 (1916), 250.

translation from Ellis.²² It is interesting to note here that ten years later Ellis had taken up a revision of his Helmholtz work during most of 1885. It contained more original notes along with an appendix. In order to include the new matter he was obliged to omit a great deal of the old and remodel much of what he had retained.²³

The formation of the new Musical Association in London in 1874 aroused considerable interest among students of music, and many distinguished scholars joined the new group in order to be in the avant-garde of the exciting nineteenth century musical investigations. Among the luminaries of the newly-formed society was Alexander Ellis, who delivered a paper to the First Session concerning just and tempered intonation. Its purpose was to show how experiments could be carried out in order to verify the hypotheses made by Helmholtz. Ellis observed in the course of the paper that one Dr. Macfarren's belief that the right tone could be heard through the wrong one was incorrect because the majority of people "never happened to have heard

²²Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Mayer to Ellis, August 14, 1875.

²³Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, November 27, 1885.

the right."²⁴

At the second meeting of the First Session of the Musical Association, Ellis exhibited a mesotonic harmonium, the invention of T.W. Saunders of Lachenals Concertina Factory of Bedford Row. Ellis' chief object was to show that the right pitch could be produced, a result not possible on the old harmonium. He could also restore the pitch by pushing in a device. It would appear that this device could tune any note believed to be out of tune. He emphasized that the instrument could play from seven flats to seven sharps with the precise mean tone or mesotonic intonation, so called because the interval of a tone was exactly a mean between the major tone and the minor tone. Ellis' chief object was to show that the right pitch could be produced than was possible on the old harmonium. Helmholtz's intonation system could thus be used on an instrument, a "justly intoned" harmonium having only one manual and the usual fingering.²⁵

²⁴A.J. Ellis, "Illustrations of Just and Tempered Intonation," Proceedings of the Musical Association for the Investigation and Discussion of Subjects Connected with the Art and Science of Music, First Session, June 7, 1875 (London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1875), p. 165.

²⁵Ibid., December 7, 1874, p. 41.

The Royal Society heard Ellis deliver on November 19, 1874 his study "On Musical Duodenes" in which he characterized the tuning system of ordinary keyed instruments as the most unsatisfactory because each harmonic element was put out of tune in all keys. Though it was impractical to have more than the twelve notes in the octave which made perfect pitch an impossibility, Ellis was of the opinion that the introduction of a trifling deviation was possible so as not to offend the ear too much. The theory underlying his paper was the careful choice of certain sets of twelve notes which he called a "musical duodene."

Ellis exhibited to the Society a chart from which combinations of certain of the desired seventy-eight notes could be ascertained for their consonance. He pointed out that the ear is most sensitive to the intervals of the major thirds, but it could tolerate a little flatness in the fifth and minor thirds. He was highly critical of the "extremely discordant" error of the major third in equal temperament.²⁶

After Ellis had delivered his paper, discussion ensued in which Dr. William Pole (1814-1900), Professor of Engineering at Bombay (and soon to be the Examiner in Music

²⁶A.J. Ellis, "On Musical Duodenes, or the Theory of Constructing Instruments with Fixed Tones in Just or Practically Just Intonation," Proceedings of the Royal Society of London, 23 (1875), 3-31.

at the University of London) remarked that the state of affairs at that time was such that the great majority of music-producing instruments were "deliberately and systematically tuned false."²⁷ Henceforth it was not necessary to use the mean temperament designed for playing in all sorts of remote keys since simplest keys actually used for church organs, along with the popular trend of velocity in modern music, were out of keeping with what was then prevalent in tuning. Ellis then also agreed that it was being done without any reasonable basis. Dr. Pole expressed to Ellis the gratitude of music lovers for his efforts to remedy the evils of equal temperament.

Llewellyn Lloyd is very critical in his analysis of Ellis' a priori theory that all composers who wrote for strings and voices thought in terms of tempered music. He was in disagreement with Ellis' conclusions based on the experimental harmonium with its duodenarium system based on modulations according to a system which he believed "desirable." It, therefore, seemed that by admitting the impossibility of hearing the same intonation twice, Ellis "demolished at a stroke his own theory."²⁸

²⁷A.J. Ellis, "Science in Music," Nature, 11 (December 3, 1874), 88-89.

²⁸Lloyd and Boyle, op. cit., p. 107.

There were also other problems to which Ellis turned such as that of "vibrations," by which he meant "the number of double or complete vibrations backwards and forwards made in each second by a particle of air while the note is heard." In his concern with the determination of pitch, Ellis had to resolve the problem of the reliability of its carriers, i.e. the source of a specific pitch. Very few people were able to reproduce a pitch at will after the lapse of time, and there was a need for having instruments which could sound a given pitch-note at any moment. The oldest was the metal flue organ pipe and the stopped pitch pipe. The tuning fork and free reed were not used till years later.

Ellis felt little confidence in the reliability of the organ pipe as a carrier of pitch because it was affected by seasonal temperatures. He calculated mathematical conversions to account for the quantity of wind regulated by the wind-slit and the orifice at the foot of the pipe.²⁹ Significantly he observed that it was almost impossible to ascertain the proper pitch relationships among the pipes of an organ. Owing to its great size there were various parts of it that were constantly at variable temperatures and were out of tune with each other.³⁰ Ellis took all possible

²⁹A.J. Ellis, "The History of Musical Pitch," Journal of the Society of Arts, 28 (March 5, 1880), 297.

³⁰Ibid.

pains to investigate every aspect of this problem. For example, he arranged with the Bell Foundry Colbacchini of Padua to borrow two stopped pitchpipes more than a hundred years old, each containing two octaves, with a sliding piston for use by singers who had available no other instruments to provide a pitch.

Ellis felt genuine admiration for the tuning fork, a "beautiful philosophical instrument."³¹ He claimed that he had reason to believe that Scheibler's forks, one of the classic tonometers, had not varied by one vibration in ten seconds since its maker's death in 1837. Ellis knew that it was extremely difficult to tune one fork exactly with another.

Johann Scheibler (1777-1837), a silk manufacturer of Crefeld, was the inventor of the tuning fork tonometer, a series of fifty-six tuning forks which could indicate absolute frequency. He had tuned a fork to the A of what he considered the correct pitch of the Viennese concert pianos and a second fork was accurately tuned an octave below the first, with a series of fifty-six forks then tuned in relation to the first two. Scheibler tuned with the greatest possible precision. A 440 Stuttgart Pitch proved a method suitable for establishing a reliable standard by which voices

³¹Ibid.

and instruments could be tuned.³²

Ellis was confident in using the fifty-six fork tonometer which the descendants of Scheibler had let him borrow. Though the original one of fifty-two forks had never been found, the set in Ellis' hands at least had been owned by Scheibler. Ellis checked the pitch of many pianos and organs in private homes and institutions with a set of tuning forks, some belonging to A.J. Hipkins, as well as those which various societies had permitted him to borrow. Friends also let Ellis take some of their choice forks for several weeks at a time. He was very cautious about handling them and worried constantly about the dangers of rust. He procured oil for removing rust from a gun-smith's shop. Ellis experimented extensively in determining the amount of rust which would affect the pitch of the forks by immersing the bend or the prongs in water so that rust would form. He then ascertained the degree to which the fork's pitch had been affected. He never stroked the prongs with his fingers or did any speaking above them. Ellis' own large forks were mounted on resonance-boxes with chamois covers, and he stored his many small forks in cases or folded up the smallest ones

³²Dayton Clarence Miller, Anecdotal History of the Science of Sound to the Beginning of the 20th Century (New York: Macmillan, 1935), p. 56.

in paper. An amusing caricature exists of Ellis being disturbed in his intent counting of the beats on a resonating fork by a squawking parrot.³³

Ellis wished to draw upon the expertise of the many organ builders who had constructed instruments for the large number of churches in Victorian London. Though their views on organ pitch differed sometimes from those of Helmholtz, Ellis was of the opinion that they had something valuable to contribute owing to their many years of practical experience.

Hermann Smith, a master organ builder, though not a scientist, told Ellis that an oboe head could be placed on a clarinet body to restore the missing partial tones. Though Helmholtz had depended on the shape of the tube to do the same thing in an organ pipe Smith explained to Ellis that by making rods about eight feet long with a triangular cross section, it was possible to obtain distinct notes an octave apart merely by changing the base of the triangle. Ellis concluded that the shape of an oboe reed determined the quality of tone. He corrected Helmholtz's assertion respecting free reeds in tubes.³⁴

³³National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh), Manuscript Collections, A.J. Hipkins Papers: Caricatures of Mr. Ellis and His Friends.

³⁴Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, November 5, 1875.

Ellis was still not satisfied with Helmholtz's notion of the relation of length to width of the tube; neither would he accept Hermann Smith's explanation nor that of the eminent Bosanquet³⁵ on the matter. Ellis' theorizing was very interesting since it had in all probability been affected by the views held by those organ builders whom he consulted.

The unusual acoustical instruments at the 1875 Loan Exhibition at the South Kensington Museum caught his attention. Particularly intriguing was the one which Hermann Smith had built. It was a kind of "wind violin" fitted up with seven strings on each of which two octaves could be played.³⁵ Ellis reported that the bowing, which was really "blowing", was done with the foot and that both hands were free to stop the strings in order to play chords in any intonation at pleasure. Ellis delighted in describing the operation of unique contrivances and willingly shared his observations with fellow-scientists.

The Ellis-Mayer correspondence reveals the enthusiasm both men shared in establishing the duration of the perception of vibrations by the listener. Ellis was always generous in furthering the work of others, and he did not withhold suggestions which would help Mayer. He told him

³⁵Ibid.

that beats do not arise from single waves but rather from the separation of sets of waves. He remarked, "Beats themselves never produce the sensation of continuity but that continuity arises from the succession of one set of waves being longer than the interval of time which separates it from the second set."³⁶ Ellis was especially adept at presenting descriptions of the most complex phenomena.

He viewed Mayer's work favorably and considered the following discovery to be of the greatest importance. Mayer had found that a single sound will extinguish a higher though weaker sound and that a high strong sound will not extinguish a much weaker bass sound. Ellis pointed out to Mayer further directions which his work ought to take. After much correspondence with Mayer, Ellis came to the conclusion that it was almost impossible to arrange the seating of an orchestra, with the "braying of the brass," in such a way as to make the orchestra produce the proper effect on all its auditors.³⁷

Ellis always researched thoroughly the current literature of any field in which he was working. In all probability such unswerving determination with which he

³⁶Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, April 3, 1876.

³⁷Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, June 22, 1876.

pursued his interests contributed to his bouts of physical prostration. He regularly examined the complex entries in Poggendorff's Annalen der Physik und Chemie, where in the May 1876 issue he discovered an obscure letter from F.W. Sonreck concerning the vibrations of tones in uncovered organ pipes. Ellis was startled to find that it was a direct translation of his own material which had been included in the Appendix to his Helmholtz translation. He felt obliged to set the record straight.³⁸

Lest he be accused of calumniating a fellow scientist, Ellis once again wrote about the indisputable priority of the studies of the organ builder Hermann Smith. Sonreck had insisted that his own investigations had preceded those of Smith back in 1864. Ellis provided the Annalen with a bibliography which put the unfortunate matter at rest, and Sonreck had no choice but to retire gracefully from the awkward situation. Ellis showed that he had a full command of the facts.³⁹

³⁸ A.J. Ellis, "Über Herrn Sonreck's Theorie der Schwingungs-Erregung und der Bewegung der Luftsäule in offenen und gedeckten Pfeifen Briefliche Mittheilung," (September 29, 1876), Annalen der Physik und Chemie, Sechste Reihe. Herausgegeben zu Berlin von J.C. Poggendorff Neunter Band. Leipzig, 1876 (Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth), p. 176.

³⁹ Ibid., November 24, 1876, pp. 665-66.

Not only did Ellis receive valuable scientific information from across the sea, but he was also able to utilize some of the instruments which were then being devised for establishing accurate pitch scientifically. Ellis received from Mayer an American "ticker", a term which Ellis frequently used in referring to his chronometer. The instrument was a very noisy one, which Ellis was obliged to keep in his dressing room next to his library. He could only bring it out for a few minutes at a time in order to conduct his experiments. He observed that he could only hear two beats to the second: viz. "one-y, two-y." The pocket chronometer that he had been accustomed to using registered five beats to two seconds. Mayer's chronometer appeared to be gaining two minutes in twenty-four hours, and Ellis felt uneasy lest the intervals would be affected. To add to the problem, Ellis found that each of his ears, when used separately, caused differences in counting.

Because Victorian London was a noisy city, he would frequently become aware of the sounds from the streets although he worked in a back room with a hundred feet of garden separating him from the opposite house. Even the cooing of the "doves" was distracting while he was trying to get the count of the vibrations of a resonating fork with the aid of the chronometer. Worst of all, domestic exigencies intruded upon his efforts, for his daughter ("a very nervous

woman of 32") would sharply protest when her father wanted to verify the forks by using reeds which were set in vials. Ellis' son Tristie only moderately shared his father's interests in pitch and pointed out that the rumble of the London horse-drawn omnibuses extinguished all the sounds made by the forks and their consequent effect upon the reeds, except for the highest treble of the barrel-organ player who passed by the Ellis residence near Holland Park.⁴⁰

Two months later Ellis expressed his keen disappointment in Mayer's special chronometer because his left ear had become so badly irritated by the loud ticking that he was obliged to say that the mere recollection of the chronometer caused him an "unpleasant and nervous sensation, almost a pain, on the spot."⁴¹ He returned the noisy chronometer three years later to Mayer because it had "bored such a hole in the tympanum."⁴²

⁴⁰ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, June 22, 1876.

⁴¹ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, August 5, 1876.

⁴² Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, July 7, 1879.

For years Alfred J. Hipkins of the firm of Broadwood's, piano makers, had also been at work determining the pitches of tuning forks. Learning that Ellis was interested in these experiments, he had started to send his results to him. Ellis suggested that Hipkins meet him at the special Loan Exhibition at South Kensington to see the work which had been devised by others for determining accurate pitch. Ellis wrote, "You will know me at once by my bald head, white beard, and stout figure."⁴³ The exhibits were of great interest to Ellis because there had been further attempts to overcome the prevailing system of harsh tuning in use for over a century and a half. The customary organ, piano, and harmonium had fixed tones, and the Exhibition aimed at showing mechanical appliances which purported to have resolved the problem.

The reed tonometer of George Appunn of Hanau had been invented in order to improve on the usual tuning fork tonometer. Ellis examined the models with 65, 33, and 57 reeds in the South Kensington Museum. Appunn had preferred to use reeds rather than forks because the reeds could vibrate at the upper partial tones, thus making it easy to have verification with them. Ellis admired the Appunn reed

⁴³British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41636 (fol. 123). Ellis to Hipkins, October 31, 1877.

tonometer for its "wonderful accuracy."⁴⁴ Appunn had not sent his own metronome with which he had measured the tonometer to the Loan Exhibition, and the only way that Ellis could count the beats for verification was by observing a chronometer watch for twenty seconds.

Hipkins was pleased to meet Ellis at the South End of Room Q at the Loan Exhibition in 1877. It was a special occasion because the Reverend Mr. Dritild, rector of Bow, was present in order to allow Ellis and Hipkins to test George Frederick Handel's own tuning fork, then in his possession.⁴⁵

Ellis particularly admired the "generalized keyboard" of Bosanquet with its four dozen finger keys to the octave. Anything that could be devised on rigorously scientific principles for the solution of an apparently insoluble problem appealed greatly to Ellis. He refused to give up in any field, whether spelling reform, phonetic systems, or algebraic immeasurables. Nothing daunted Ellis, who must be seen involving himself equally in all his interests in order to appreciate the remarkable spirit of inquiry which he brought to all his investigations.

⁴⁴A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Nature, 16 (May 18, 1877), 85.

⁴⁵British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41636 (fol. 123), Ellis to Hipkins, October 31, 1876.

"Tonometry," which had appeared in the December 2, 1876 Athenaeum⁴⁶ was reprinted in its entirety in the February 1877 Journal of the Franklin Institute.⁴⁷ Ellis was well-known in American scientific circles, and it is interesting to take note of the respect which so conservative a body as the Franklin Institute felt in accepting Ellis' work even though it had already appeared in print in Britain. Almost all the material in the Journal was original.

Inspired by the quality of the 1877 Loan Exhibition, Ellis prepared an article in which he evaluated the instruments that he had examined. To devise an instrument with 117 notes to the octave in order to get a perfect modulation of octaves, fifths, and major thirds was a mechanical impossibility. He admitted that even doubling the number of the twelve notes on the piano by use of the harmonic Seventh would not solve the problem. This meant that one would have to settle for the "degree of endurable imperfection."⁴⁸ Temperament would not remedy the situation,

⁴⁶A.J. Ellis, "Tonometry," Athenaeum, December 2, 1876, p. 731.

⁴⁷A.J. Ellis, "Tonometry," Journal of the Franklin Institute of Philadelphia of the State of Pennsylvania for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts, 103 (February 1877), 101-6.

⁴⁸A.J. Ellis, "Recently Proposed Improvements in Musical Intonation," Nature, 15 (March 29, 1877), 475.

and a singer was really at a disadvantage in part music because it was difficult to attain an accurate parallel with the piano if the singers went off pitch.

In order to advance his investigations into accurate pitch Ellis examined several well-known forks and organs. Handel's tuning fork was a disappointment to Ellis because it proved to be flatter than the concert pitch used by the Philharmonic Orchestra. This fork necessitated a transposition of the music. Ellis, however, was pleased with the loan of another tuning fork from Hipkins, which had been tuned to that of the Hampton Court Organ. By this time Ellis was convinced that in establishing proper pitch he had to eliminate any reliance upon one's ear when using the fork and have a purely "mechanical result." He discovered that he could flatten the tuning fork by holding it under his arm for a minute.⁴⁹

At this time an encouraging situation developed. Through the efforts of the Foreign Minister, the Society of Arts had secured some tuning forks in 1869. Because Ellis felt a measure of obligation to the Society of Arts for the loan of these valuable forks, he delivered before that body a paper which he called "On the Measurement and Settlement of Musical Pitch" on May 23, 1877. It was a source of

⁴⁹Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, April 2, 1877.

distress to Ellis that the general public had so little knowledge on these matters.⁵⁰

His American friend Professor Mayer was continuing acoustical experiments by utilizing forks covered with foil in conjunction with smoked paper. He tried to determine the vibratory period. The results were passed along by Ellis to the Society of Arts.⁵¹

The Musical Association continued to engage in lively discussions following the delivery of papers, and Ellis participated enthusiastically on such occasions. Typical was the meeting following a paper by Charles Kensington Salamon, an Honourable Member of the Academy St. Cecilia at Rome. The topic for the evening of June 4, 1877 concerned the suitability of the English language in vocal music. W.H. Cummings rose to state his disagreement with Ellis' experiments which concluded that the vowel a in English was the only proper one upon which to sing. Salamon also felt that the other vowels and sibilants referred to by Ellis had demonstrably been sung by trained English vocalists. Mr. Salamon, nevertheless, exercised caution so as not to offend Ellis, "a man of such celebrity and an experienced

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ A.J. Ellis, "Professor Mayer's Electrical Tonometer--A Correction," Journal of the Society of Arts, 25 (June 29, 1877), 792.

philologist and scholar."⁵²

Many brilliant figures are numbered among the friends of Alexander Ellis in the 1870's, though none perhaps more so than the Professor of Natural Philosophy at the Royal Institution, John Tyndall, whose achievements are celebrated. He allowed Ellis to borrow some of the tuning forks which had actually been made by Rudolphe Koenig (1832-1901), who had established a manufactory of acoustical instruments in Paris. Koenig's clock fork used a standard clock along with the forks in order to determine absolute pitch. It had originally been used in connection with the measurement of the Diapason Normal fork (A 435 = International Pitch), the only fork which received governmental sanction. Koenig had devised 150 forks, including some large ones weighing 200 pounds which were used with resonators measuring eight feet with 20" diameters.⁵³

⁵²Charles Kensington Salamon, "On the English Language as a Language for Music," Proceedings of the Musical Association for the Investigation and Discussion of Subjects Connected with the Art and Science of Music, Third Session, June 4, 1877 (London: Chappell and Co., 1875), p. 139.

⁵³Miller, op. cit., p. 89.

Although Ellis still continued to employ Georg Appunn's reed tonometer, he noted some rather alarming discrepancies in the vaunted Koenig forks. The Koenig tonometer, used in many physics laboratories, had been measured originally against the famous Diapason Normal. In 1859 the French Commission had arranged for Jules Lissajous (1822-80) to superintend the creation of the Diapason Normal. Accordingly, the musical world had accepted the A fork at 435 vibrations per second.

Hipkins arranged with his own employer Messrs. Broadwood to obtain a copy of the French Diapason Normal. In exchange for commercial courtesies the Normal was deposited at the Broadwoods piano factory. Ellis was then able to check the Normal against the accurate Appunn reed tonometer and found that it was four vibrations sharper than accepted. A 439 was a significant difference.⁵⁴ Inasmuch as Koenig had checked his own set of forks against the Normal, Ellis felt justified in criticizing Koenig's tonometer. The Lissajous computations on the Normal had been the cause for error on the part of Koenig.

In the argument regarding the accuracy of the Koenig tonometer, there came from Paris a letter from Rudolphe Koenig

⁵⁴ A.J. Ellis, "Koenig's Tuning-Forks and the French Diapason Normal," Nature 16 (May 18, 1877), 85.

himself, who scathingly lashed out at Ellis for having had the audacity to imply that his diapasons were not reliable. In a haughty manner he dismissed Ellis' opinions of the forks "qu'il n'a problemement jamais vus et en tout cas jamais examin ." ⁵⁵ Koenig also angrily recalled a letter which Helmholtz was reputed to have sent Appunn, the inventor of the reed tonometer. The pre-eminent German Professor of Physics had been "etonn " by the reliability of Koenig's measuring device! Temperature would, of course, affect the mechanism, but there was provision for making a satisfactory adjustment. Koenig reproved Ellis for having relied only on Appunn's harmonium reeds and for having failed to respect properly the experimentation of Helmholtz and Lissajous.

Koenig's public excoriation only elicited a dignified response from its target. As for the possibly spurious letter from Helmholtz to Appunn--it received scant attention from the public. Ellis shrewdly observed that the criticism directed towards Appunn's reed tonometer by Koenig was no longer valid because the tonometer had been corrected more than ten years previously. ⁵⁶ As a result of his discussion of the Koenig tonometer in Nature, Ellis maintained an

⁵⁵R. Koenig, "To the Editor," Nature, 16 (July 26, 1877), 162.

⁵⁶A.J. Ellis, "Koenig's Tuning Forks," Nature, 16 (July 19, 1877), 227.

interesting correspondence with Professor Preyer at the University of Jena. His German colleague now proceeded to carry out a set of fatiguing experiments, which required counting the beats of the maligned Koenig forks (since he had been accustomed to the difficulties associated with counting the heart beats of small animals for many years). Ellis also shared his own views with Mayer in America about the Koenig forks and indicated that the age of Koenig's forks might account for the slight variations in the number of vibrations reported. He emphasized that research needed to take into consideration the factors of temperature, dampness, and disuse in checking the pitch of the Koenig forks.⁵⁷

At this time Preyer was invited to present a paper at the Third Session of the Musical Association. It was titled "Über die Grenzen der Tonwahrnehmung". Ellis carefully analyzed this report and added his own views in "On the Sensitivity of the Ear to Pitch and Change of Pitch in Music."⁵⁸ By keeping up-to-date with Continental

⁵⁷ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, August 27, 1877.

⁵⁸ A.J. Ellis, "On the Sensitiveness of the Ear to Pitch and Change of Pitch in Music," Proceedings of the Musical Association for the Investigation and Discussion of Subjects Connected with the Art and Science of Music, Third Session, November 6, 1876 (London: Chappell and Co., 1877), p. 1.

scholarship Ellis was able to utilize the results of their findings in connection with his investigations then in progress.

Ellis encouraged Mayer to study carefully the most trusted representative of musical pitch, i.e., the French Diapason Normal, by trying to determine the method by which Koenig had arrived at the pitch for the forks of his tonometer. It was Ellis' theory that Koenig had worked originally from the French Diapason Normal fork; and since Koenig had not denied the assertion, Ellis wrote to the distinguished French physicist Lissajous at Besançon University. With characteristic thoroughness, Ellis had thus succeeded in locating the man who had made the famous Normal.

Ellis planned to measure the Normal through the use of Lissajous' computations and then measure those figures against a similar set of forks, which he had been able to procure through the assistance of his friend A.J. Hipkins. Ellis planned to determine the ratios of both sets of the French tonometer against Appunn's reed tonometer in order to arrive at more definite conclusions.⁵⁹

In September 1877 Ellis returned without Hipkins to the South Kensington Museum for the purpose of counting the vibrations on Appunn's tonometer, which by this time had

⁵⁹ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, August 22, 1877.

gotten a little out of order. Employing one of Webster's ship chronometers, he counted each set of reeds over and over for one or two minutes. Ellis ascertained that his original work, as well as that of Professor Preyer at Jena, on the Koenig tuning forks was approximately correct. Ellis also discovered that the reeds on Appunn's tonometer were affected by their placement within a confined area, thereby causing a one percent acceleration of the reeds' movements.

Ellis was anxious to communicate this "important acoustical fact" and made plans to continue his experiments over many weeks.⁶⁰ He conferred with John William Strutt, Baron Rayleigh (1842-1919), who was awarded the Nobel Prize for physics in 1904. This eminent scientist had his own theories regarding the determination of pitch. Lord Rayleigh was able to secure the assistance of Ellis in several experiments which required the use of clocks and watches in conjunction with a Koenig tuning fork which was excited by a violin bow. Ellis counted the entire series of beats and compared the pitch with that of the tuning forks which Rayleigh had used in earlier investigations. In his report of these experiments he mentioned Ellis' part, but assumed responsibility for all his assertions.⁶¹

⁶⁰ A.J. Ellis, "Letter to the Editor," Nature 16 (November 3, 1877), 26.

⁶¹ John William Strutt, Baron Rayleigh, "Absolute Pitch," Nature 17 (November 1, 1877), 13.

Ellis went ahead with the tedious experiments and faithfully reported his progress to his American friend Alfred Mayer. Ellis felt confident that the one percent acceleration of the reeds accounted for the discrepancy between Appunn and Koenig.⁶²

As he continued his complex investigations, Ellis acquired an extraordinary knowledge of the properties of tuning forks and the problems arising during their manufacture. Ellis had great confidence in the quality of the work done by Messrs. Valentine and Carr of Sheffield, who manufactured large forks if required. In the course of his experiments Ellis confirmed Scheibler's experience in making forks because he found that after filing, the pitch rises and the fork has to rest three days at least before it can be tried again. Ellis also measured the vibrations of the Fork of the Liceo Musicale of Bologna which had been "officially" sent to the Society of Arts in 1869.

Most important of all, in August 1878 Ellis was successful in getting from the French organ-builder in Paris, Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, an account of the method employed by Lissajous in determining the pitch of the great Diapason Normal. Ellis now felt encouraged by the progress made in

⁶²Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, November 4, 1877.

England in the use of equal temperament rather than the old mean-tone principle.⁶³

Ellis at work over his tuning forks presents an arresting picture. He devised all kinds of experiments in which he would strike one fork over a jar and another one in the air; then he would try both over one jar. Afterwards he would try each over a separate jar. He would try a dozen different arrangements, discovering that the size of the jar sometimes caused the fork to ring too sharp or too flat.⁶⁴

When Ellis measured a pipe organ's pitch, he operated in the following way: In order to hear the beats, he held the forks over a resonance jar filled with air, and tuned to its pitch by pouring in water. The organ bellows were first filled, and he allowed no pumping during the ten seconds in which he counted.⁶⁵ For several weeks in 1879 he continued his research at the South Kensington Museum, but when he would get home in the afternoon to assemble his morning's

⁶³A.J. Ellis, "Mons. A. Cavaillé-Coll on Musical Pitch, the French Diapason Normal, Scheibler's Tuning-Forks, Etc.," Nature 18 (August 8, 1878), 381-83.

⁶⁴British Museum, Hipkins Papers, Department of Manuscripts (Add. MSS 41636), Ellis to Hipkins, September 9, 1878.

⁶⁵A.J. Ellis, "On the Ancient Pitch of Organs," Nature, 19 (December 26, 1878), 171-72.

notes, he found that there would be many interruptions that maddeningly slowed up his attempts to make the necessary mathematical computations.⁶⁶

It should be noted here that Ellis was still very much disturbed because the tonometer which Scheibler had described in Der Tonmesser was not the same type which had been sent to him for his regular use. The original tonometer was irretrievably lost, and all of Ellis' attempts to locate the great set of forks came to nothing.⁶⁷ He had only a copy of the tonometer, but it was impossible to determine just how faithful it was to the original. Cavaill6-Coll informed Ellis that a tuning fork preserves its pitch for at least twenty-eight years.

Certainly various devices for ascertaining pitch did have their limitations; and even though Ellis appreciated their interesting construction, he was irritated when he was actually counting the beats. Again he shared his thoughts and experiences with Mayer on this problem, indicating that he felt that an instrument for counting the beats was very much needed. Ear, eye, and chronometer presented great difficulties and serious limitations. He found that his brain

⁶⁶ Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Clement Ingleby, November 24, 1879.

⁶⁷ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, July 7, 1879.

was becoming undependable from the work. For example, he would count only from 1 to 8 instead of 10. He also had to delay the progress of his experiments because answers to his queries on pitch often would be slow in arriving. At times Ellis was ready to give up hope of hearing from informants in Hamburg, Strassburg, and Seville. He began to feel very much out of sorts, for his work on the pronunciation of English was demanding his attention.⁶⁸

The resonance chambers of old violins also yielded information to Ellis in his pitch studies. He worked with instruments by Stradivari, Guarneri, and Maggini and was able to determine their best resonance at about 252.⁶⁹ These researches absorbed much of his time and strength. The observations were laborious, and he was continually under the obligation of returning the instruments as quickly as possible to their owners.⁷⁰ It was aggravating to have to stop his work because of interruptions, and his letters to his friend Thomas Hallam in Manchester were filled with his

⁶⁸ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, August 20, 1879.

⁶⁹ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, January 18, 1880.

⁷⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, June 2, 1879.

anger at those who persisted in intruding on him.⁷¹

After much more experimentation, Ellis realized by March 1880 that because of the increased percentage of acceleration owing to the confined space around the reed tonometer, he had to reduce Appunn's values mathematically in order to make the three tonometers (Koenig's, the French Commission's, and Appunn's) correspond with Scheibler's forks. Ellis could not spare any more time to the examination of the apparent discrepancies of Koenig.

Though the situation was an awkward one, Ellis graciously apologized to Rudolph Koenig and carefully explained that the apparent variables owing to the confined air in the Appunn tonometer were responsible for the conclusions which he [Ellis] had attributed to him.⁷²

Ellis' reputation as a student of musical pitch was growing in Britain. His Irish colleague in the Philological Society James Lecky admired him particularly. A query had come from George Bernard Shaw to Lecky asking about a good book on musical theory. Accordingly, he recommended Ellis'

⁷¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, June 19, 1879.

⁷²A.J. Ellis, "The History of Musical Pitch," Journal of the Society of Arts, 28 (March 5, 1880), 300-01.

work On the Basis of Music,⁷³ "a very interesting resumé of Helmholtz." He also approved of Bosanquet's Temperament, "a work highly endorsed by Ellis" because, along with Ellis' work, Shaw would find that he would have a "complete library of science for a musical student."⁷⁴

Later in 1879 Lecky provides us with another glimpse of Ellis that is not quite so flattering. Sir George Grove was then compiling his notable Dictionary of Music and Musicians (4 vols., 1878-89). Lecky found himself caught up in a series of adventures with the "unholy crew of musical editors" and irreverently referred to "old Grove," who had been obliged to employ specialists for writing the scientific articles for the Dictionary. Lecky informed Shaw that Grove had not engaged Ellis because he was "too dry!!"⁷⁵

While Hipkins visited in Paris in 1878, Ellis anxiously awaited his return in order to hear about the

⁷³ A.J. Ellis, On the Basis of Music, Containing an Elementary Account of the Nature of Musical Notes and Chords, the Generation of Scales and Modulations, and the Origin and Effects of the Usual Tempered Scales: A Lecture Delivered before the College of Preceptors, 14 March, 1877 (London: C.F. Hodgson & Son, 1877).

⁷⁴ British Museum, George Bernard Shaw Correspondence, Add. MS 50549, Lecky to Shaw, May 5, 1879.

⁷⁵ British Museum, George Bernard Shaw Correspondence, Add. MS 50549, Lecky to Shaw, December 13, 1879.

meeting which had been scheduled to take place with Cavaillé-Coll. Ellis also hoped that this would straighten out the confusion over another set of tuning forks Ellis had ordered and which Hipkins had arranged to send to him from Paris. Because of some mistake the handles would not screw on to the forks when they finally did come. The expensive box in which they were to be stored arrived "fractured," and Ellis protested at having to use up valuable time and ship them back to France.⁷⁶

During these years when Ellis was examining the pitch of musical instruments he was also giving a great deal of his attention to studying the pitch of the human voice. In 1872 he found himself involved in an unpleasant controversy regarding the methods employed in two London music schools for the training of voice students. Having studied the course of instruction at the Tonic Sol-Fa College back in 1856-57, Ellis approved of the method of time notation which its founder John Curwen espoused; but Ellis denounced on several occasions before the Musical Association of London the methods which were utilized for time notation in a new rival school operated by a Frenchman, Edmond Andrade. At this school the pupils were required to pitch their notes a

⁷⁶British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Ellis to Hipkins, September 9, 1878.

half tone higher than their nearest flats. Ellis was convinced of the inaccuracy of this method and did not hesitate to express his views.

Kenneth Simpson's study of this difference of method observes that Ellis hadn't considered that the tuning of particular notes, as well as artistic decision rather than mathematics, serve as the determining factors. Ellis availed himself of every opportunity to denounce with vehemence the French system at meetings of the Musical Association.⁷⁷

In 1871 John Curwen engaged Ellis to deliver a series of lectures to the students of the Tonic Sol-Fa College because he had previously worked with him on that school's Graded Course. The sol-faists, on taking up the song itself, after leaving behind the note syllables, proved completely ignorant of the pronunciation of the foreign languages. Having resided three years in Germany, a year and a half in Italy, and six months in France made Ellis competent in providing instruction on the pronunciation of these tongues.

⁷⁷ Kenneth Simpson, "Some Great Music Educators: The Galin-Paris-Chev  Movement," Music Teacher and Piano Student, 47 (January 1968), 21.

The approach Ellis adopted in his work Pronunciation for Singers⁷⁸ was for the student to sing all the special speech exercises. He had little respect for anything that had previously been written in the singing manuals and was concerned principally with the action of vowel on vowel and consonant on vowel. In this work he devoted much space to what he called "glides" and the students were urged to spend at least five minutes daily at "vocal gymnastics" in order to improve the production of sound.

In Speech in Song (1878)⁷⁹ Ellis refers to "speaking registers" but he does not assign linguistic significance to the term. He, nonetheless, does point out that a speaker can choose a particular register if he is so inclined.⁸⁰ The book provided lessons in the correct pronunciation of foreign words in cantatas, oratorios, lieder, and opera. Ellis employed his Glossic alphabet (to be discussed in Chapter IX), founded on English spelling. He knew that he was writing for musicians, not philologists,

⁷⁸ A.J. Ellis, Pronunciation for Singers, with Especial Reference to the English, German, Italian, and French Languages: with Numerous Examples and Exercises for the Use of Teachers and Advanced Students (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1877), pp. x-xii.

⁷⁹ A.J. Ellis, Speech in Song, Being the Singer's Pronouncing Primer of the Principal European Languages for Which Vocal Music Is Usually Composed (London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1877).

⁸⁰ Abercrombie, Elements of General Phonetics, p. 172.

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BY

ALEXANDER J. ELLIS.

B.A., LITT.D., F.R.S., F.S.A., F.C.P.S., F.C.P.

Late Vice-President (formerly President) of the Philological Society, Member of the Mathematical Society,
Member of the Musical Association, Honorary Member of the Council of the Tonik Sol-In College,
Formerly Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge.
Author of "Early English Pronunciation," Translator of HELMHOLTZ'S "Sensation of Tone."



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and the student who examined his transcriptions of Verdi arias was able to derive practical guidance with the difficult foreign spellings. He was very pleased with his work and sent a copy of it to Professor Johann Storm in Norway.⁸¹

This type of work was very much in keeping with Ellis' sense of obligation to provide works which the student of modest finances could utilize in his self-improvement. From the early years in the 1840's when he was working with Pitman and producing simple primers in his phonotypic alphabet down through the 1870's when he was devising simple calculators for young laboring men who wanted to get ahead, Ellis exhibited a generosity of spirit by his willingness to draw upon his extensive learning so that others could benefit. At no time was he condescending. He addressed the College of Preceptors with as much enthusiasm as he expressed at meetings of the august Royal Society. Though the little work Speech in Song deserves recognition among his musical studies, it also belongs among his linguistic efforts because of its practical application of a phonetic system.

Inquiries on matters relating to musical pronunciation came frequently to Ellis. Professor F. Niecks of Edinburgh queried him regarding a number of special symbols for use in

⁸¹University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 30, 1878.

a work which he [Niecks] was preparing. Ellis did not care to write a lengthy analysis of Niecks' system of symbols and accordingly referred him to Speech in Song. By this time Ellis was becoming desperate for time and had to discourage requests for letters of explanation from all but the most distinguished of scholars. Such a response was uncharacteristic of Ellis, who had always been accommodating to others. He wrote as follows: "When a man is nearing seventy-three and is racing to get his work done while alive, time is heart's blood. I can't write you a letter!"⁸²

Twelve years after the publication of Speech in Song, the acerbic Bernard Shaw remarked concerning the merit of this work:

A fresh course can be gone through on pronunciation. Look through Mr. Alexander J. Ellis' little book on Speech in Song in order to get some idea of what to watch for and then call in a friend again--a vulgar friend if you have one. Study his vowels, and how loud he thinks it necessary to speak. Then go to the theatre and compare his with the speech of a mediocre actor.⁸³

Ellis himself was rather adept at playing an instrument though he makes practically no references throughout his musical studies to his accomplishment. As a boy he had learned to play on Wheatstone's English concertina, an

⁸²University of Edinburgh, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Niecks, February 1, 1887.

⁸³G.B. Shaw, London Music in 1888-89 as Heard by Corno di Bassetto (Later Known as Bernard Shaw) with Some Further Autobiographical Particulars (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1961), p. 265.

instrument more portable and cheaper than the harmonium. It had fourteen keys to the octave, and thus had plenty of scope for trying out new tunings. Later in life he tuned four concertinas on different principles and demonstrated the results before the College of Preceptors on March 14, 1877. He presented what he called Greek Tuning, Old Tuning, New Tuning, and Just Tuning. He maintained a close contact with the Lachenals Concertina Factory, and on his visits to Lachenals gave directions to a certain Mr. Saunders on his own preferred system of Just Intonation.⁸⁴

All of Ellis' instruments--the Ellis Collection of Musical Instruments--were subsequently presented to the Royal Institution by his friend Hipkins. Sir Charles Wheatstone's concertina, invented in 1829, pleased Ellis especially because it was possible to maintain a steady sustained note upon it. The concertinas which Ellis used are still in perfect condition and are very handsome.⁸⁵

In 1879 Rudolphe Koenig was still on Ellis' mind. His friend Alfred Mayer had written Ellis about contacting Koenig in connection with his own acoustical researches on

⁸⁴ Ellis, On the Basis of Music, pp. 15-16.

⁸⁵ Lawrence Bragg, Sir, "Treasures in the Collections of Apparatus at the Royal Institution," Proceedings of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, 38 (Part III, No. 167, 1959), p. 260.

the "electronic" tonometer. Ellis cautioned him that if he wanted to receive assistance from Koenig not to allude to their friendship. It had come to Ellis' attention from abroad that Koenig abused him "by the hour."⁸⁶

Ellis was continually returning to the problems of pitch in vocal music and he carefully explained in his "History of Musical Pitch" how the work of Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), the "English Palestrina," now had to be transcribed to a lower pitch because the present values given to the notes had changed.⁸⁷ Ellis held the opinion that most people generally did not know what pitch composers, particularly Handel, chose for their music; accordingly, singers found their voices strained in the upper limits because the notes on the page carried no trace of the original lower pitch.

In order to determine the compass of the human voice he made arrangements with several of the principal London choir directors to allow him to attend rehearsals. For example, on January 27, 1880, Ellis arrived fully equipped

⁸⁶Princeton University Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, August 20, 1879.

⁸⁷Ellis, History of Musical Pitch, p. 301.

with his tuning forks in order to measure the vocal range of the members of Henry Leslie's choir. His investigations were hampered to some degree because the room itself was enveloped in fog. He procured four forks, corresponding to Handel's A422.5, French Normal A435.4, Scheibler's A440, and Hipkins Philharmonic pitch EA454.7. Ellis then asked the conductor to pitch the voices of the choir to do from the first fork. The choir was then requested to sing the scale down twice. Each choir member was asked to mark on a special paper which Ellis had prepared the lowest note to which each voice could sing easily and then to mark the extreme lowest note to which it could sing at all. The voices then took an ascending scale to the same pitch and marked the highest note and then the highest extreme note. Using the other three tuning forks, Ellis repeated the same directions. He then calculated the number of vibrations in each of the limiting notes and then worked out the average compass of each kind of voice--soprano, alto, tenor, bass--within a quarter of a tone.⁸⁸ Ellis concluded that music for choruses should not be written for the average or mean limits, as probably one half of the chorus could not reach those limits easily and those that could would be distressed by them if they occurred frequently. He observed that it is safe to

⁸⁸Ellis, History of Musical Pitch, pp. 302-3.

write from the actual highest form of the lower limit to the actual lowest form of the higher limit. In this enterprise he also came into contact with Alberto Randegger (1832-1911), Director of the Norwich Music Festival, and he exchanged opinions on the range of the human voice.⁸⁹

Ellis' investigations in relation to the range of the singing voice provide us with a glimpse into the London social life of the 1880's. He went with his box of forks to the many choirs which assembled for the joy of making music for themselves as well as preparing for their annual concerts. W. McNaught, Director of the Bow and Bromley Institute Choir, and Ebenezer Prout, Director of the Borough of Hackney Choral Association, cooperated with his unusual request. With his instruments he crossed the Thames to visit Mr. L.C. Venables and his Advanced Choir of the South London Choral Association.⁹⁰ The world of Dickensian London was all around Ellis, with its contrasts ranging from the elegant musical soirées attended by the aristocracy of Portman Square to the working girls and men who assembled in a room over the market at Spitalfields where their choir sang Sir Arthur Sullivan's "Lost Chord." Ellis also gathered together some very old

⁸⁹ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, January 18, 1880.

⁹⁰ Ellis, History of Musical Pitch, p. 302.

data concerning organ specifications found in rare volumes of music which he was obliged to use when it became apparent that it was impossible to trust to the memory of organ builders or impractical to examine the organs themselves.

He was appalled at the generally "undignified and unscientific position taken by musicians on the matter of pitch with respect to orchestras, organs, and most instruments. In the 1880's there was widespread chaos with regard to a standard pitch. Ellis believed that £1000, the cost of lowering the pitch of instruments at Covent Garden Opera House, was nothing compared to the loss caused by the "premature ruin of one great singer's voice."⁹¹

Ellis went to visit organ builders and pianoforte makers, as well as horn makers and bell founders as part of his search for a standard pitch. His chief source of information about pitch came from the great nineteenth century organists, who were themselves often not only distinguished performers but also knowledgeable acousticians. He had spent many hours in the organ lofts among the manuals and pipes of many famous institutions, *viz.*, St. James, Piccadilly; St. George's Chapel, Windsor; Temple Church, London; Chapel Royal, St. James, London; and Westminster Abbey. He knew personally some of the distinguished figures of

⁹¹Ibid., p. 312.

Victorian music whose performances are legendary in the annals of the time: Sir John Stainer (1840-1901) of St. Paul's, London; and Dr. Armes of Durham Cathedral.

No amount of inconvenience deterred Ellis from pursuing his researches when he would examine large organ pipes. In order to listen to his forks he had to go long distances from the reed or pipe and hold the fork close to his ear or hold it over a jar. From his letters we are able to visualize Ellis with his fork and jar sixty feet away from the strong blast of wind coming from the organ in the great Norman cathedral at Durham.⁹² He arranged to meet with Henry Willis, the principal organ builder in London, who also tuned his great instruments against Scheibler's tonometer. Ellis was indefatigable and valued the fine personal contacts which his researches afforded him.⁹³

Before the Society of Arts, March 3, 1880 Ellis delivered his remarkable paper "On the History of Musical Pitch", in which he employed many complicated charts.⁹⁴ The

⁹²A.J. Ellis, "Notes of Observations on Musical Beats," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 30 (1880), 521.

⁹³Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, January 18, 1880.

⁹⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, February 17, 1880.

paper was an outgrowth of criticism directed at an earlier one, "The Measurement and Settlement of Musical Pitch," for which he had been awarded the Silver Medal by the Society of Arts. One of the earlier objections was that he had failed to give a sufficiently detailed account of musical pitch. The other criticism was that Appunn's reed tonometer yielded different results from those obtained by the tuning forks.

The cost of carrying out his research was indeed considerable. It required his travelling to many places where there were organs that presented interesting pitch variations. An examination of the "Historical Musical Pitches in Numerical Order", Table I of the History of Musical Pitch, reveals data on instruments in many countries on the Continent as well as those in the British Isles which Ellis had examined in order to ascertain their pitch. He was indebted for assistance to 107 public bodies and persons and acknowledged the involvement of many people in connection with this study to determine a standardized pitch. In many respects his approach to the solution of pitch problems is comparable to procedures in his dialect survey concurrently taking place.

Ellis enlivened his presentation of his researches before the Society of Arts by having Hipkins perform on the piano from Handel's oratorio Judas Maccabeus, the tune "See the Conquering Hero Come" in seven different keys in order

to illustrate the different sounds attributed at various periods to the same symbols. He paralleled this tour de force with the words uttered in different European languages for representing the same Arabic numerals.⁹⁵

It occurred to Ellis that his paper on the history of pitch, though highly specialized, contained a number of elements of great interest in it which could be enjoyed by the general reader. Nature, familiar to readers in Britain, published a brief four page abstract which he had adapted from his earlier one in the Journal of the Society of Arts.⁹⁶ Later in 1888 Guido Adler reviewed the Ellis work on musical pitch in the Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft and stated that he considered him a memorable example of scientific industry and perseverance.⁹⁷

The most important study in modern times extensively referring to Ellis' musical investigations appears in Arthur Mendel's series of monographs on the history of musical pitch.

⁹⁵ Ellis, History of Musical Pitch, p. 315.

⁹⁶ A.J. Ellis, "The History of Musical Pitch," Nature, 21 (1880), 550-53.

⁹⁷ Guido Adler, "A.J. Ellis" in Vierteljahrschrift für Musikwissenschaft, IV (1888), pp. 122-46 in Studies in the History of Musical Pitch by A.J. Ellis and Arthur Mendel, by Arthur Mendel, ed. (Amsterdam: Frits Knuf, 1969), p. 78.

Though he regards Ellis' essays as "monumental", they seem to him far from reliable despite the numerous studies Ellis published. Mendel emphatically states that Ellis' reports cannot be accepted at face value.⁹⁸ He is critical of Ellis' technique of determining organ pitch from old pipes and then determining their vibration frequencies "correct" to one decimal place by having smaller pipes built to scale. He is also of the opinion that there is absolutely no "calculable relation between the principal dimensions of a pipe and its pitch."⁹⁹ Ellis, however, had taken into account all factors such as length, diameter, pressure, and temperature of the organ pipes. Mendel points out that the effect of such variables as shape, dimensions, and position of mouth, the size of the hole which admitted wind at the foot, and the shape of the pipe at the open end could not be measured unless the actual unaltered pipe was in evidence. He was not satisfied with the Ellis models and insisted that the organ pipe had to be tried at the exact pressure specified for the organ of which it originally formed a part.¹⁰⁰

As part of his search for a standardized pitch, in 1880 Ellis examined with great interest an account of the

⁹⁸ Mendel, op. cit., "Introduction" (n.p.)

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 164.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 166.

"electric tonometer" of Alfred Marshall Mayer. Its operation was unusual. Ellis noted from Mayer's diagrams that a rotating cylinder covered with camphor-smoked paper was inscribed with a wave-curve by an aluminum point which was attached with some shellac to one prong of a tuning fork. A powerful induction coil, actuated by a pendulum, sent a spark through the fork which burned a hole in the paper every two seconds. Vibrations were determined by counting the sinuosities in the wave curve between the holes. Ellis pointed out that the method was applicable only to large forks, and that he had not been able to use this new data for his paper.¹⁰¹

He was anxious that his own recent observations would be included in the printed form of his forthcoming address to the Society of Arts and notified Hallam that he had done so, indicating his plans for additional articles based on his current researches.¹⁰²

For the next two years Ellis followed from a distance with interest Mayer's experiments with the electric tonometer. The American scientist's problem, however, still continued to be the discovery of a means of determining the beginning

¹⁰¹ Ellis, History of Musical Pitch, p. 299.

¹⁰² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, March 30, 1880.

and end of each second on the sinuous curve of vibration. He finally solved the problem by using a pendulum with a point which cut through a globule of mercury when it received an electronic impulse from a voltaic cell. Ellis observed that the method was not superior to Scheibler's but was on a par with it, and applicable only to very large forks. Ellis thought carefully about possible difficulties in Mayer's method, particularly the centering of the mercury globule. He generously praised the method as an "extremely accurate means of measuring short intervals of time to a certainty within one hundredth of a vibration of the fork."¹⁰³

In addition to his correspondence with Mayer, Ellis exchanged observations with Gustav Engel and reported in detail to him his examination of Appunn's latest invention, a thirty-six note harmonium. Because it was difficult to play this strange instrument, Ellis praised it only moderately though he did approve of a fifty-three note harmonium which had also appeared on display in the South Kensington Museum in 1881. Fellow scientists frequently urged Ellis to contribute opinions on a wide variety of subjects; yet it is amazing how many courteous and highly

¹⁰³A.J. Ellis, "On Measuring the Vibratory Periods of Tuning-Forks," Nature, 33 (November 19, 1885), 54-56.

detailed responses he took time to furnish graciously.¹⁰⁴

Occasionally Ellis would take time to join his affable friend Alfred Hipkins in a session of tuning grand pianos, both at private homes and public institutions. After the work was completed, he would draw up an elaborate chart of pitch indications of each piano. His calculations, preserved in the British Museum, exhibit the thoroughness of his examinations of the existing tunings of hundreds of pianos and organs. For example, Ellis accompanied Hipkins at an actual tuning of the organ at South Place Chapel, where Ellis would often attend by way of religious activities. He knew the place well, for it was there that he would sometimes preach a sermon on ethical conduct.¹⁰⁵

Hipkins himself was a very able performer on the harpsichord and clavichord, to such an extent that George Bernard Shaw heard him play on many an occasion and observed that his dexterity could not be undervalued.¹⁰⁶ It appears

¹⁰⁴ Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Berlin), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Engel, April 4, 1881.

¹⁰⁵ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Ellis-Hipkins Computations (fol. 57), October 23, 1883 circa.

¹⁰⁶ George Bernard Shaw, Major Critical Essays: Music in London 1890-94: Criticisms Contributed Week by Week to 'The World' in Three Volumes (New York: Wise & Co., 1931), "Criticism XXVIII", p. 235.

that Ellis did not display great patience towards those who bothered him with too many questions, but towards Hipkins, he felt an almost "paternal patience--even pride."¹⁰⁷

At regular intervals during the course of the year Ellis came to discuss musical pitch with A.J. Hipkins at his house in Warwick Gardens, Kensington. On Sunday afternoons--for the mornings were devoted to Comte's philosophy and South Place Chapel--Ellis arrived in a cab bearing his box of tuning forks, measuring rods, and resonators. He was so reluctant to cause any inconvenience to his host that he would even provide himself with the glass jars containing water. A delightful picture emerges from Edith Hipkins' memoir of her father. On these visits Ellis came "beaming like the beneficent sun on the Hipkins family."¹⁰⁸ He took only milk and water at eight o' clock in the evening and consequently never joined in the supper which followed the completion of the tedious tuning fork experiments and the ensuing mathematical calculations.

Ellis' thoughtfulness was extended to Hipkins in many little ways. Immediately upon learning about the count of the vote taken by the Society of Arts giving admission to

¹⁰⁷ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, fol. 144, "A Few Notes on Dr. A.J. Ellis' Engaging Personality" by Edith Hipkins.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

Hipkins in that Society, Ellis sent a postcard to his anxious friend. Nothing was too much trouble for him, and he could be kind-hearted and patient towards his close friends.

Sometimes Ellis had to join Hipkins in conducting experiments that required them to travel away from Kensington. At the bottom of Argyll St. he would wait in a cab for Hipkins and would be sure to bring a cake or scone in the event that Hipkins would be hungry while he [Ellis] was determining the pitch of some famous organ or grand piano. The personal relationship of Ellis and the Hipkins family is charming in its depiction of life among the cultivated classes in Victorian England.

In 1884 Ellis turned his attention to the determination of extra-European musical scales and continued working closely with Hipkins on the pitch of the actual notes produced on native instruments, then proceeding to calculate the intervals between those notes in terms of hundredths of a semitone. He reported on his studies in "Tonometrical Observations on Some Non-harmonic Musical Scales" before the Royal Society in 1884¹⁰⁹ and later expanded his conclusions in yet another paper "On the Musical Scales of Various Nations," which he read before the Society of Arts on March 25, 1885.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹A.J. Ellis and A.J. Hipkins, "Tonometrical Observations on Some Non-harmonic Musical Scales," Proceedings of the Royal Society, 37 (1884), 368-85.

¹¹⁰A.J. Ellis, "On the Musical Scales of Various Nations" (London, 1885), for private circulation only.

It was Ellis' view that nothing comes near what could be called a "natural" music scale. There is enormous diversity among foreign systems because harmony proper is unknown in spite of ensemble playing. He noted that octaves were used in this exotic music to produce certain effects, and Fourths and Fifths were rarely admitted.¹¹¹ Ellis illustrated his lecture before the Society of Arts by playing certain foreign scales on a dichord, a double monochord corrected so as to give the true intervals. The instrument, consisting of two strings constructed on a beautiful sounding board, was made by the firm of Broadwood for which Mr. Hipkins worked. (This was the same company which constructed the first grand piano in England.) The thin vibrating wires of the monochord were ten millimetres thick.

The nut was raised by 7mm., and the bridge was 24 mm. from the sounding board. A number of laths served as finger boards and had marks where the wire should be stopped by the side of the thumb nail. Ellis played the notes on a harmonic scale with just intonation which he and Hipkins had jointly tuned. His work with tuning forks had enabled him to locate the exact position for producing an interval of any given number of semitones, and he was proud of being able to render

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A.J. Ellis, "Musical Scales of Various Nations," Nature, 31 (March 26, 1885), 490.

almost any kind of scale for his audience to hear.¹¹²

Ellis had sent Hipkins four sheets of bagpipe music used among the Arabs and Hindus along with a formula for performing them on the piano. In 1880 Ellis had been busy for weeks trying to find somewhere in London an Indian who would be able to play such a scale.¹¹³ He also spent long hours measuring the distances of the frets on an ancient Hindu vina, a seven stringed instrument with a gourd resonator at the end of a long bamboo finger board.¹¹⁴ Eventually Ellis' inquiries in London musical circles enabled him to make the acquaintance of a Mr. Phookan, a friend of Rajah Ram Pal Singh, who was able to help him avoid incorrect variations with the frets. To Ellis' delight Phookan arranged to bring to Ellis' home a large sitar. In addition the South Kensington Museum obligingly allowed Ellis to examine a Chinese guitar that had fixed frets.¹¹⁵ Ellis was disturbed because he could not

¹¹² Pennsylvania State University, Manuscript Collections, Miscellaneous Hipkins Papers, "Notebook".

¹¹³ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fols. 337-40.

¹¹⁴ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 341, December 12, 1882.

¹¹⁵ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fols. 344-45, December 20, 1882.

differentiate among the Rajah's scales in Hindu music because the tone did not seem to be always clear, and he felt that his ear was betraying him.¹¹⁶

Letters were rapidly passing to and from other scholars who also had studied foreign music. Professor J.P. N. Land of the University of Leyden checked for Ellis the Javanese gamelang, which produced music on the pentatonic scale, but Ellis believed that some of that Dutch scholar's figures were incorrect.¹¹⁷ Ellis demonstrated his theories to a group of friends by playing Scottish airs on his concertina tuned to the pentatonic scale in order to show the effect of the scale on the songs.

Hipkins was very helpful to Ellis and kept him regularly informed of his own efforts. The sitar which had been promised needed to be completely strung, and Ellis was forced to curb his impatience. He went the length and breadth of London to check his pitches and found that it would be very difficult to learn the pitch of the Javanese instruments because the scales had never been determined by Westerners.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fols. 86-87, August 22, 1884.

¹¹⁷British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fols. 359-64, December 12, 1882.

¹¹⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 405-06), Ellis to Hallam, November 16, 1883.

Ellis was fast becoming short-tempered with his lack of success with the Chinese guitar and observed that "wild horses couldn't drag the secret of Chinese music from the instruments," and he grudgingly admitted that in spite of the fact that Chinese music seemed "amiss", it was strangely "like ours."¹¹⁹ He did succeed in working out a table showing a comparison of Chinese instruments with the Western oboe and flute, but he could not conceive how a Chinese orchestra could play in unison because no descriptions existed which could be of use to him.

Fortunately, in February 1885 the Commissioners of the Chinese Court, who were then in London, cooperated with Ellis and Hipkins by arranging for certain musicians who were present at the Health Exhibition to note down the pitches of the notes played on the transverse flute, gongs, dulcimer, tamboura, and balloon guitar. Studying their notation, Ellis noted that the scales were, for the most part, incompatible and could not be played together.¹²⁰

With his customary thoroughness Ellis examined the koto, Japan's national instrument. He made the acquaintance of Mr. S. Isawa, Director of the Institute of Music in Tokyo,

¹¹⁹British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 82, ca. August 4, 1884.

¹²⁰Ellis, "The Musical Scales of Various Nations," Nature, 31 (March 26, 1885), 489.

who assisted him in his inquiries, but it was very difficult to secure a proper tuning from anyone. At the "Japanese Village", a restaurant in Knightsbridge, the proprietor, Mr. Buhicrosan, cooperated with Ellis by copying down observations of the players' method of tuning the koto, a procedure called "hiradio-shi", taking its name from a female musician and her music master.¹²¹

From a short note made by Ellis at this time, it seems as if the player of the koto did not actually know the special tuning, and Ellis was disgruntled over the "inaccuracies of most Asiatic tuning." He refused to abandon the quest for the tuning of the koto, however, and on February 27, 1885 arrived in person with his box of forks at the "Japanese Village" in order to determine the scale.¹²²

A few months later the Japanese Commissioner in return presented Ellis with a handsome set of tuning forks. Ellis' interest in non-Western music was so comprehensive that his research already had come to the attention of foreign dignitaries as well as of English musicologists. The glow of pleasure at this evidence of courtesy faded by July, for the gift from Japan proved incapable of properly sounding the musical equivalents which the obliging Mr. Isawa had

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 123, February 27, 1885.

recorded from the koto. Ellis complained privately, "They are worthless!!!"¹²³

Ellis even gave his assistance to a member of the Tokyo Department of Education, a friend of the helpful Mr. Isawa, who had requested Ellis to devise a plan for the operation of a music school. Undaunted by this demanding assignment, Ellis forwarded this information to Japan along with copies of his studies on pitch. Both were gratefully acknowledged.¹²⁴

In 1885 the Executive and Music Committee of the Society of Arts sent Ellis an invitation to meet the Prince of Wales for an evening of Siamese music and an inspection of Siamese instruments. Unfortunately his friend Hipkins had not received a similar invitation, and Ellis was genuinely distressed at the "serious bungle."¹²⁵

Though he was at this time suffering from a severe bout of rheumatism, Ellis customarily attended all exhibitions which could enlighten him in his current fields of interest. With difficulty he attended the International Inventions Exhibition in May 1885 to study the charts displayed and

¹²³British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 135, July 28, 1885.

¹²⁴Pennsylvania State University, Hipkins Papers. Senaburo Kodzu to Ellis, May 13, 1887.

¹²⁵British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fols. 130-31, June 2, 1885.

examine the tuning forks.¹²⁶

Ellis faithfully reported his studies in determining the pitch of Indian instruments to his American friend A.M. Mayer: "I am going to divide the octave into twenty-two parts for India to try and get that scale settled!"¹²⁷

There has been a resurgence of interest in the musical systems of non-European nations, and Alexander Ellis' pioneering efforts of a hundred years ago have earned him much commendation that would have gratified him considerably. In Germany, O. Abraham and E.M. Von Hornbostel's collection of translated music history reprints included Ellis' Über die Tonleitern verschiedener Völker.¹²⁸ These editors recognized Ellis as the true founder of comparative scientific musicology because he had collected the largest amount of foreign material, thereby laying the groundwork for all future investigations.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 128, May 22, 1885.

¹²⁷ Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, November 27, 1885.

¹²⁸ Carl Stumpf and Erich M. Von Hornbostel, eds., Abhandlungen zur vergleichenden Musikwissenschaft, von A.J. Ellis, J.P.N. Land, C. Stumpf aus den Jahren 1885-1908 (Munich: Drei Masken Verlag, 1922), "Vorwort des Übersetzers."

Ellis' scientific theories about music were all incorporated in his Helmholtz translation, and Grove's Dictionary¹²⁹ acknowledges the indebtedness of musicians to him for his part in forming English opinion in favor of a standard or concert pitch.

¹²⁹Grove, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 933.

CHAPTER VII

RECONSTRUCTING THE SOUNDS OF GREEK AND LATIN: BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR RELATED STUDIES IN COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS

Ellis' abiding enthusiasm for the classical languages had its origins in the thorough training he received in his early school years. As a student at Cambridge he became dissatisfied with the opinions held by his tutors regarding the best means of attaining proficiency in learning languages. Moreover, he was particularly critical of the accepted manner of pronouncing Latin and he brought before the public his views on the matter in his Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin. Similarly he directed his efforts to reconstructing the correct sounds of ancient Greek because he was convinced that the nineteenth century British schools were perpetuating many inaccuracies of pronunciation. Ellis always retained a deep interest with regard to the progress of classical studies within the Philological Society. In order to understand Ellis as a serious classicist, we shall now look closely at his activities in that discipline.

Ellis would have been greatly flattered and amused with the fulsome praise which the American Professor of

Anglo-Saxon, Francis March, bestowed upon him in the Transactions of the American Institute of Instruction. Any classical allusion gave Ellis pleasure, and March sincerely paid him a compliment when he referred to his friend as a "Tenth Legion, an old guard that never surrenders."¹

Ellis was an exceptional classical scholar, who retained his admiration for the language and literature of Greece and Rome. He possessed a wide familiarity with every aspect of those languages and earned the respect of scholars in many different disciplines throughout Europe. His work moved in two directions: classical studies in connection with comparative philology and pedagogical efforts aimed at improving the pronunciation of Latin and Greek. His knowledge of the two ancient tongues indeed served as a bed-rock on which to build his complicated theories of the changing pronunciation of his own language.

Ellis was a practical person who at sixty-one recalled with bitterness the kind of classical training he had received as a student at Shrewsbury School when the tyranny of language held a strong grip on the boys. As a Salopian he was permitted to study a little "wretched French," but music was discouraged lest classical studies should

¹Francis A. March, "Spelling Reform," Transactions of the American Institute of Instruction printed in the Bulletin of the Spelling Reform Association (May 1879, No. 10), p. 22.

suffer some possible neglect. At Eton with Dr. Keate young Ellis studied some more Greek that had a "flavour of mathematics."² It was at this school that he experienced the dreary methods of instruction in classical languages which were to continue with little modification throughout the Victorian Age. At Eton there were a great many boys who could not read Latin at sight, much less write it with any degree of ease.

The years that he spent reading classics with a tutor at Cambridge had a profound influence on him because the problem of deciding upon the correct pronunciation of a dead language would later influence him in his efforts to determine how the English language had been pronounced in those periods which were separated only by a few centuries and for which records, though murky and confusing, fortunately did exist. The strange situation which resulted from studying Latin and pronouncing it in the manner taught at Eton seemed to be as useful to him as walking the treadmill, but optimistically he observed that "at least in the mill the corn does get ground."³ He was critical of the pronunciation

²A.J. Ellis, On the Acquisition of Languages: A Lecture Delivered before the College of Preceptors on Wednesday 13 October, 1875 (London: Asher & Co., 1875), p. 2.

³Ibid.

then taught throughout the British schools, and the dependence on dictionaries to make words and phrases "immediate representatives of thought" appalled him.⁴

As early as 1848 Ellis advocated the Italian pronunciation of Latin as a convenient one for all nations and condemned the Etonian or common English one. Observing that a German or Italian would not be able to understand an Englishman who taught Latin, he recalled that the natives of some Chinese provinces employed systems of pronunciation unintelligible to natives of other Chinese provinces.⁵

Ellis has provided us with information regarding the pronunciation of Latin at Eton. For example in the sentence sīc. vōs nōn vōbīs nīdificātis avēs, it was usual to pronounce the word sīc like English sick, nōn to rhyme with on, vōbīs with the last syllable like the first in biscuit, nīdificātis with the syllables as far as the a like English nidification, and avēs with av as in aviary, so that five false quantities were made in one short line. He pointed out that words like opus, operis, sōlus, sōlitūdo furnished thousands of others. He especially deplored the Etonian custom of marking a vowel as long when all that is known is that the syllable containing it is long owing to a combination of consonants. In learning the paradigms usually given in grammars, the student was

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. 143.

instructed to say ēmō for amō, if we use Latin letters to express our English pronunciation.⁶

Though Alexander Ellis abhorred the Shrewsbury and Eton methods, he conceded that it was hardly worth disturbing the status quo if written examinations were the only means by which success in classics was to be measured. At Eton he felt a horror for what he termed "false quantities,"⁷ and yet the Eton masters themselves perpetrated several pronunciations that were difficult to reconcile. Ellis recollected that he had been obliged to place the accents on the penultimate syllable in words of more than two syllables, and if the boys did so, the masters praised them for having made no "false quantities."⁸ The nature of long and short vowels was not taken into account. As a result the Etonian would speak in a manner that was nothing but "sound and no sense to a Roman's ears."⁹

⁶A.J. Ellis, Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin for the Use of Classical Teachers and Linguists (London: Macmillan, 1874), pp. vii-viii.

⁷A.J. Ellis, "Third Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 15th May, 1874", Transactions of the Philological Society (1874), p. 402.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ellis, Practical Hints, p. viii.

PRACTICAL HINTS ON THE
QUANTITATIVE PRONUNCIATION
OF LATIN.

FOR THE USE OF CLASSICAL TEACHERS AND LINGUISTS.

BY

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ἡ μὲν γὰρ πρὸς λέξεις οὐδὲν ἐστὶν ὁρίσματος, οὔτε βήματος,
βασίς τε τοῖς χρόνοις, οὐδὲ μεταστροφῶν· ἀλλ' ὅσας παρελήφε
τῇ φύσει τὰς συλλαβὰς τὰς τε μακρὰς καὶ τὰς βραχεῖας,
τοιαύτας φυλάσσει.

DION. HAL. *First Century, B.C.* (See Art. 41)

London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1874.

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18. A.J. Ellis, Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin, 1874: Title Page

Ellis spoke critically of Dr. Jacob, whose Lectures on Teaching the Classics stressed that the classics were peculiarly adapted to the moral improvement of the boys.¹⁰ Ellis, in contrast, emphasized that a teacher's assistance with the pronunciation could do more for the boys than any reliance upon the text itself as a clue to the pronunciation. He was very forthright about the slight accomplishments of those boys who studied Latin in the English schools and received prizes for what he termed "mere botch-work."¹¹ Observing that only a very small percentage of pupils could actually sense the difference between the language and the tone of Livy, Ellis recalled from his early years an old teacher who had been required by the almshouse committee, of which he was the chaplain, to teach only grammar but had actually been prohibited from translating any Latin from a book. During Ellis' lifetime some improvements had taken place in the instruction of the classic tongues, but it had by no means attained what he considered to be a satisfactory level.¹²

Latin pronunciation was a vexing problem to the Schoolmasters Conference which was convening in 1871. This

¹⁰Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., p. 6.

¹²Ibid., p. 7.

group's efforts later resulted in a new scheme of Latin pronunciation, but its contents made their way very slowly into the larger English schools. At Oxford and Cambridge the reception accorded those boys bringing with them the new pronunciation fresh from Shrewsbury, Christ's Hospital and other public schools was decidedly cool.¹³

Henry Roby, whose distinguished Latin grammar incorporated much of the new thinking concerning the teaching of pronunciation of the language, regarded Ellis' competence in Latin with deep respect, and he was convinced that Ellis had an unrivalled power of phonetic discrimination.¹⁴ Ellis, nevertheless, realized that he could not change the entrenched system of teaching Latin and Greek but chose rather to make some contribution towards what he felt was a more accurate approach to teaching its pronunciation. He thereby hoped to sweep out some of the hoary deadwood surrounding that admired discipline.

It is interesting to observe Ellis' criticism of the current value of the Latin language in spite of the deep interest that he had in the problem of its pronunciation. He attributed its demise to its inability to express adequately

¹³Ibid., pp. v-vi.

¹⁴Henry J. Roby, A Grammar of the Latin Language from Plautus to Suetonius (2 vols., London: Macmillan, 1904), p. xliv.

nineteenth century European science and philosophy.¹⁵ It was amazing to him that Latin and Greek continued to serve as the foundations of an English education inasmuch as the students were removed from the whole circle of thought expressed by the writers in those languages. The English did not wish to use the living pronunciation of the Athenians; consequently, it would be impossible ever really to know Greek.¹⁶ Since the classical languages still occupied the chief place in education, Ellis wanted to see that they were correctly pronounced.

Pedagogically Ellis sets forth his method of acquiring the pronunciation of a classical tongue by requiring the teacher to recite passages over and over again because he felt that isolated words were of little value and that words were best learned through hearing them naturally. He expressed great admiration for Roby's paradigm system, which built up inflections from the root given to the student.¹⁷ This approach enabled a student to grasp the complexities of inflections and offered a rationale for the requisite amounts of memorization. Rather daringly for his

¹⁵ Ellis, On the Acquisition of Languages, p. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁷ Roby, op. cit.

time, Ellis went on record as observing that Latin and Greek belonged to the niceties and refinements of life rather than to the staples of education. He believed that if Latin continued to be forced upon boys who had to leave school at age fourteen the entire effort would be wasted.¹⁸

Scholarly circles considered Robinson Ellis, Corpus Professor of Latin at Oxford, one of the greatest of classical scholars. Alexander Ellis valued his friendship and consulted with him regularly at the meetings of the Philological Society. When Robinson Ellis addressed the Philological Society in 1873, he was well aware that it would be extremely difficult to cause teachers to change their methods uniformly and that any progress in this direction would be halting. Alexander Ellis agreed completely with the eminent scholar, declaring that pronunciation reform should be espoused by such schools as University College, London, and Owens College, Manchester.¹⁹

Through the years Ellis gave further thought to his theories of Greek and Latin accents. In a highly scientific paper delivered before the Philological Society on February 7, 1873, he carefully set forth his concept of the physical basis of pitch and force in English, French, Italian, and

¹⁸Ellis, On the Acquisition of Languages, p. 20.

¹⁹Ellis, Practical Hints, p. vii.

German.²⁰ On that occasion he utilized a device, a phonautograph, as a basis for his calculations and attempted to draw conclusions from the undulating lines scraped by a pin or "style" on a lamp-blackened cylinder when the human voice was sounded into a resonating box. He observed the length, the pitch, the force (determined mathematically), and the form, i.e. the undulation's shape.

Ellis had recently been working on a translation of Helmholtz's Sensations of Tone and had derived much of his theory from that scientist. The sound-curves were constantly changing because of pitch, force, and form, and the indication of each sound by the phonautograph was extremely minute. The gliding sounds were heard during the changes. Since national characteristics, according to Ellis, were characterized by these glides, he had to determine historical pronunciation by means of "the clumsy instrument of ill-understood

²⁰"The greater the force of the disturbance of the air, the further will the style depart from its position of rest, and hence the greater will be the amplitude, or greatest distance, measured from the medial line, of any point in the sound-curve corresponding to one complete double vibration. The square on the line measures the sensation of loudness produced, and will be called the force.... There is only a relative standard of force.... Practically more power is sometimes (by no means always) necessary to produce a great pitch than a small one but it does not follow that the force of the sound will be greater. Practically a sound of great pitch is often more penetrative than one of small pitch, though the force of the latter may be greater. Compare cricket chirps with deep organ pipes." (A.J. Ellis, "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1873-74, pp. 116-17.)

alphabets."²¹ Ellis was, in short, critical of the capability of the phonautograph to discriminate as carefully as the living drum of the ear.

His studies in the human speech of Englishmen provided him with theories regarding the true manner in which Latin and Greek were uttered.²² In his opinion, a principle of fixed syllabic length governed all of an utterance. He was convinced that a syllable with a short vowel before a single final consonant, as well as a syllable ending with a short vowel "owing to the evidently close pronunciation of adjacent words, was ready to generate a long syllable by entering into 'position' with two following consonants, of which one or both belonged to the following word."²³ The direction of the pitch was determined more or less by the fixed lengths of neighboring syllables. Ellis emphasized that the Greek accents always referred to the rising or lowering of musical pitch. He could not be sure of the difference between Greek and Latin habits but recognized

²¹Ellis, "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis," p. 120.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 143.

that the two modes of marking the accent and pitch varied considerably.

Ellis concluded his paper before the Philological Society on February 7, 1873 with a reading of classical passages in various metres. He supposed the length and pitch to be fixed and the forces to be free. His use of a modern Athenian pronunciation disturbed Messrs. Henry Sweet and Henry Nicol, both colleagues in the Philological Society, who listened attentively to his performance of conjectured classical sounds; yet Ellis was satisfied that he was the first who "hazarded [sic] the problem on purely physical grounds."²⁴ We do not know how enthusiastically the rest of the Philological Society received this solution to the problem.

Regarding Latin, Ellis was confident that the boys could take up this ecclesiastical pronunciation, provided that the masters worked at it themselves during the summer vacation by "spouting Virgil and Horace to the Nereids and Dryads till it ran glibly off their tongue."²⁵ He assured the Philological Society with great seriousness that he could overcome the difficulties of his technique without drastically reverting to a monotonous series of sounds. He also

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

emphasized his desire to avoid the possibility of introducing a "Suffolk whine."²⁶

Ellis called upon his colleagues to undertake investigations which might yield answers about the authentic Latin pronunciation, for he realized that the fourth and fifth century grammarians were not to be trusted as the basis for determining the sounds made by Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and Terence. Ambitiously, Ellis proposed that the members of the Society produce a phonetic reconstruction of Romance in order to arrive at the truth concerning the sound of Latin.²⁷

In his 1874 Presidential Address to the Philological Society Ellis took care to indicate that it would not be de rigueur to fulminate against the value of classical studies. One of the subsections of the address was given over to the current trends in Latin and Greek scholarship. He proposed incidentally that since Latin was still very much alive in the Roman Church, one could profitably say, "Read Latin as it would be intelligible at the Vatican" and that by using the ecclesiastical Italian pronunciation as a norm for the pronunciation of Latin, one would also not "offend the ears of a nation, as in the case of Greek." This seemed to be

²⁶Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 403.

²⁷Ibid., p. 407.

logical since there is no one Italian dialect for representing Latin, as Hellenic represents Greek.²⁸

Shortly afterwards, when Ellis spoke to the College of Preceptors on June 10, 1874 concerning the subject of accent and quantity, he expressed the usual perturbations which most speakers feel prior to their facing an audience, particularly one composed of many conservative schoolmasters who would view any radical proposals regarding their specialty with a jaundiced eye.²⁹ Ellis composed himself for the difficult task by writing on the afternoon of the appointed day to his friend Paul Meyer in Paris in order to express his mounting nervous tension. Ellis was fearful that he might destroy the effect of using Italian vowels in speaking Latin if he stammered. He was also particularly alarmed that he would not have the ability to convey the exact intonation he desired for the authors. He was well aware of the passage of two thousand years since Virgil's language had been heard, a situation which could make the conjectured spoken reconstruction a precarious undertaking at best. Buoying himself up for his performance, he decided that he would not even say "on le peut" or "un plus savant le fasse," but

²⁸Ibid., pp. 400-401.

²⁹Ellis, "On the Physical Constituents," p. 114.

rather "je l'essaye." Ellis revealed a great deal of bravado in desiring to carry off his linguistic reconstruction.³⁰

Prior to delivering his long lecture he felt great weariness, but he was able to address the College of Preceptors for two and a half hours, a period of "unexampled length."³¹ He quoted principally from Cicero and Quintilian, the authorities of any value, and he provided some useful directions for self-practice so that the Latin masters could adopt his conjectured pronunciation. For example, when Latin nouns were declined, the Latin master should scrupulously observe the length and pitch of every syllable. Because Ellis was trying to be practical, he recommended listening, if possible, to an Italian who spoke cultivated Tuscan in order to get an inkling of the old Roman authorities.³²

When the revision of this lecture appeared shortly afterwards in published form as Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin, Ellis acknowledged his indebtedness to Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte for having

³⁰Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, June 6, 1874.

³¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 226), Ellis to Hallam, June 10, 1874.

³²Ellis, Practical Hints, p. 113.

helped him evolve his notion of final M.³³ Ellis spoke briefly to the Philological Society once again on November 6, 1874 and suggested that the final M was not pronounced but that it only lengthened the preceding vowel.³⁴

Ellis' theories of pitch accent, however, were not accepted with complete satisfaction by all his contemporaries. One reviewer of Practical Hints in the Athenaeum pointed out that the schoolmaster had to be aware that, though certain syllables in classical times might have been pronounced on a higher pitch and others on a low one, there yet existed the possibility that pitch and force coincided. Neither view could definitively be proved.³⁵ The reception, on the whole, accorded Ellis' work on Latin pronunciation was splendid, and the Scottish Latin master who reviewed that publication in The Scotsman of January 15, 1875 found Ellis' conclusions "indisputable."³⁶

³³Ibid., p. 114. There were no complimentary copies of the book available for distribution. "The 'little book' costs, I think, 4/6." (Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, d. 43, Ellis to Hallam, January 13, 1875).

³⁴"Philological Society," Academy, 7 (November 14, 1874), 541.

³⁵"Latin Pronunciation", rev. of Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin, by A.J. Ellis, Athenaeum, March 13, 1875, p. 355.

³⁶"Latin Pronunciation", rev. of Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin, by A.J. Ellis, The Scotsman, Jan. 15, 1875, p. 8.

His reputation as a classical scholar was steadily increasing. Though Paul Meyer had missed the memorable evening when Ellis read the Latin authors with this reconstructed pronunciation, he was too shy to ask him to give a private performance when he was a dinner guest in Ellis' home on May 9, 1875. Had Ellis known of Meyer's desire, he certainly would have retired to the library with alacrity in order to "spout"³⁷ Latin for as long a time as his guest would have been pleased to hear him.

Ellis was proud of having proposed a reconstruction of the Latin pronunciation, and he attributed his success to his labors on Early English Pronunciation with its similar approach to the reconstruction of the sounds of English. He exhibited the same enthusiasm in restoring the sounds of Homer and Aeschylus as he had shown in reconstructing the sounds of Cicero and Quintilian.

Early in his life in 1839-40, he spent fifteen months in Italy in a variety of fascinating ways, including the study of modern Greek pronunciation from Patros Mathrangos, the Vice-rector of the Greek College at Rome. Ellis admired the strict though cumbersome rules of pronunciation in that tongue because it was possible to deduce the sounds immediately from the written form; however, he felt that the

³⁷ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, September 5, 1875.

orthography might be more directly phonetic. When he later wrote his work on the pronunciation of ancient Greek, he was able to show the relationship of the classical language to the modern sounds.³⁸

Ellis enjoyed discoursing on his theories of speech in long letters to interested parties. An unidentified friend had asked him to account for the fact that Greek had not altered drastically in fourteen centuries whereas English had changed considerably in just four centuries. Ellis reasoned in his response that small Greece with its many dialects had little effect on mainland Byzantium's literary dialect spoken at court. In his view, England's civil wars, which had forced a peasant dialect to become a court one, along with the rise of secondary cities, accounted for the changes in English.³⁹ Though his studies were principally directed at reconstructing the sounds of the past, Ellis frequently discussed the phonetic changes in a larger historical context.

Consequently Ellis insisted on more attention being paid to pronunciation in Greek classes in the schools. His own early training, in his opinion, was unsatisfactory, but

³⁸ Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. 139.

³⁹ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, Vol. II, p. 526.

he was convinced that Greek still had a chance of flourishing. Trying to make his readers grasp his point, he wrote, "After all, hadn't it come down from Homer to the morning newspaper in Athens?"⁴⁰ Ellis insisted that the Greek master of the 1870's had a definite obligation to be concerned with the problem of pronunciation especially since the sounds of modern Greek were so easy to ascertain, and paralleled those of Pericles and Xenophon. With intense conviction he remarked that the current method of reading Greek was on a footing with an uneducated Frenchman's struggling with the sounds of Shakespearean English. He was unwilling to compromise and exhorted, "Read Greek as a Hellene, not as a Briton!"⁴¹

Ellis argued that Greek had to be pronounced in a way that would have been intelligible in ancient times when verse was regulated by quantity and when accent remained unchanged. In his 1873 Presidential Address to the Philological Society he roundly castigated European schoolmasters for uttering insane cries while thinking they "spouted" [sic] Aeschylus and Homer.⁴² He was completely

⁴⁰A.J. Ellis, The English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations of Greek, Considered in Reference to School and College Use (London: Hodgson, 1876), p. 3.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 52.

⁴²A.J. Ellis, "Second Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 16th May, 1873," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873), p. 207.

out of patience with people who were indifferent to such matters and who felt that they would never have occasion to speak with an ancient Greek or even a modern one.

Because Greek pronunciation and accentuation were of particular interest to Ellis, he was in close touch with the eminent Hellenist John Peile, Tutor of Christ's College, Cambridge, also a member of the Council of the Philological Society. The latter brought to Ellis' attention current researches in Greek philology which showed the impossibility of advancing its course unless there was an increased knowledge of Greek pronunciation.⁴³

Complicated problems attendant on Greek sounds were brought to the Philological Society's notice during the summation of the work for 1874. Members learned that Erasmus, Sir Thomas Smith, and Sir John Cheke probably employed a different pronunciation of Greek from that which was heard at Athens and Constantinople. On the other hand, the later English schoolmasters turned it into something that no Greek had ever used or would use.

Ellis dismissed the so-called beauty of a school boy's oration on Speech Day with a reference to the pleasure which Pericles would have derived from a "London cat's

⁴³Ibid., p. 226.

nocturnal oration."⁴⁴

Ellis tempered somewhat his references to these English schoolmasters' shortcomings in his concluding remarks to the nation's philologists. After offering them a brief series of suggestions concerning the pronunciation of the upsilon and the aspirate, he remarked, "I leave it [my bear] to the schoolmasters, our national bear-leaders, to teach it to dance."⁴⁵

On Friday, November 5, 1875 Ellis read a further paper before the Philological Society, this time on "Some Difficulties in the Determination of Ancient Greek Pronunciation."⁴⁶ He carefully noted all the major changes in ancient Greek pronunciation with emphasis on both the old Attic period and the period during the Peloponnesian War. He suggested that, since the classical pronunciation had prevailed for a thousand years to A.D. 875, probably o and v were pronounced like French u, and the η like French ê. In spite of these proposals, he admitted to the Society that his present conjectures on Greek were "like a link [a torch]

⁴⁴ Ellis, "Third Annual Address", p. 393.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 394.

⁴⁶ "Philological Society," Academy, 9 (November 13, 1875), 510-11.

flashed in a fog."⁴⁷ He regretted the inadequacies of the old Greek alphabets and the non-existence of any manuscripts of the famous writings in their original spelling.⁴⁸ An examination of the paper's contents in the Society's minutes indicates Ellis' original, though highly conjectural, views. The membership received the report of his notions about the old dialects with much approval.

He sincerely believed, in another paper which he was preparing, that he was rendering a very useful and necessary service to his contemporaries and to posterity by describing the pronunciation of Dionysios of Halicarnassos, the eminent Greek authority in Rome in the first century before Christ. He was pleased with this Dionysian system because it was possible for the nineteenth century Englishman "to step out of the English bog on to such a firm Greek embankment" in the pronunciation of Greek.⁴⁹ By probing into the work of the German classicists and by consulting documents which provided transcriptions of Latin letters into Greek and vice versa, Ellis was able to arrive at a number of conclusions about

⁴⁷ "Philological Society", Athenaeum, November 13, 1875, p. 645.

⁴⁸ Philological Society, Academy, 9 (November 13, 1875), 510-11.

⁴⁹ Ellis, English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations, p. 9.

ancient Greek sounds though he was aware that much modern Greek spelling was actually medieval and of little help to the scholar.⁵⁰ It will be seen below that he had been dealing with the identical problem in his researches on English sounds but had been plagued with the absence of information about sounds for the fifteenth century in England--an absence paralleled by our ignorance of the state of Greek pronunciation until 530 B.C. Ellis equated the retention of ancient quantity and accent in the Dionysian pronunciation with that of Ciceronian Latin.⁵¹

On the morning of December 15, 1875 Ellis informed his friend Hallam that he was "full of Greek only until tomorrow" and that then English dialect work would be resumed.⁵² When Ellis delivered his lecture on Greek pronunciation at the College of Preceptors that evening, he deliberately read to the audience in a declamatory manner in order to emphasize the sonorities of the passage of poetry. Among his renditions were the "First Ode" of Anacreon and the "invocation to the Muse" at the beginning of the Iliad. On the other hand, Ellis declares that he made

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 10.

⁵²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 317), Ellis to Hallam, December 15, 1875.

use of a quiet lecture room style for the prose selection, a piece from the writings of Dionysios (De Compositione Verborum Cap. XIV).⁵³ It was a difficult evening for Ellis. There were only fifty in the audience, but they were particularly attentive. At the conclusion of the presentation Ellis was hoarse.⁵⁴

He enjoyed examining all the possibilities of the improved pronunciation, showing how the modern Hellenic pronunciation was of great value because it had been employed for fourteen hundred years by every Greek and contained few departures from the Dionysian.

Three Greek members of the College of Preceptors attended that lecture. They informed Ellis later how readily they had understood his reading from Dionysios in the modern pronunciation.⁵⁵ Ellis remarked that the principal value of modern Greek lay in its bringing to the nineteenth century the pronunciation at least of the Sinaitic Manuscript of the Testament. He pointed out that for historical and theological purposes, there was no excuse for not using the

⁵³Ellis, English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations, p. 16.

⁵⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 319), Ellis to Hallam, December 18, 1875.

⁵⁵Ellis, English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations, p. 19.

modern Greek pronunciation since it was easier for English organs of speech.⁵⁶

From his own ample resources Ellis arranged for the separate publication of a leaflet titled Appendix to the Lecture on Greek Pronunciation, the discussion of Dionysios which he had delivered before the College of Preceptors on December 15, 1875. This work consisted of the same literary selections as he had read on that occasion intransliterated versions. It was now possible for British schoolmasters to make use of a summary of Ellis' ideas of Greek pronunciation in their own classes by making reference to this leaflet. Ellis was willing to bear all the costs of printing because he was convinced of the merit of his theories and wished to bring them to the attention of as many as he could by distributing it gratis.⁵⁷

When he sent a copy of his work Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation of Latin to Professor Pott of Halle, he intimated his intention of later expanding his views on Greek pronunciation into a companion volume. Though he had already delivered papers on the subject, he still felt

⁵⁶"Philological Society", Academy, 9 (December 25, 1875), 656.

⁵⁷A.J. Ellis, Appendix to Lecture on the School and College Pronunciation of Greek (London: Hodgson, 1875).

doubts about the possibility of achieving complete success. Ellis was generally discouraged at this time, for he was having problems in trying to decipher English contributions from his dialect informants. To accomplish a similar thing for the old dialects of ancient Greece via an analysis of the modern ones posed a formidable task.⁵⁸

By April 26, 1876 Ellis joyfully wrote Thomas Hallam that he had only a fortnight's labor remaining before completing the work on Greek pronunciation.⁵⁹ Several months later he published The English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations of Greek, an expansion of the little leaflet he had distributed.

Just as he had provided a method of instruction for Latin pronunciation, so did Ellis offer a pedagogical approach for Greek sounds. He suggested that the master read aloud slowly and encourage pupils to place a pencil mark under each long vowel. He particularly discouraged "painful consultation of lexicons."⁶⁰ Ellis' book is a very detailed teaching manual which provided specific helps for explaining

⁵⁸University of Halle, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Pott, December 3, 1876.

⁵⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 86), Ellis to Hallam, April 26, 1876.

⁶⁰Ellis, English, Dionysian, and Hellenic Pronunciations, p. 11.

the intricacies of Greek pitch. He clearly recognized the need for the school boy to learn how to utilize the written accents when speaking even though the markings had been used heretofore principally for composition. He firmly believed in learning the written accent along with the nominative case and the infinitive. He was convinced that the master himself had to practise assiduously this totally different system of reading Greek which employed such unusual combinations of "highlow", "lohilo", etc. along with Greek examples. It was essential to get rid of "vicious habits already ingrained."⁶¹

He also suggested the value that lies in the Scottish pronunciation of English because of its resemblance to the quantitative pronunciation of Greek and referred his readers to modern Norwegian and Swedish with their obvious pitch.⁶²

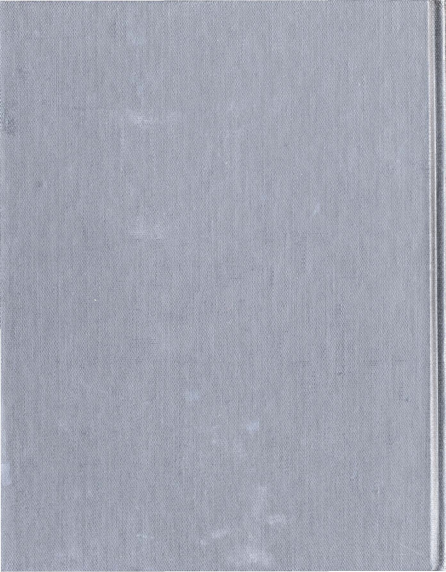
Ellis always maintained a strong interest in all matters relating to classical philology. His knowledge of the languages was broad, and he was able to speak with authority among his colleagues in the Philological Society. His studies in reconstructing the sounds of Greek and Latin

⁶¹Ibid., p. 14.

⁶²Ibid., p. 15.

exhibit a painstaking attention to detail which is typical of the kind of investigation which parallels his work with the historical sounds of four centuries of the English language as presented in Early English Pronunciation. His contributions to classical phonology are convincing and merit the respect of scholars today. Ellis was willing to present unorthodox views and defend them with conviction. He showed a large degree of imagination based on logical reasoning.





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PHILOLOGIST

PART II

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CHAPTER VIII

GUIDING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

As a prominent figure in the affairs of the Philological Society, Ellis unstintingly gave sound direction and leadership to the activities of that scholarly body. Early during his incumbency as President he set forth his theories of language and openly disagreed with the eminent Sanscritist, Max Müller. Because Ellis exhibited a fine skill as an organizer of programs and projects, and because he stood for scholarship of the best sort, he was invited to preside in the Chair for several terms. His capabilities earned him the respect of such distinguished colleagues as Sweet, Whitney, Pott, Paris, Sayce, and De Beer. Ellis played a significant role in the events connected with the Society's sponsoring of its exhaustive Dictionary. Ellis often was called upon to settle complex professional difficulties because of his prominence in the affairs of the Philological Society. He exercised considerable diplomacy in solving the problems which confronted the Society in connection with Professor Jülg and the Royal Asiatic Society, in settling the difficulties caused by the Stanford Bequest, in dealing with the

sensitive invitation from the Leiden Literary Society, in coordinating the Andaman Islands research, in utilizing the Thomas Bridges Patagonian Papers, and in resolving the dilemma of participating in the Congress of Universal Languages proposed by the American Philosophical Society. We shall now take a close look at the years during which Ellis served the Philological Society with distinction and added lustre to his career as a professional scholar.

In assessing the Philological Society's role in the intellectual life of London during the last decades of the nineteenth century, Harrison Steeves notes in his study of the learned societies of Great Britain that men like Furnivall, Morris, Ellis, Wheatley, Sweet, Murray, and Skeat possessed that degree of enthusiasm which turned the organization into activities which were particularly significant: textual publication, spelling reform, and the project for the great historical English dictionary.¹

The influence of the Philological Society in the 1860's is of paramount significance because it was from this group that Furnivall organized the Early English Text Society, as well as other groups which made it possible for a man of Alexander Ellis' ability to find channels of expression for his investigations and the means for

¹Harrison R. Steeves, Learned Societies and English Literary Scholarship in Great Britain and the United States (New York: Columbia University Press, 1913), p. 149.

implementing his conception of an English Dialect Society. He was a vital force in the Philological Society, the group that was the prime force in the advancement of English linguistic scholarship in that period.

Ellis was a figure familiar to the membership because he presented many papers on a variety of topics ranging from detailed phonetic analyses in progress reports of his dialectal investigations to papers considering the historical development of the language. His great erudition earned him an honored place within the Society, and his commitment to the advancement of linguistic study never flagged. The Society made great strides during the years when Ellis served as its President because, in addition to his scholarly abilities, he possessed extraordinary organizational skills. Though he is best remembered for his historical phonetic work, his years at the helm of the Philological Society reflect his fine leadership qualities.

When Theodor Goldstücker (1821-71), the Sanscrit scholar, died without completing his term of office as President of the Philological Society, the Council of the Society approached Alexander Ellis to assume the office.² Willingly, Ellis accepted the honor. He readily welcomed the opportunity for service.

²Notices of the Meetings of the Philological Society, May 17, 1872.

In addition to completing Goldstücker's term as President of the Philological Society in 1872, Ellis served four more times as President during 1873, 1874, 1881, and 1882. Among the distinguished scholars who held the Chair during the period from 1875 to 1886 were Richard Morris, Henry Sweet, James A.H. Murray, and Walter W. Skeat.

Professor Goldstücker had already formulated plans for an Annual Address with a report on the progress of philology during the year 1871; however, there was not sufficient time for the preparation of such an Address when Ellis took over the responsibility. Ellis found himself faced with the task of carrying out his predecessor's intentions, but substituted for the report an essay, "The Relation of Thought to Sound as the Pivot of Philological Research."³

Ellis was modest in placing himself before such a distinguished body because he felt he did not possess sufficient knowledge or have enough time to carry out the duties in the proper way. He was, nevertheless, not afraid to censure the Society for its complacency concerning some of its previous work which had not reflected a truly "scientific investigation." It was his opinion that learned societies were supposed to be engaged in acquiring knowledge.

³Ibid.

Though Ellis was at work on his own reconstruction of the sounds of the earlier stages of the English language from a host of documents, he informed the Philological Society that the written record would positively not provide the answers, but rather it was the living speaker who was the key to languages. Even at this date he was proposing a principle important in his subsequent dialect survey.⁴

In the Annual Address of 1872 he was aiming his criticisms at many of the philologists who had come merely for the novelty of an Address by the President. Without mincing words he told them that few scholars were even moderately well-informed on the production and perception of sound.⁵ Ellis shocked this group so accustomed to non-controversial topics relating to classical texts like Pott's Etymologische Forschungen. Ellis provided them with realistic details extracted from the pages of the Odonotological Society's Transactions. He mentioned some of the diseases of the glottis and the effects of deafness. Since this kind of information was alien to the greater part of the audience, his determination to bring current research to his fellow-scholars earned for him the approval of only a segment of the group. Ellis was always practical in his

⁴A.J. Ellis, "First Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 17th May, 1872," Transactions of the Philological Society (1872), p. 4.

⁵Ibid., p. 6.

approach, and the years with Pitman had been helpful along these lines.

In his Address he ran the gamut of a number of topics which were loosely held together by what he termed "meropy," i.e., the love of words. On this occasion the audience did not receive much at all in the way of a detailed account of the year's philological research Professor Goldstücker had envisioned. Ellis eventually would take a much more organized approach in his later addresses after having the benefit of the suggestions of his colleagues. He did recognize the exigencies of the situation and admitted that he had only given the audience "a butterfly view of the philological honey."⁶

Nineteenth century language scholars were very much interested in Sanscrit, and Ellis, always the perfect gentleman, took special care in his first Address to pay proper tribute to his predecessor, a distinguished scholar in that area. Touching on a sensitive point, however, he observed that there was little value in studying that language of the ancient East in order to understand the science of language. Perhaps one of the reasons why the Society admired him so much was because he employed so felicitous a turn of phrase. He reminded everyone that "life can't be studied with the bones of the dead"⁷ and pointed out

⁶ Ibid., p. 34.

⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

that conchology, the classification of hard shells, could be extended to malacology, the study of the living mollusc. On this occasion he was most severe in criticizing the proliferation of Sanscrit studies and pointed out the inaccuracies of the Devenagari script and the folly of scholars pretending to recite the Indian chants while not even comprehending the system of accentuation. In no other Address to the Philological Society did Ellis express himself so forcefully as an unsympathetic supporter of the dead tongues. He was much less critical about Latin and Greek than of Sanscrit.

Ellis valued highly his long association with the London Philological Society because it always brought him much satisfaction. In the rooms at University College the monthly meetings of the group brought together an assemblage of gifted personalities composed of some of the most distinguished scholars of all the British Isles and Continental Europe, savants who delivered papers on an astonishing variety of subjects. Sometimes the papers would arrive from some distant location for presentation by another member of the Society owing to an illness of one of its elderly contributors. The regular attenders were often obliged to sit for hours and listen to papers which abounded in minutiae concerning the technical aspects of language study. Each specialist came to listen, judge, and discuss those areas which were of particular interest to him.

Often, after the formal business had been transacted and newly elected members had been introduced to the fellowship, the entire meeting was given over to the presentation of a single paper treating, for example, of the Manx dialect or of the Finnish verbs with Icelandic roots. The meetings were sometimes exhilarating because all kinds of new investigations in progress were announced. Maintaining the strictest regard for formal attire and Victorian decorum, the Philological Society would convene to argue heatedly about the linguistic difficulties occurring in papyrus, palimpsest, incunable, manuscript, and codex. The membership welcomed the chance to share their latest findings with kindred spirits.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the efflorescence of language investigation, notably within the Philological Society. It provided the ideal environment in which Alexander Ellis' star could rise rapidly and shine brilliantly. There were many scholars in the organization who argued passionately on a variety of issues, and Ellis was only too ready to become involved in the widest diversity of linguistic subjects possible. Because he was articulate with his associates and painstakingly precise in his studies, he soon came to the attention of the Society. It was a privileged membership which he valued and he took advantage of every contact with the other learned societies and universities of the Western world.

He did not shirk any kind of difficult work. Organizations welcome those who are willing to give generously of their time. After Goldstücker's death, Ellis found himself after the completion of his predecessor's term, swiftly achieving the pinnacle of his involvement with that group of philologists. Who can say if he hadn't deliberately planned his rapid rise to prominence under the guise of modesty? Certainly he had not been self-effacing during the years of association with Pitman. Any person in the President's Chair had to devote hours of planning, coordinating, lecturing, politicking, cajoling, and adjusting to the idiosyncracies of distinguished but frequently capricious colleagues.

Ellis' remarkable abilities are evident in his role as coordinator of the progress of nineteenth century language studies within the Philological Society. For four terms he was in the vortex of scholarly activity, a situation which provided him with the opportunity for making informal contact with the leading scholars in philology. The Society benefited in many ways as a result of his ability to effect several of its important projects.

Early in his capacity as President, Ellis attempted to deal with the debatable topic regarding the origin of language. Professor Hans Aarsleff notes that the Société Linguistique (Paris), formed in 1866, forbade in its statutes any discussion on this topic, and in the London

counterpart there was a similar reluctance to engage in the controversy.⁸

Max Müller's theory of the origins of language was becoming well-known to the members of the Society, but as President of the body, Ellis refused to allow fruitless involvement in the highly unorthodox interpretations, which at this time were attracting the attention of so many of his contemporaries in various circles outside the Society. Ellis believed that the onomatopoeitic imitational theory was a source of great error. He dismissed Müller's notion that "each conception as it thrilled for the first time through the brain received a phonetic expression."⁹ Ellis repeatedly reminded the Society that its real function was to pay "marked attention to existing forms of speech."¹⁰ There was unwavering determination evident in Ellis' views. He argued that the Society had to refrain from making metaphysical distinctions and speculations. Throughout his career he placed emphasis on a truly scientific approach, one which could yield results based on the slow accumulation of evidence.

Ellis was always seeking out material which could offer some attraction for the meetings. Further lectures

⁸Hans Aarsleff, The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 229.

⁹Ellis, "First Annual Address," p. 12.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 32.

on the origins of language which Max Müller presented at the Royal Institution in March and April, 1873, with statements about the "impassable barrier between ape and man," gave Ellis an opportunity of expanding his own attitude towards the topic.¹¹ He indicated that such investigations were not properly the province of philology and felt that it was the Society's responsibility to study the historical growth of one language rather than to engage in speculations on the origin of all tongues.

Presiding over the Philological Society was a great honor, but there were unpleasant responsibilities which would often beset the President. Ellis sometimes had the distasteful duty of informing members that their requests for financial support for projects had to be denied.

Prior to Ellis' holding office in 1871, the Philological Society had printed an oversupply of its special texts. Its funds were almost depleted, and there was much consternation within its Council. By 1874 Ellis as President was obliged to refuse Richard Weymouth fiscal support, and he informed him that the Society had to refrain from printing for two or three years more. Weymouth, no doubt, derived scant comfort from the fact that other valuable papers, too, were being delayed until the Society

¹¹A.J. Ellis, "Second Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 16th May, 1873," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873), p. 51-52.

could recoup its finances.¹²

Because several years had elapsed since Weymouth originally delivered his paper before the Philological Society, and because it had refused him financial help, he utilized the Preface to his published work to vilify the Society for not having underwritten the expenses of publishing. He asserted that he, himself, had been a member "for nearly a quarter of a century and that his hope has proved to be vain."¹³ This unbecoming display of ill temper in public, so unusual among the dignified members of Society, in all likelihood, caused a great deal of excitement among the members of the Council. This was poor reward for all of Ellis' efforts to guard prudently the Society's interests.

By the time Ellis delivered his Second Annual Address in 1873, he was in a better position to carry out the obligation which Professor Goldstücker had placed upon him. His colleagues had honored him by offering him the Chair for a full term the following year. When Ellis spoke to the Society on May 16, 1873, he expressed his appreciation by promising to spare his audience the tedium of

¹²Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Weymouth, May 13, 1871.

¹³Richard F. Weymouth, On Early English Pronunciation with Especial Reference to Chaucer, in Opposition to the Views Maintained by Mr. A.J. Ellis in His Work "On Early English Pronunciation" (London: Asher and Co., 1874), pp. i-iv.

ON
EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION,

With especial Reference to Chaucer,

IN OPPOSITION TO THE VIEWS MAINTAINED BY

MR. A. J. ELLIS, F.R.S.,

IN HIS WORK

"ON EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION, WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE
TO SHAKSPERE AND CHAUCER."

BY

RICHARD FRANCIS WEYMOUTH, D.Lit., M.A.,

FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON.

LONDON:

ASHER & CO, BEDFORD STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1874.

19. Richard Weymouth, On Early English Pronunciation, 1874:
Title Page

listening to a "scramble over a wide subject."¹⁴

Thomas Hallam of Manchester, who was to become his closest associate in the coming years in the dialect survey, wrote a letter of congratulation on hearing of his appointment to a full term as President.¹⁵ The years of service to the Philological Society were very rewarding and satisfying ones to Ellis. He carefully compiled reports from materials drawn from the inquiries originally directed to leading members of the group. He took great pains to cover each subdivision of philological study in his Address even though some of the scholarly contributions were arid in style and occasionally lacking in general interest. From Ellis' reports to the membership there emerges a fascinating portrait of a group of linguistic pioneers who presented the results of some of their remarkable studies for the first time before the Philological Society. Ellis was sufficiently competent to deal with all aspects of philology, and his interpretations of these reports was immediately helpful to the membership.

For example, Ellis brought to the assemblage scientific knowledge on the operation of the laryngoscope

¹⁴Ellis, "Second Annual Address," p. 202.

¹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 23), Hallam to Ellis, June 18, 1873.

and its uses by Herr Behnke of Birmingham with the medical students of University College, London. Ellis, however, tactfully assured the Society that its interests and activities which stressed attention to details were justified and alluded to the recent paper on Danish pronunciation which Henry Sweet had prepared for the members. Ellis equated his own attention to the operation of the laryngoscope with the many fine distinctions which he admired in Sweet's work. It is significant to notice that in 1873 it was A.J. Ellis who indicated to the Philological Society the subsequent fine career of Henry Sweet.¹⁶

In his capacity as President of the Philological Society, Ellis came in contact with Continental scholars because of his own interest in some of the European tongues. For years he was interested in studying Danish and always regretted that he couldn't speak that language more fluently. His position made it possible for him to make the acquaintance of Johan Storm, whose large work, Engelisk Filologi, he was laboriously trying to translate in order to consider the theories which it developed.¹⁷ Ellis was hopeful that there would be published a translation "more known to us Englishmen."¹⁸

¹⁶Ellis, "Second Annual Address," p. 208.

¹⁷University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, June 14, 1879.

¹⁸Ellis, "Second Annual Address," p. 217.

As President of the Philological Society, Ellis had occasion to consult on many matters some of the most colorful personalities of the world of philology. The Transactions in his first full term as President reflect the activity and enthusiasm of his colleagues. Dr. Whiteley Stokes (1830-1909), who drafted the Anglo-Indian civil and criminal codes, discoursed on the Irish verb; and Arthur J. Patterson gave an account of Hungarian philological activity. Ellis again commented courteously, though critically, on Dr. Goldstücker's opinions concerning Sanscrit lexicography. He disapproved of his predecessor's reliance upon earlier interpretations and objected to the inflexibility of his opinions.¹⁹ Theodor Aufrecht (1822-1907) was the Professor of Sanscrit at the University of Edinburgh. He was a member of Ellis' Council and expounded at inordinate length on the problems inherent in Sanscrit "grammaticography." It was Aufrecht who pointed out to the membership the existing need for a work which would show the development of Sanscrit into the modern popular dialects of India.²⁰ This, of course, was the kind of thinking which was in line with Ellis' own ambitious project on the history of the English language though utilizing an entirely different approach.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 219.

²⁰Ibid., p. 226.

When Reverend Richard Morris moved at the November 6, 1874 meeting to honor the Sanscritist William Dwight Whitney of Yale University by proposing his election to the Philological Society, Ellis spoke with great eloquence of the latter's contributions to comparative and English philology.²¹ Whitney came to England in 1875 and was cordially received by London's principal philologists. His schedule was so filled with appointments that he had little time for the kind of leisurely visiting which he so enjoyed in the environs of Hartford and New Haven. There developed a rapport between the two philologists. On May 5, 1875 Ellis entertained Whitney at a five o'clock dinner at his home, following which they went to a meeting of the Council at "6 1/2" prior to the full meeting of the Philological Society at University College.²²

Whitney was able to spend at this time only a few days in London, but after touring Germany for a while, he returned to London for another short visit before returning home. He met again with Ellis on September 1, 1875 at a dinner given in his honor by F.J. Furnivall, the leading figure among textual scholars in later nineteenth century London. The conversation at that dinner dealt

²¹"Philological Society," *Academy*, 8 (November 14, 1874), 541.

²²Yale University Library, Manuscript Collections, William Dwight Whitney Diaries, May 7, 1875.

chiefly with the problems of Sanscrit grammar.²³

During the 1870's scholars were rarely able to avail themselves of indexes of manuscript sources to assist them with their investigations. Ellis urged the Philological Society to prepare such lists which could answer the needs of its members. He particularly recognized the value of indicating those editions of the literary texts which were reliable. Ellis, furthermore, began to assemble his own files organized according to manuscript sources. He never asked others to undertake projects which he himself was not willing to do. He stressed the responsibility which the members of the Society had to render service to others.²⁴

Possibly many of the Society's members did not share their President's views on the role of women in serious scholarship. In 1874 Ellis felt that a new attitude had arisen and that no longer were Merton Hall and Girton Hall of Cambridge sufficient for educating women. Men had gone to university frequently because it was customary and now the time had come to realize that "women are quick."²⁵ Ellis cautiously remarked to his colleagues

²³Yale University Library, Manuscript Collections, William Dwight Whitney Diaries, September 1, 1875.

²⁴A.J. Ellis, "Third Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 15th May, 1874," Transactions of the Philological Society (1874), p. 357.

²⁵Ibid., p. 358.

that the entire question concerning the role of women was "beyond our pale" [i.e., the Philological Society] although it was beginning to receive some attention. The Philological Society was a conservative group of gentlemen who took a point of view very much in keeping with the Victorian standards assigned to women.

In Ellis' correspondence with Paul Meyer of Paris, which often touched on prominent European philologists whose books were heatedly discussed as part of the Society's social hour following the formal meeting, he expressed much interest in the writings of Ernst von Brücke (1819-92), the German physiologist. Ellis had carefully analyzed his studies on phonetics. He found himself in a particularly delicate situation because as President of the Philological Society he was obliged to be very circumspect in his remarks. Because he had written deprecatingly about Brücke to Paul Meyer in an earlier letter, and having worried about the matter, he asked Meyer to take care to say nothing about his indiscretion. He urged Meyer to remember that what he had written about the eminent doctor was private. He felt that since Brücke was so highly regarded in Germany, he had to be "spoken of carefully." Ellis was still chafing under Brücke's criticism of his Essentials of Phonetics. He knew full well that he had to be "'on my p's and q's', as we say, in anything I wrote of him." Such a remark exhibits an unexpected aspect of Ellis'

nature though he was always very careful about anything he wrote. He learned from the Brücke situation that he could not afford to take any chance which would embarrass him as President of the Philological Society.²⁶

Frequently the correspondence led to steps which involved the membership in special projects. Every type of suggestion came to Ellis from all over Europe, but sometimes there was an idea which caught his interest immediately. Paul Meyer had set Ellis thinking about the problems basic to the editing of texts. In the nineteenth century scholars were feverishly working at establishing accurate literary texts which could then serve as a foundation for other scholars to use, for example, in connection with their linguistic studies. The effect of Meyer's notes to Ellis on the subject was "to incite [Ellis] to scribble off a footnote on the same subject which certainly requires all the consideration that can be given to it."²⁷ Ellis had examined Gaston Paris' fine editing of great French medieval texts with the highest approbation. In addition, he had recently met M. Paris at a reception at F.J. Furnivall's home at which all the leaders of the Philological Society were present.²⁸ Because so many of the

²⁶Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, May 7, 1874.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 4, 1874.

Society's members were engaged in editing texts under the auspices of a number of learned bodies, they listened with great attention to their President's observations growing out of so much research in languages and speech.

The Early English Text Society had concluded its great edition of Langland's Vision of Piers the Plowman collated by Reverend Walter W. Skeat. Richard Morris' Four-Text edition of the Cursor Mundi had also recently appeared. Ellis described to the members in his prepared Address the current trend in editing in which scholars gave several transcripts of the original instead of relying on a complex series of collations.

Furnivall's Six-Text edition of Chaucer, as well as Sir Frederick Madden's Brut of Layamon were examples of this new approach to editing. With much satisfaction, Ellis remarked that the result could be the "displacing of many a worshipped tyrant."²⁹ He set the tone for the Society.

As President, Ellis took seriously his associations with learned bodies of all types. It is fortunate that several unusual letters have survived the vicissitudes of time which reflect the helpful attitude which Ellis showed towards the work of other scholarly bodies. There was a great deal of exchanging of ideas in the international

²⁹Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 446.

network with regard to scientific and literary activities. In every city of Europe learned societies maintained libraries composed primarily of books and journals donated by members who gave copies of their works or bequeathed their entire libraries to their favorite organization.

Among these libraries the exchange system provided a principal source of materials. Often a society would send copies of its monographs to many other groups throughout Europe, thereby stimulating a fruitful exchange of ideas among hundreds of scholars. The system also encouraged a growing personal correspondence between individual scholars who used the monographs as a point of departure for specific inquiries relating to their own pursuits.

As President of the Philological Society Ellis was in touch with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Pesth. According to custom among all nineteenth century learned societies, acknowledgments were always sent for any books or materials which augmented their libraries. Since the Secretary of the Hungarian Academy was somewhat deficient in the niceties of English expression, and the Academy's form letter which had been constructed for such purposes was also filled with grammatical errors, Ellis patiently noted his mistakes in his response to the acknowledgment. He softened his criticisms to some extent by saying it was

"unpleasant to print any language erroneously."³⁰ Though his acquaintance with Hungarian was almost non-existent, he carefully explained the theory of English genders by using such words as "sailor", "sun", "ship", and "train". He suggested proper forms for use in connection with scientific works and discussed the employment of plurals in speaking of the members of a learned society. He even explained the difference between the words "pest" and "Pesth". The Hungarian Academy also learned from the Philological Society that in official communications one did not use such a phrase as "with warmest thanks." Ellis emphasized the sincere spirit which prompted him to write such a letter from an official of one learned society to another. He was always eager to comment and write about a problem concerning language even if it was not on the highest scholarly plane but rather on the practical aspects of usage.

Not only did Ellis maintain an impersonal correspondence with scholars from lesser known institutions, but he also valued the friendship which his position as President made possible with some of the great linguists of Europe. For example, on behalf of the Philological Society and himself, Ellis expressed his warmest admiration for the work of August Friedrich Pott, whose Lexicon of Roots, the Wurzelwörterbuch, was completed in 1873. He paid

³⁰Hungarian Academy of Science (Budapest) Archives, Ellis to the Secretary (unidentified), July 14, 1874.

tribute to him because at last scholars were utilizing this study in radicalism upon which its authors had been working for forty years. Ellis called upon the Society to rejoice because Pott had returned with his work completed.

The members learned that Ellis loved to read "on and on" in that work until obliged to set it aside for other pressing matters. He felt profound respect for Pott and said that in comparison with his great learning he [Ellis] was "hundreds and hundreds of years younger by linguistic study."

When Ellis presided in the Chair at meetings of the Philological Society, he was fond of grandiose exhortations to carry his point. The gathering of learned men were either inspired or amused by his flights of emotion on many an occasion. Pott merited the fullest expression of Ellis' approval: "Honour to the pioneers! Forward on their track! Who goes to the rear? Let us work while it is day!"³¹ The language is reminiscent of the type he employed as a preacher at the nonconformist South Place Chapel on several occasions.

While President Ellis relied a great deal on the guidance and support of the members of the Council of the group, no one was more indefatigable in his efforts to lend

³¹ Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 459.

assistance than F.J. Furnivall, the Honourable Secretary. Because he, too, was a scholar of great repute in the 1870's and 1880's, he knew well an extraordinary number of people throughout the country and was in a position to expedite matters with relative ease for Ellis. The Chair represented great responsibility for Ellis, who appreciated Furnivall's help deeply. There were many moments when Ellis felt "as a round man trying to fill up a square hole, but not forgetting its empty corners."

Ellis, on the whole, was very much at ease with his duties as President and gave the impression that he was wrapping up a tidy package of reports furnished him by his associates who had promptly turned in their assignments as if to a demanding schoolmaster. If we examine his four Annual Addresses we can see the success he had in getting people to do the tasks assigned to them, the sine qua non of a good administrator.

He attempted to maintain a balance among the reports which were accepted for delivery before the membership and published in the Transactions so that the philological discoveries of the Society's Celtic or Dravidian scholars received equal attention with that afforded their French or Latin colleagues.

Ellis was able to recognize what studies constituted good material for inclusion in an annual report to the membership. For example, he was eagerly awaiting

Professor Aufrecht's account of his current Etruscan investigations because they would provide "a very attractive set of reports to present."³²

In his May 14th report (1874) Ellis aired his views before the Philological Society on the projected dictionary, pointing out that the problems facing a body in connection with an undertaking of such great magnitude could be compared to a corporation which supposedly would succeed "because it had neither a soul to save nor a body to kick."³³ Throughout Ellis' formal presentations such as the Annual Addresses, he exercised his sense of humor. He was very often a witty and entertaining individual in his speeches.

Plans for the great New English Dictionary on Historical Principles, which had been proposed as early as 1858, moved ahead very slowly because it was a staggering endeavor. Ellis was very cautious in his remarks about the project. He hoped that the dictionary would indeed be finished, as was Littré's definitive French dictionary, and wistfully told the membership that he hoped that he would be allowed, like Balaam "to see it but not nigh."³⁴ Ellis loved to use Scriptural allusion if it were at all possible.

³²Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 4, 1874.

³³Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 355.

³⁴Ibid., p. 356.

Taking a positive approach, he warmly encouraged the Society not to be put off by the length of the dictionary scheme because earlier philologists had undertaken tasks which seemed endless, too.

Though cautious, Ellis was always optimistic and regularly sounded the note of good cheer to many of the flagging spirits who were engaged in ambitious courses of investigation along many untravelled routes. He was also very conscientious about his duties as President.

As an organizer of the Society's work, he liked to suggest modifications of its policies. For example, it was his opinion that the discussions following the reading of scholarly papers often contained much worthwhile thinking and he suggested that the Society publish in its Transactions the salient points in order "to provide service to general philology."³⁵

The construction of an Annual Address required careful scheduling in order to allow for the arrival of material for inclusion.³⁶ It often necessitated long correspondence with Continental scholars, and Ellis appreciated

³⁵ Ibid., p. 357.

³⁶ Ellis' Annual Addresses are filled with references to his own past experiences and have proven helpful in providing the present writer with information about his views on a number of matters not directly connected with the operation of the Philological Society. The construction of the Address was one of his major responsibilities and reflects the leadership he gave the Society as President.

the dilatory ways of many of his colleagues. There were always deadlines that he had to meet, and many aggravations arose in getting the cooperation of the specialists. Though actually harried to the point of exhaustion in 1874, he maintained his calm throughout much protracted letter writing.

Ellis had to be sure not to irritate or offend a contributor by importuning him too much. On the contrary, the ensuing correspondence often led to a warm friendship based on mutual admiration and respect. Both men could unburden their minds and hearts under the demands of scholarly deadlines. We can see Ellis at his best in the events which lay behind the long French Report on Romance Philology which Paul Meyer promised to give Ellis for the 1874 Presidential Address. The letters give a fine picture of the world of true scholars on both sides of the English Channel.

Upon receipt of Meyer's tract La Manière de Langage Qui Enseigne à Parler et à Écrire le Français (1874), Ellis promptly sent its author an acknowledgment and gratefully expressed appreciation for the reference to his own "big book", i.e., Early English Pronunciation. He wrote Meyer further that he wished to honor the Philological Society by inviting him to become one of its honorary foreign members.³⁷ Such an invitation would first have been discussed privately

³⁷ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 10, 1874.

with the leading figures in the Philological Society. His nomination was merely a formality at the Council meeting held on February 20, 1874.

Marie Paul Hycinthe Meyer (1840-1917) was an authority on medieval French and Provençal languages and literature and was a professor at the Collège de France. He had earned a fine reputation for himself for Les Derniers Troubadours de la Provence and was at this time about to bring out the first part of his Recueil d'Anciens Textes Bas-Latins, Provençaux, et Français. He was most deserving of the honor which the Philological Society wished to confer upon him.

Ellis personally knew the foreign honorary members of the Society. As President it was his duty to receive them formally and extend special recognition to them when they were present at the London meetings. It was a company of brilliant personages and included the following: August Immanuel Bekker (1785-1871), editor of the Anecdota Graeca and professor at Berlin; Friedrich Wilhelm Ritschl (1806-76), editor of the five volumes of the Opuscula Philologica; Christian Lassen (1800-76), chief authority on Old Persian cuneiform writing. There were many other luminaries among the honorary members, and Paul Meyer could not help being flattered at his inclusion.³⁸

³⁸"Membership," Transactions of the Philological Society (1874).

In February of that year Ellis urged Meyer to provide him with material which could be incorporated in the President's Address. He candidly informed him that he was busy locating contributors. Ellis needed from six to eight pages, each containing four hundred words for the section on the progress being made in Romance philology. There was a need for an annual listing of national philological publications in various fields. He wanted to match Furnivall's resumé on Early English with one on Early French. Meyer was to have a little more than a month in which to complete the account of the year's work in Romance philology.³⁹ Ellis did not foresee the many problems with which he was soon to be involved owing to the French scholar's personality.

Ellis was optimistic that Meyer would oblige the Society on such short notice because Romance was an extremely broad area. It was only one of the many with which Ellis had to deal in preparing his Address. It meant that Meyer would have to expend much effort to produce the report in time for the deadline. Ellis felt very much at home discussing the state of learning in that area of scholarship. He wrote to Meyer about the experiences he had had in examining Prince Bonaparte's library where he had been able to locate Ascoli's Glottologico Italiano, at the same time

³⁹ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 10, 1874.

"rejoicing" that there was work being carried on the Italian dialects. There was so much that Ellis could discuss with Meyer. For example, they both shared an enthusiasm for Winkler's linguistic contributions to "language" in his Algemeen Nederduitsch en Friesch Dialecticon. It was living speech that primarily interested Ellis but its study was in a state of "fermentation" as distinguished from research in "crystallized written language."⁴⁰

Ellis knew exactly what he wanted his contributors to send. Meyer would be permitted to touch upon Romance literature "very lightly," and he could be sure that he did not have to worry about being too long.⁴¹ Publication in the Transactions would take care of what would have to be pruned from the report. Ellis could not afford to run the risk of discouraging anyone who might at the last moment possibly ask to be excused because the topic could not be compressed. With relief Ellis received an affirmative reply from Paris by the 22nd of February.⁴²

To maintain professional harmony among the leading authorities in a particular field often posed a delicate problem. In order to spare himself embarrassment because a

⁴⁰Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 16, 1874.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 22, 1874.

particular title had been omitted from the list of national philological-bibliographical items submitted to him by a contributor, Ellis would take time out to write the specialist and indicated that the title would be included later as a footnote in the Report. Ellis, for example, informed Meyer to be very careful not to omit certain titles lest he give offense by the omission.⁴³

Meyer did not take too kindly to Ellis' instructions about special bibliographical items because he did not agree with such a policy particularly if an author lacked discrimination in referring to authorities. Ellis and Meyer were both fond of employing the word "regretted" to express their disapproval concerning the work of some of their colleagues who were inaccurate. The titles which the contributors to the Address eventually sent Ellis would serve as points of departure for future correspondence with other scholars who would note the titles in the Transactions.⁴⁴

Since Ellis planned to have copies of each scholar's long Report available for distribution to the members on the actual evening when he would deliver the Address, Ellis reminded Meyer that he would be working under great pressure

⁴³Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 4, 1874.

⁴⁴Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, May 7, 1874.

in order to finish with the printer's proofs in time. Ellis' competence in French was considerable and he offered to translate from Meyer's French as he delivered the paper, though he planned to print the French itself in the Transactions.

The Report from Meyer had to be in London by March 31, but on April 4 Ellis tactfully wrote Meyer expressing the hope that the awaited proofs had not "gone astray."⁴⁵ Reports were meanwhile coming in from all over Europe, and Ellis was almost overwhelmed by the sheer bulk of the contributions. Twelve more days elapsed; nothing came from Professor Meyer. In desperation Ellis wrote again in a sympathetic and patient tone, acknowledging that "le plan le plus circonscrit" always takes a very long time.⁴⁶ He stressed that he was counting on its arrival. He tried flattery and said that its inclusion in his Address would enhance his incumbency as President of the Philological Society.

Ellis then had to propose a compromise. Dealing with the Continental scholars could be a very trying affair. He suggested that Meyer should immediately send him the full Report in case there might be enough time to print it

⁴⁵Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 4, 1874.

⁴⁶Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, April 16, 1874.

before the meeting. Ellis was counting on the printer's having enough material to set in type until the end of the month. He had to conciliate Meyer because the French scholar was very hesitant about his own ability to cut enough of his manuscript, now in proof form.

Ellis frantically assured him that anything which he wrote on Romance was too useful to be curtailed. He did indicate to Meyer that only in his [Ellis] capacity as President would the Report contain any modification in its oral delivery. He decided upon this plan. The membership, on the one hand, would be told that proof would be ready shortly for distribution. Meyer, however, would be led to believe that the entire process was being held up by his slowness. Such maneuvering must have been very distasteful for Ellis, but part of the reason for his success as President was his skill in coping with the apprehensions and whims of the Society's membership.

On April 30 Ellis tried a humorous approach with the Romance authority. Unlike "crookedbacked Richard who smothers the babes in the Tower," he positively would not consign any part of it into the "wastebasket" with the abundant material which had been sent him by other scholars.⁴⁷

The arrival of Meyer's corrected proofs posed additional difficulties for Ellis because references to other

⁴⁷ Ibid.

contributing scholars in the Report had to be revised. He had to change such phrases as "most illustrious" to a less effusive "highly esteemed."⁴⁸ There were hundreds of erroneous French accents which the English printer had set, and Ellis regretted that the proof corrections in that language were consuming so much of his [Ellis] precious time needlessly.⁴⁹

The corrected proofs and manuscript were returned to Meyer by May 15. Another irritation developed in connection with the customary procedures, and Ellis had to exercise the utmost patience. According to British scholarly methodology, Ellis was obliged to give a detailed explanation to Meyer of what was expected. He had requested Meyer to initial all the corrections in order to absolve the printer from any responsibilities at a later time. When Ellis had first received the corrected proofs, he found to his great dismay that not only were the initials of approval lacking, but Meyer wanted a full explanation for their necessity.

Ellis was desperate by this time because of the approaching Address for the Society. He indicated to the French scholar that since there was little time left, he "had performed the dreadful operation of 'initialing' as

⁴⁸Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, May 12, 1874.

⁴⁹Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, May 15, 1874.

your plenipotentiary."⁵⁰ He knew that Meyer would be confused by this process and assured him that it was performed daily in England thousands of times. To make certain that Meyer would understand him completely, Ellis explained that it meant the same as "Vu et approuvé par nous."⁵¹ He referred Meyer to Fleming and Tibbins' French Dictionary in order to settle the matter once and for all. Wearily, Ellis resumed compiling similar Reports from scholars from Salamanca to Upsala. The delivery date of the Address was getting closer.

Adding to these difficulties, Ellis had to take over the responsibility of sending Meyer ten copies of the full Address plus fifty of the Romance Report in accordance with the usual arrangement made with the contributors. He also asked Meyer to furnish him with a French title for the reprint.⁵²

Ellis, in the end, was pleased with the outcome of all this effort. He wrote Meyer saying, "You must be extrêmement content d'avoir fini but I am also extrêmement content de vous y avoir poussé."⁵³ With relief Ellis accepted the Meyer report. It took an hour and thirty-five

⁵⁰ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, June 6, 1874.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, n.d.

minutes to deliver the 1874 Address and it was well received. The Annual Addresses, often running to more than a hundred printed pages in the Transactions, were a great burden to Ellis but his thoroughness in organizing the many Reports from scholars earned him the approbation of his colleagues who invited him to hold the Chair for four separate terms.

If Ellis could not acquire information from his personal acquaintances in the Philological Society, he did not hesitate to call upon scholars with whom he had had no contact before. On one occasion he received assistance from the distinguished Assyriologist of Queen's College, Oxford, Reverend A.H. Sayce (1845-1933), who had recently published his Assyrian Grammar for Comparative Purposes (1872). Sayce obligingly provided Ellis with a large section on Semitic philology for the 1874 Address. After presenting to the membership Sayce's detailed bibliographical survey of the significant progress in Babylonian, Hebrew, and Assyrian languages, Ellis reminded the Society of the responsibility they had of becoming familiar with the results of others' work "to secure that general thoroughness without which the individual work is so often illusory."⁵⁴

In addition to the assistance which he was able to get from members of the Society and their acquaintances, Ellis knew that he could count on the British Museum's

⁵⁴Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 377.

staff to supply valuable assistance in connection with almost any matter dealing with literary or historical interest. Theodore G. Pinches had been able to secure a very detailed account of Professors Schrader and Delitzsch's new scientific methods for translating the cuneiform records of the Assyrians and Babylonians. As President of the Society, Ellis wanted to make available the latest findings and praised those scholars as "learned Reporters."⁵⁵

Ellis recognized his own scholarly limitations and candidly admitted them to the Society. For example, he was "totally incompetent" regarding a knowledge of the Etruscan language, and he remarked that Professor Aufrecht could supply the deficiency on "so recondite a matter."⁵⁶ There were few philologists who possessed any familiarity with that ancient language.

Typical of Ellis' organizational skills was his maintenance of files in which he noted any special courtesies paid by societies to his fellow-scholars. When one of the Society's members, Dr. Wagner, was elected an Honorary Member of the Greek Philological Society at Constantinople, Ellis took care to announce the honor bestowed upon him.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 362.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 362.

As President, Ellis maintained close relations with several American scholars who were active in philological circles in their country. In 1875 Ellis sent J. Hammond Trumbull an account of the problems arising in connection with the preparation of the Annual Addresses. It was encouraging to know that his successor, Richard Morris, also had much "extraneous" assistance from authorities within the Philological Society.⁵⁸ Each part of an Address consisted of an important individual contribution.

The demands of a large correspondence during his incumbency as President did not seem to disturb Ellis to any large degree. He devoted hours each day to writing in connection with the affairs of the Society. Throughout letters to O.H. De Beer we are able to get additional understanding of his commitment to learning of all kinds. The camaraderie which developed at the close of the meetings often resulted in a lengthy correspondence arising from a chance remark made in connection with some research problem. At a meeting of the Society a reference had been made, for example, to the old sixteenth century witchcraft trial, Die Bernsteinhexe. Ellis wrote to De Beer in the Netherlands that it was important to be aware of the story's spuriousness because it was a hoax perpetrated by a professor who had wanted to embarrass a colleague's judgment. De Beer learned from Ellis

⁵⁸Trinity College (Hartford, Connecticut), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, November 28, 1875.

that the hoax had occurred about thirty years before. It was the kind of exposé De Beer could share with the Nederlandsche Maatschappij van Letterkunde in Leiden. The Philological Society thus became known even further in European linguistic circles as a result of a casual correspondence arising from a social hour after a meeting. Ellis was the best possible public relations force in the Philological Society.⁵⁹

The De Beer correspondence also contains an exchange of opinions concerning the work of some of the prominent British philologists as well as the progress taking place at that time in the Netherlands. Ellis admired deeply the Englische Spraakunst of J. Beckering Vinckers. De Beer had sent a copy of the work to Ellis, who was fascinated by the section taken from W.D. Whitney's works, Language and The Study of Languages. There were new examples taken from the Dutch language. Ellis was especially interested in any writings of the American philologist.⁶⁰

Ellis shared the information on books which foreign correspondents brought to his attention. After reading Vincker's book, he discussed it with Professor Russell Martineau at the Society's meeting. Henry Sweet also joined

⁵⁹University of Leiden, Manuscript Collection, Ellis to De Beer, July 17, 1876.

⁶⁰Ibid.

the discussion on the Dutch work.⁶¹

His prominence in the Philological Society brought Ellis into the middle of a literary controversy which caught his interest because of its philological problems. Different in nature from the usual type of work which he usually read was the Oera Linda Bok, a Friesian work concerned with a utopian republic built on principles of truth, justice, and a personal Deism but without any outward forms of worship. Its editor, Jules Andrieu, believed on internal evidence that it had been written in the seventeenth century with a "high and definite purpose."⁶²

Beckering Vinckers had also studied the work and believed that its grammatical forms represented a much later period of Friesian. Ellis put himself on record as being in support of Vinckers' opinion. The struggle with Dutch had been a real effort for Ellis, but he finally concluded that the Oera Linda Bok was written no earlier than 1853. He observed that the "nine-day wonder disappears altogether below the philological horizon."⁶³

Ellis sent a copy of his observations concerning the Oera Linda Bok to De Beer and a lively discussion arose

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Jules Andrieu, "The Origin of the Oera Linda Bok," Academy, 9 (June 17, 1876), 586-87.

⁶³A.J. Ellis, "The Oera Linda Bok," Academy, 9 (June 24, 1876), 610.

between the two scholars. It became clearly evident to them that the work was not a seventeenth century work but rather a nineteenth century forgery.⁶⁴

De Beer proposed Ellis as a member of the Leiden Literary Society and its Secretary informed him to that effect in a formal letter on June 17, 1876.⁶⁵ Cautiously, Ellis made inquiries of De Beer concerning the *Nederlandsche Maatschappij van Letterkunde*. Ellis carefully examined its by-laws and decided to accept his election to the learned society. He was anxious to receive its *Transactions*.⁶⁶ He appears to have had second thoughts about the honor, for shortly afterwards he wrote again to De Beer and stated that he had little claim to a seat in a Society when he "really didn't know the literature of the country."⁶⁷ Ellis was also sensitive to the fact that Winkler had seconded his nomination to the Society because of the space which had been devoted to his *Dialecticon* in Part IV of *Early English Pronunciation*.

Ellis went so far in his letter as to analyze the differences between a Royal Society of Literature and a

⁶⁴University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, July 17, 1876.

⁶⁵University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, June 17, 1876.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*

⁶⁷*Ibid.*

Philological Society, and he looked for further information on the matter of his having been proposed for the "vacant seat." He remarked that the name "Nederlandsche" was possibly equivalent to the British "'Royal' as assumed by special grant from the sovereign." Ellis was punctilious about these fine distinctions.⁶⁸

He also enjoyed discussing the language of his correspondents. Within the Philological Society there were few who knew Dutch or were interested in learning the language. Owing to his desire to read Donders and Land's pamphlets on Dutch pronunciation, Ellis had become moderately competent with Dutch. He regretted that he had lost his skill with the language but was afraid of injuring his German which he had perfected thirty years before.⁶⁹ At the same time, he sought advice from De Beer in his letter on the correct Dutch way of addressing correspondents.

Ellis was still appealed to by many scholars after his term as President of the Philological Society had been completed. He had earned the respect of the distinguished membership and always showed a willingness to assist any of his colleagues if within his power. For example, Prince Bonaparte was distressed that the Annual Address by his

⁶⁸University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, June 19, 1876.

⁶⁹University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, June 20, 1876.

successor, Henry Sweet, failed to set aside space for a discussion of the Basque language. As President, Ellis had been frequently approached to pay particular attention to a scholarly investigation of a member. This was a problem sometimes, for he had to determine whether there was likely to be sufficient interest among the membership to warrant its inclusion. On April 8, 1877, Bonaparte was unable to present before the Society his Basque paper containing a critique of M. Ribary's Hungarian work. Bonaparte turned to Ellis, with whom he felt on sufficiently close terms, asking him to intercede with Henry Sweet, then President in 1878, on his behalf.⁷⁰ It was a delicate situation for Ellis, who had to tread very warily with Sweet, a volatile person, who was likely to take offense at Ellis' interfering in his affairs. The problems of the Philological Society were always with Ellis even when he was not directing its affairs as President. It appears that Ellis did not interfere with Sweet's decision.

Though no longer its President in 1878, Ellis was without question one of the leading figures in all philological matters, and his reputation was ever growing. Thomas Raynesford Lounsbury (1838-1915), Professor of English at Yale University, felt the greatest respect for Ellis because of his position in the Society.

⁷⁰Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 6186, L.L. Bonaparte to Ellis, May 12, 1877.

Using his [Lounsbury's] membership in the Society as an excuse for writing to Ellis, Lounsbury inquired about a point of Old French which had been discussed on page 620 of Early English Pronunciation Part II about the form of the word "honur" as opposed to "honour." Ellis replied that inasmuch as so long a time had elapsed since that point had been raised, he had taken the trouble to contact Henry Nicol in France, who, in turn, had sent him an exhaustive reply on the matter of Old French sounds.⁷¹

Ellis forwarded to Lounsbury a copy of Professor Nicol's reply. In his letter Ellis admitted that the state of Old French learning had progressed much since he [Ellis] had first studied that language. Having been an officer of the Philological Society, he never neglected any opportunity to render service to a colleague.⁷² He gladly interrupted his own investigations out of a sense of obligation to the Society.

The most important official assignment which fell to Ellis in 1879 was announcing to the membership of the Society that the body was being dissolved and that it was taking the new form given to its incorporation under the Companies Acts of 1862, 1867, and 1877 as well as its

⁷¹Yale University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Lounsbury, April 30, 1878.

⁷²Ibid.

modification as of January 2, 1879. Ellis provided the membership with an exhaustive account of the Indenture of Agreement.⁷³

At the time when the Philological Society was being incorporated, Ellis shared with Thomas Hallam gratifying news about the progress of the Society's dictionary. The Philological Society had finally drawn up a contract with Oxford University Press and arranged for it to be signed. The actual composition was scheduled to begin immediately under the editorship of Dr. James Murray. Ellis observed that it would take from ten to fifteen years to complete the editing though the first volumes would not appear for at least three or four years. With his penchant for statistics, Ellis calculated that the dictionary would be "between six and seven thousand quarto pages triple column small print."⁷⁴ The statistics relating to the great dictionary had been discussed many times at the committee meetings, but now that the Oxford contract had become a reality, Ellis could consider the facts in a different light. His own enthusiasm mounted when he saw the practical steps that were being taken. It must be emphasized that Ellis participated in the planning stages

⁷³Philological Society of London, "Special General Meeting," Minutes, February 7, 1879.

⁷⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 9), Ellis to Hallam, February 14, 1879.

of the dictionary, but he had no editorial responsibility for it. During his terms of service as President he was consulted on matters pertaining to its progress.

After these years as an ordinary member of the Society, Ellis was again elected to the Presidency in 1880, succeeding J.A.H. Murray, who had the highest regard for Ellis. When Murray completed his year as President of the Philological Society in 1880, succeeding Henry Sweet, he turned over that office with the greatest satisfaction to Ellis who would "fill the Chair with dignity and ability."⁷⁵

After taking office again in May 1880, Ellis wrote to his friend, Alfred Marshall Mayer (1836-97), the American physicist at the Stevens Institute in Hoboken, New Jersey. He informed him that his new duties left no more time for scientific matters and that during the two years lying ahead of him as President, he expected to publish the fifth volume of Early English Pronunciation with the subtitle The Phonology of English Dialects. He reminded Mayer that it was the Philological Society for which the book had been written.⁷⁶ Ellis acknowledged his indebtedness to the Society and said he was more than

⁷⁵James A.H. Murray, "Ninth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 21st of May, 1880," Transactions of the Philological Society (1880), 174.

⁷⁶Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, May 22, 1880.

willing to serve its members because that body had given generous support to his own personal scholarly interests.

During the 1880-81 tenure as President, Ellis occasionally encountered some extraordinarily unorthodox approaches to linguistic problems and dealt with them in as courteous a manner as he possibly could before the membership. On June 17, 1881, Herbert Morton Baynes read "The Psychological Method in Its Application to Languages" in which he warned against the current dangers of extreme specialization in many departments of linguistic scholarship. Referring to Egyptologists who had left aside questions of etymology and syntax, Baynes tried to account for various inconsistencies regarding onomatopoeic words in various languages. He produced a classification utilizing such divisions as "negative predominant resulting from universal relativity" as exemplified in such languages as Abiponean, Grebo, and Mponive.⁷⁷

Ellis was thoroughly bewildered when Baynes suggested analogies between linguistics and esthetics. His remarks on the effect of the coloration of words and ideas on the retina astounded Ellis, who could only politely say that during his student years the state of Egyptology precluded his being able to confirm the arguments offered

⁷⁷Philological Society, Proceedings, June 17, 1881, p. 61.

and that the analogies which Mr. Baynes presented were indeed unusual. Sweet, Murray, and Martineau agreed with what Ellis had been uncomfortably obliged to observe before the entire membership of the Philological Society.

Soon it was time to deliver another Annual Presidential Address. Ellis gallantly referred to the ladies of the Philological Society and praised their ability to acquire proficiency in foreign tongues. He humorously observed that this was not surprising since everyone knew "how very apt women are in the use of language."⁷⁸

He also commented on the publication of the Society's Proceedings, initiated by Dr. Murray and containing abstracts of the Society's work for the benefit of those who were not residents in London. This was a long-desired need, for the Transactions often did not appear until long after the meetings.⁷⁹

The work of scholars on the dictionary was moving along at a very slow pace and Ellis gave reports concerning it to all the members at each meeting of the Philological Society. Oracularly he prophesied that the dictionary would be the work by which the Society would be best known to future ages. At times Ellis would sound a discouraging

⁷⁸ A.J. Ellis, "Tenth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 20th May, 1881," Transactions of the Philological Society (1880-81), 252.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 256.

note as on the occasion when he remarked that under the guidance of Dr. Murray, he might see "the four parts of this gigantic work flutter into life" before he himself "fluttered out of it."⁸⁰ It may be recalled that he earlier had hoped to attain only a Pisgah-view of the lexicon.

Ellis' preparations for writing the Eleventh Annual Address, after still another term as President, were complicated by the problems arising in connection with the Society's dictionary project, an undertaking which required continual attention on his part. The enthusiasm which Ellis shared with Murray concerning the importance of the dictionary project and which had been conveyed to Hallam in the letter of February 14, 1879, diminished with the passing of time. There was no end to the number of aggravations besetting Murray, who referred many problems about pronunciation to Ellis since he was the Society's President in 1882. The editorial task was a colossal one. Hallam had now become Murray's confidant in a series of letters.

By March, 1882, Murray felt that he had to explain to the Society the difficulties he was encountering in choosing the pronunciation scheme for the entry words in the dictionary. He considered employing a combination of

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 260.

Roman type with italics to indicate the English vowels. Ellis told the membership that he felt quite satisfied with the arrangement.⁸¹ Ellis probably decided to discourage any argument on the matter because he strongly believed in the autonomy of an editor to go about his task in a manner best suited to him in spite of differing views of other people.⁸²

Inasmuch as Hallam reported every little thing to Ellis, it is reasonable to assume that the concerns of Murray made their way back from Manchester to Ellis, thus adding to his worries as President. The problem of pronunciation marking was one of "excessive difficulty" and indirectly via Hallam, Murray let it be known that he had still not decided upon Henry Sweet's or Alexander Ellis' scheme for indicating the sounds of the words. He could not choose among Palaeotype, Narrow Romic or any of the systems which used special markings. Murray lamented that he "had no space and the world no patience!"⁸³

Undoubtedly this news was distressing to Ellis, for had his Palaeotype been selected, his system would have been presented widely in the dictionary. It must have been a painful moment for Ellis to hear Murray make his

⁸¹"Philological Society," Academy, 21 (March 25, 1882), 217.

⁸²"Philological Society," Athenaeum, March 25, 1882, pp. 384-85.

⁸³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34), Murray to Hallam, October 5, 1882.

announcement before the Society of his final choice.

As for the 1882 Address which required careful preparation as usual, Ellis had to contact Murray in Edinburgh about his dictionary "Report." He offered him the opportunity of withholding remarks until Part I of the dictionary had appeared. Ellis, moreover, took pains not to irritate Murray, who also was the President-elect for 1882-83.

He notified Murray about the affairs of the Society and made reference to the progress of his own Eleventh Annual Address then in preparation, summarizing the papers which he had already received. He said, "My Address will be very full this time and very little of my own except these arrangements of which the Andaman is not begun and will be extremely laborious."⁸⁴ At this time Ellis was preparing a report on the language of the Andaman Islands.

The 1882 Presidential Address under Ellis assumed alarming proportions. He was well aware of the danger in allowing it to be so long, but it seemed to him imperative to include such a large a quantity of material. He was disturbed that the Address in its printed form in the Transactions would take up more than a hundred pages, and he was unhappy because he had to "cut it down fearfully in

⁸⁴National Library of Scotland, Manuscript Collections, MS 5509 fol. 201, Ellis to Murray, May 2, 1882.

delivery."⁸⁵ It took two hours to read and imposed a great strain upon Ellis. This kind of activity contributed to the days of utter prostration which Ellis was then experiencing with increasing frequency. He appears to have been suffering nervous states of mind which prevented his working for periods of time.

That evening he also gave Murray ample time to address the Society in order to request much needed help in arranging and classifying the thousands of slips. Ellis sympathized with Murray's vast undertaking because he himself was laden down with a similar project involving slips recording the many dialectal variations which were arriving from his informants collecting dialects.

It had been a year filled with all kinds of unexpected difficulties. In his capacity as President he had to deal with a work on foreign loans which had been undertaken by John Frederick Stanford. The author expected the Philological Society to utilize in its dictionary his mass of undated extracts and slips which did not indicate sources. Ellis found himself involved in the legal intricacies of Stanford's bequest arranging for Cambridge University to publish the work.

⁸⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 351), Ellis to Hallam, May 21, 1882.

Certainly as President, Ellis needed to be consulted by Furnivall on the Cambridge Senate's decision to publish a "useless contribution to lexicography," The Stanford Etymological Dictionary of Anglicized Foreign Words and Phrases.⁸⁶ Ellis very reluctantly endorsed the work before the Society but said that the full list of importations since the Revolution would not be included so that there would be no conflict with current dictionaries.

Though he was critical of the Stanford work, he recognized the great need for collecting foreign expressions from newspapers and books in order to "understand our home growth."⁸⁷ He was also aware that there were many in the Philological Society who considered him as a rather one-sided philologist, one who was too much interested in phonetics. He was thoroughly modern in his outlook at the time and did realize the need for examining all kinds of languages, both those which were studied by a small number of scholars and those which were obscure, in order to arrive at an understanding of the nature of language. As President, he regularly gave encouragement and praise to the many serious efforts to broaden linguistic knowledge.

⁸⁶ A.J. Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 19th May, 1882," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1882-3-4, p. 9.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 147.

When he delivered his last Address on May 19, 1882, it opened on a sad note with a tribute paid to the passing of another of the Society's older members, John Muir, the "Scottish Sanscritist."⁸⁸ One can sense that Ellis was thinking ahead to the close of his own productive life. His letters are filled with an almost morbid concern about not completing his life's work.

Almost every time that Ellis addressed the Society, no matter what the subject, he urged the members to direct their efforts towards phonetic research. He warned them that it was impossible to be an etymologist without a sound knowledge of phonetics; however, he did feel encouraged on this score because several important papers had been given during his tenure as President. He praised the following as being especially worthwhile: Prince Bonaparte's "exhaustive" one on Slavonic sounds on November 4 and 18, 1881; Sweet's Part III of his History of English Sounds; and Powel's paper on the phonetic modifications of Welsh words of West Brecknockshire and East Cardiganshire when imported into English on December 16, 1881.

Possibly Ellis owed his success with the Philological Society to the fact that he did not hesitate to bring to the members' attention matters which were esoteric in content. In 1882 he offered a report based

⁸⁸ Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," p. 2.

on his organization of papers of the missionary Reverend Thomas Bridges, who had written on his experiences in Tierra del Fuego.

Ellis took possession of the papers from Robert Cust, a member of the Council of the Society, who had received them from Reverend Bridges in 1880. They concerned the Yagaan language. The notes had been brought to England for publishing. Ellis entertained a special feeling towards these papers because of their use of the 1846 phonetic alphabet, though some of the changes in symbols employed by Bridges in his version of the Acts of the Apostles were unacceptable to Ellis. He informed the Philological Society that he objected to the accuracy of Bridges' statement indicating that he had used Ellis' alphabet in printing. He commented with astonishment on the dictionary prepared by Bridges containing 30,000 words. Ellis wrote, "What a wealth of language for a naked barbarous tribe now only 3000 strong!"⁸⁹

Ellis likewise took the opportunity in the 1882 Address to include a similar Report of Researches into the Language of the South Andaman Islands.⁹⁰ North of Sumatra

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 32-43.

⁹⁰ A.J. Ellis, arranger, "'Report of Researches into the Language of the South Andaman Islands' in Edward Horace Man, On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1882-3-4, 44-73.

in the Bay of Bengal is a group of islands whose language was probably completely unknown to the membership of the Philological Society.

The materials for the Report were furnished him by both Edward Horace Man and Lieutenant R.C. Temple of the Bengal Staff Corps. Ellis' imagination was captured by Man's vivid account of the aboriginals who inhabited the penal settlement. Because of Ellis' prominence in the Philological Society, he was introduced to Mr. Man of the Anthropological Institute by E.L. Brandreth for the purpose of fixing on an alphabet for printing the Andamanese language. There were also plans for a later study of the Nicobarese language, another island tongue.

Ellis had to construct the alphabet solely from hearing Mr. Man speak Andaman, but he felt that "his pronunciation cannot be far from wrong" as the natives had been able to converse with him.⁹¹ Ellis studied Temple's grammar and completed the task of assembling Man's papers. The difficulty of the work was compounded by the confusing job of sorting out the mutually unintelligible varieties of nine Andamanese tribes.⁹²

The Andaman language was a difficult challenge to Ellis. He adopted a professorial role in addressing the

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 48.

⁹² Ibid., p. 45.

Philological Society. He explained in detail his method of coping with the phonetics of a strange language which had little similarity to the ones known by the Society. He had constructed a series of commentaries analyzing both the meaning and grammatical analysis of every word occurring in letters that Mr. Man had written for some natives accompanying him to the Nicobar Islands. Ellis studied copies of these letters and pronounced them to be genuine specimens of South Andaman vernacular.⁹³

He believed his work to be finished and wrote to Hallam that he could now focus more on his own dialect work,⁹⁴ but the relief was short-lived. By the end of August Ellis had written a long letter to Lieutenant Temple about the Andaman notation which was still causing him trouble. Ellis suggested to Hallam that he take time out to read his account of the "very curious" language.⁹⁵

Frequently in his remarks to the Philological Society, Ellis would hypothesize about a variety of matters. In the Andaman report the Society heard his analysis of what would happen in a place should the death rate exceed that of the birthrate and the subsequent effect upon the

⁹³Ibid., p. 61.

⁹⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, August 3, 1882.

⁹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, (d. 11), Ellis to Hallam, August 29, 1882.

language. He observed that the government would determine the book language whereas that of the islanders would have to be considered as that of a provincial.⁹⁶

In the reviews of Man's book, Ellis received due acknowledgment. The work was later issued by the Royal Anthropological Institute and reprinted from its Journal.⁹⁷

Ellis' remarks before the Society on the Andaman language demonstrate his concern for providing the members with a satisfying report because novelty was always welcome. As President he made every effort to enliven the program with an unusual subject.

Bernhard Jülg (1825-86), a professor at Innsbruck whose Report on the state of Mongolian research formed a further part of the 1882 President's Address, brought much distress and aggravation to Ellis because inadvertently two learned societies planned to publish his observations. Originally, in 1879, James Murray had requested Jülg to submit a Report for the Address of that year, but like so many similar ones, it had been delayed. Meanwhile, Robert N. Cust of the Royal Asiatic Society invited Jülg to submit a similar paper to that body for publication in its Journal. The problem arose, therefore, because the invitations were

⁹⁶Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," p. 73.

⁹⁷"The Andaman Islanders," rev. of On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands, by Edward H. Man, Nature, September 3, 1885, pp. 408-10.

for the professor to write upon the same topic. The kind of situation which Ellis had to cope with is clearly seen in the following events.

On November 23, 1881, Jülg told Ellis that Mr. Vaux, the paid Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, had gone ahead with arrangements for the translation of the article, not realizing that another learned society, the Philological, had pre-empted the study. Mr. Cust, nevertheless, thinking that the Philological Society no longer was interested in Jülg's contribution, wrote to Ellis that the latter could still have the paper. Ellis decided that it was preferable to allow the Royal Asiatic Society to proceed with the publication of the Jülg paper on Mongolian research. From Innsbruck the professor tamely assented to the arrangement.

In the Presidential Address, Ellis had to explain to the members that the Report on Mongolian Research originally had been intended for their Society. What bothered Ellis very much was that the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society placed at the head of the article the statement by Jülg indicating that the contribution had been forwarded to that body for publication.

On the other hand, it would appear that Ellis had received some inquiries concerning the inclusion in his speech of the phrase "mutual consent" with respect to the article's appearance in the Royal Asiatic Society's

Journal.⁹⁸ The members of the Philological Society were very astute in catching any apparent discrepancies. They found to their intense satisfaction that Ellis was prepared to set out all the confusing details in the Transactions because he felt obliged to clarify the events behind Jülg's contribution.⁹⁹ It was an unfortunate occurrence and in the scholarly circles of the Philological Society caused much surmise.

The President of the Philological Society was in a special position to be in touch with some of the finest scholarship then in progress because so much of the activity taking place in Europe and America came to the notice of the chief officers of the Society. Inquiries, publications exchanges, and introductions to other scholars passed through Ellis' hands in his capacity as head of that learned society. He must have enjoyed coordinating the activities of the Society in spite of the annoyances and crises which would occur from time to time. Intellectually it was one of the most stimulating activities of his life.

Because of his leadership in the Philological Society, Ellis continued to share the confidence of some of America's distinguished scholars. Francis J. Child (1825-96), with whom he had earlier corresponded in

⁹⁸Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," pp. 73-74.

⁹⁹Ibid.

connection with Chaucerian pronunciation, sent Ellis the latest work which he had just published. Ellis was in a special position to endorse this work to the membership of the Philological Society. The first of the volumes of English and Scottish Ballads arrived at Ellis' home in July, 1883. Ellis was "so taken with the book" that he read it straight through before acknowledging its arrival.¹⁰⁰ He was enormously impressed with the amount of research which had gone into the compilation of the variants, especially enjoying the work on "Gil Brenton," which Child had previously discussed with him. He also praised the four versions of "Lady Isabel and the Elf Knight," upon which Child had expended so much care and patience.

At times Ellis launched into purple prose, describing the Bluebeard tales as "a monument of critical sagacity."¹⁰¹ Ever the true scholar, he appreciated the amount of labor particularly the "sifting" and examination of details. Ellis' letter to Child affords us an insight into his opinions related to textual problems, a matter of prime importance in the Philological Society. He raised the question with Child about the original conception of the story and was enthusiastic over the subsequent elaborations of the ballads which were brought about by oral

¹⁰⁰Harvard University Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Child, July 23, 1883.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

transmission. At meetings of the Philological Society Child's work received the greatest endorsement from the President.

At intervals the Society entertained resolutions concerning the work of linguists who were not members of the Society. With satisfaction Ellis heard the Honourable Secretary, Mr. Furnivall, offer a resolution commending Thomas Hallam for his efforts on behalf of the study of provincial dialects. Henry Sweet seconded the resolution and forwarded it to Hallam in Manchester. Ellis, however, notified Hallam the next day, knowing how much pleasure his loyal friend would take in having been accorded so great a courtesy by the Philological Society.¹⁰²

With much satisfaction Ellis, also, sent to Hallam in 1884 a prospectus for the Society's Dictionary on the red-letter day when the first part was published.¹⁰³ Hallam replied with the greatest enthusiasm possible, calling the work "super-excellent."¹⁰⁴ There was general rejoicing throughout the Philological Society and Ellis felt particularly gratified because so much progress had

¹⁰²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, (d. 12, fol. 129), Ellis to Hallam, April 19, 1884.

¹⁰³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis (d. 12, fol. 76), Ellis to Hallam, January 29, 1884.

¹⁰⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis (d. 12, fol. 77), Hallam to Ellis, January 31, 1884.

been made on the enormous project during his tenures as President.

His term ended on May 19, 1882, but he continued to observe the situations arising critically. He attended the meetings faithfully in spite of the pressures which he was under compiling the last volume of Early English Pronunciation. His admiration for the succeeding President, Walter W. Skeat, was very great. He observed the poor attendance at one of the meetings in the spring of 1886 with disappointment because the Shelley Society "carried off Furnivall and others."¹⁰⁵ With the increase in the number of specialized societies at this time, Ellis reflected on his own terms as President when the problem of attendance at meetings was never a concern.

His reputation among Continental scholars remained substantial during this time. In 1886 he declined an invitation from the Secretary of the Berlin Congress of Science to attend its meeting. He was obliged to reduce his participation in many activities and limited himself to attendance at the Royal Society and the Philological Society. He regretted not being able to go to Berlin, for he enjoyed meeting fellow-scholars. Courteously and with elegance typical of the period he expressed himself thus:

¹⁰⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 279), Ellis to Hallam, May 8, 1886.

"With affirmations of my profoundest respect" ¹⁰⁶

His proficiency in the German language made it possible for him to oblige a colleague who was unable to attend the Philological Society in order to deliver a paper. On April 2, 1886, he obligingly read Dr. F. Stock's paper which discussed the Heidelberg dialect. ¹⁰⁷ Since it was customary to hold discussion following the delivery of such papers, it is very probable that Ellis presented his own views on the dialect by way of amplifying Dr. Stock's remarks. He was conversant with the linguistic situation in Germany, having spent many years in Dresden as well as having worked on the translation of Helmholtz's Tonempfindungen.

Learned societies in the United States received the accounts of the Philological Society's work which Ellis had directed. Little known organizations were anxious to include in its membership rolls so distinguished a man as the former President of the Philological Society. Ellis was perplexed, flattered, but cautious when Benjamin Austin, Secretary of the North Western Literary and Historical Society in Sioux City, Iowa, invited him to become a member of that body. He pleasantly acknowledged the

¹⁰⁶ Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to the Secretary of the Mathematical-Astronomical Section of the Berlin Congress of Scientists, July 4, 1886.

¹⁰⁷ "Philological Society," Athenaeum, April 10, 1886, p. 492.

courtesy but candidly told the Secretary not to be "astonished at my not having previously heard of it."¹⁰⁸ Like his colleague, Furnivall, who distributed many photographs of himself, Ellis, too, enclosed one for the savants of Sioux City to examine along with a "Report" of what he had been doing in London. Ellis refused to accept membership in a society until he found out more about it.

By 1888, James Murray was beside himself with concern over the slow rate of progress that the Philological Society's great dictionary was making. With the deepest distress he complained to Hallam: "If I had to begin again, I would either do the same or omit pronunciation entirely."¹⁰⁹ He felt that the obscure vowels as pronounced in certain words by Ellis, Sweet, and Furnivall received varying emphasis and resulted in a confusing state of affairs for him [Murray]. Such frustrations were shared with many of the members of the Society and close friends who were interested in the activities of the organization. In keeping with his custom, Hallam forwarded an account of the latest frustration expressed by Murray to Ellis, the leader par excellence on all phonetic matters.

¹⁰⁸The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to T. Austin, February 8, 1877.

¹⁰⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34), Murray to Hallam, November 19, 1888.

Though severely limiting his activity in the Philological Society in his last years, Ellis always felt great satisfaction in introducing novel materials to the group. He had known the American ethnologist, Horatio Emmons Hale (1817-1896), who specialized in the study of American Indian language. On the evening of March 21, 1890, several months prior to Hale's death, Ellis addressed the Philological Society in order to present an account of Hale's researches on the Chinook jargon which was used as the trade language both in the Oregon districts and in Upper Canada.¹¹⁰ It was characteristic of Ellis to welcome the opportunity of praising the work of his colleagues in America.

He looked out for the interests of the Philological Society up to the very end of his career as a scholar. Nowhere can one get a better view of him at work on behalf of that organization than in connection with the problems arising from the attempts of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia to enlist the support of the Philological Society of London in its plan to hold a Universal Language Congress.

Ellis became involved in this effort when he first heard with great interest and attention Herr K. Dornbusch extol the virtues of the recently proposed international

¹¹⁰"Philological Society," Academy, 24 (April 12, 1890), 256.

language, Volapük, before the Philological Society on December 16, 1887. The idea of a rational language was not completely new, for the ideas of Bishop Wilkins and Descartes were thoroughly familiar to those scholars. Ellis was fascinated with the ingenuity of the inventor of Volapük, Schleyer of Konstanz. Dornbusch explained all the modifications which could be effected and the relationship of this "new" language to languages of Europe.¹¹¹

Following the reading of that paper, Ellis pointed out that Volapük would be particularly useful to a school boy because its grammar was perfect and because there were no exceptions to the single conjugation and single declension. F.J. Furnivall glowingly observed that it gave him great pleasure to see such "liberality" among the members of the Philological Society.¹¹² The progress of the movement for the adoption of the universal language was making strides, especially since a Volapük Congress had recently been launched in Munich for the settling of doubtful points. In addition, an Academy had been established for regulating the uniformity of the language.

Several weeks after Dornbusch had delivered the paper, Ellis observed that the greatest difficulty which

¹¹¹"Philological Society," Athenaeum, November 24, 1887, p. 867.

¹¹²Philological Society, Proceedings, December 16, 1887, pp. ii-iii.

confronted Volapük would lie in the preservation of its unity because of the possible danger of its splitting into a number of dialects. He informed the members that already the Munich Congress had made several changes in the Volapük system.¹¹³

As a result of the December 16, 1887 meeting when Dornbusch had addressed the Society, Ellis was asked to deal with a complicated and delicate situation involving the relationship of one learned society, the American Philosophical, with the Philological Society of London. Though six years had passed since his service as President, Ellis' experience rendered him particularly suited to deal with the awkward problem, which in 1888 Skeat placed into his hands. On March 12, 1888 a communication arrived from the American Philosophical Society containing a resolution enjoining learned bodies to cooperate "in perfecting a language for learned and commerical purposes based on the Aryan vocabulary."¹¹⁴ Along with the letter were various reports of the Committee (D.G. Brinton, Henry Phillips, Jr., and Monroe B. Snyder) "Appointed October 21, 1887, to

¹¹³"Philological Society," Academy, 22 (January 7, 1888), 13-14.

¹¹⁴A.J. Ellis, "On the Conditions of a Universal Language, in Reference to the Invitation of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, U.S., to Send Delegates to a Congress for Perfecting a Universal Language on an Aryan Basis, and Its Report on Volapük," Transactions of the Philological Society (1888), pp. 59-98.

Examine into the Scientific Value of Volapük, Presented to the American Philosophical Society, November 18, 1887 and January 6, 1888."¹¹⁵ Ellis was given the task of responding to the invitation and drew up a detailed analysis of the problems inherent in the adoption of a universal language. He criticized particularly the attempts made by the American committee to ignore Volapük. Ellis held that Volapük had the first claim for attention and referred sarcastically to the American Philosophical Society's plan which the Philological Society had been invited to "perfect."¹¹⁶ His own experiences with learned congresses had been extensive, and he knew that any plan had to be scrutinized before it was ready for the discussion of such a group. He was very hesitant about the wisdom of the American Philosophical Society's plans for holding the meeting in Paris at the same time that Schleyer's Academy would be sending its twenty-seven members from fifteen countries to convene there to discuss the problems of Volapük.¹¹⁷

Likewise, Ellis indicated that the work done on Volapük had to be acknowledged. To support his views he offered some impressive statistics about that language's

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 59.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 62.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 63.

dictionaries, grammar, and supporters. He was cynical, nonetheless, about the likelihood of the general public's accepting anything which emanated from the "learned."¹¹⁸ Ellis reminded the Philological Society of his experience with sending delegates to a Congress and warned his colleagues about the years of labor and endless debate which such a Congress would entail.

Ellis' own experiences with Isaac Pitman in the 1840's had made him aware of the need for showing deference to the inventor of a particular scheme, because he [Ellis] believed that without an inventor there would be no "security for its stability."¹¹⁹ He also touched on the problems of forming new roots in a universal language and praised Bishop Wilkins' Essay toward a Real Character and a Philosophical Language, "a work which should never be neglected."¹²⁰ Ellis felt that such a work as Henderson's Lingua was just too impractical. He deplored the American Committee's approval of Creole Indian jargons, remarking that a new language should be composed of "living-coordinated parts and not a loose heap of dead chips."¹²¹ The overall tone of Ellis' paper was sharp, decisive, and

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 65.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 66.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 79.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 86-7.

censorious of the American plan for a Congress on a universal language. At the conclusion of his remarks, Ellis provided a summary of his reasons for the Society's declining the American invitation. He did not leave open any possibility for allowing the Philological Society to reconsider the matter.

Following the reading of Ellis' paper on June 15, 1888, Furnivall promptly wrote to the President of the American Philosophical Society, Mr. Fraley, that the Council had asked Ellis, "the best authority among us,"¹²² to prepare the paper. Because Ellis had strongly urged the Philological Society not to join in the arrangements, it was unanimously decided not to participate in the proposed Congress. Fraley was also told that Ellis' arguments would be printed in the Transactions of the Philological Society. Furnivall offered no cooperation and said that the meeting could only prove fruitless.

Several weeks later, Ellis' entire paper was dispatched to Fraley in Philadelphia by Furnivall, with a note officially informing him that it had been resolved to "take no action in the matter."¹²³ It was hoped that Mr. Ellis' reasons were sufficient.

¹²²American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Archives, Furnivall to Fraley, June 16, 1888.

¹²³American Philosophical Society, Archives, Furnivall to Fraley, July 7, 1888.

The paper on universal language aroused considerable interest, and Ellis received many letters concerning the merits of the system. He was obliged to set aside the demands on his dialect studies, which were extremely pressing at this time, in order to respond to some of the asseverations.¹²⁴

Meanwhile, in America there were those who refused to accept Ellis' views related to the American Philosophical Society's invitation. The ethnologist, Horatio Emmons Hale, wrote to Henry Phillips of the American Philosophical Society that he, too, had received one of the five hundred copies of the Ellis paper which had been made available for the author's distribution.

Hale found this reprint "utterly childish and hardly worth answering."¹²⁵ He was of the opinion that Ellis' notion of Volapük's ideal structure for the school boy was not a good solution to the problem. The objective of a universal language Congress went beyond relieving the "much-suffering" boy.¹²⁶

¹²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 300), Ellis to Hallam, September 7, 1888.

¹²⁵American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Archives, Hale to Phillips, October 2, 1888.

¹²⁶Horatio E. Hale, "An International Language" in Extracts from the Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Anthropology) at the Meeting Held at Cleveland, Ohio, in August 1888, n.p., n.d., p. 318.

Hale tried to appease the anger which Henry Phillips had expressed to him [Hale] about the Ellis paper. Hale observed that Ellis did not constitute "formidable opposition."¹²⁷ Irritation was increasing with the negative attitude of the Philological Society as expressed by Ellis' paper. Max Müller at Oxford also wrote critically of Ellis to Phillips. Soothingly, he indicated that he considered Ellis' paper "far too majestic"¹²⁸ and went so far as to question the right of the Philological Society of London to speak "in the name of Great Britain and Ireland."¹²⁹ Müller himself offered to attend the proposed Congress.

The American Philosophical Society continued to disagree vehemently with Ellis' claim for the superiority of Volapük. It was of the opinion that Schleyer had not adequately provided for the needs of a modern language and that six or seven "leading Aryan nationalities," rather than one individual, would be able to solve the problem of a universal tongue. The special committee for the American Philosophical Society could only view Ellis' thinking as a "distinct retrogression in linguistic

¹²⁷American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Archives, Hale to Phillips, October 2, 1888.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹Ibid.

progress."¹³⁰

The editor of the Volapük journal, Rund um die Welt, published in Vienna, was elated with the impressive endorsement which Ellis had made in response to the American Philosophical Society's plans for convening a Congress in order to adopt an international language by all learned groups. Fervently they exclaimed, "Thank God, the day breaks!!" The Committee members of the American Philosophical Society, however, reported that Ellis had not considered the idea of a universal language utopian or untimely even though he was a confirmed advocate of Volapük.¹³¹

He received a sharp verbal attack from Nürnberg where Leopold Einstein disputed Ellis' support of Volapük along with his rejection of the American Philosophical Society's plans. Ellis' reputation in German as "ein wohlbekannter Linguist" was established but in some German scientific circles there were expressions of shock that

¹³⁰ American Philosophical Society, Reports of the Committee (D.G. Brinton, Henry Phillips, Jr. and Monroe B. Snyder) Appointed October 21, 1887 to Examine into the Scientific Value of Volapük Presented to the American Philosophical Society November 18, 1887 and January 6, 1888, n.p., n.d., p. 12.

¹³¹ American Philosophical Society, Supplementary Report of the Committee (D.G. Brinton, Henry Phillips, Jr., and Monroe B. Snyder) Appointed to Consider an International Language Read before the American Philosophical Society December 7, 1888, n.p., n.d., pp. 4-6.

the London Philological Society should have compromised its scientific integrity by adopting Ellis' "Standpunkt."¹³²

Among the European learned societies which did not agree with Ellis on the support for Volapük that he had recommended to the American Philosophical Society was the Société Zoologique de France. His ideas had not gained acceptance, and in a hostile report containing an analysis of Ellis' proposals, the entire matter was magisterially dismissed: "Volapük soit rejété!!!"¹³³ That learned body direly warned of the evil of "le chauvinisme" among nations and considered Ellis' reasoning fallacious. Ellis must have regarded dourly the Société's perfunctory "chaleureuses felicitations pour son initiative."¹³⁴

Though the movement for a universal language had existed in Europe for many years, Ellis' lengthy remarks on the subject for the Philological Society aroused much debate among many groups which were divided over the merits

¹³²Leopold Einstein, Weltsprachliche Zeit-und Streitfragen in Vorträgen Erörtert: Volapük und Lingvo Internacia nebst Einer Beilage Enthaltend den Neuesten Bericht der Amerikan. Philosoph. Gesellschaft von Philadelphia über Eine Internationale Sprache (Nürnberg: Verlag von J.A. Stein's Buch- & Kunsthandlung, 1889), p. 23.

¹³³Société Zoologique de France, De l'Adoption d'une Langue Internationale. Rapport Présenté à la Société Zoologique de France le 12 Juin 1888 par une Commission Composée de MM. M. Chaper et Dr. Fischer (Paris: Au Siège de la Société, 1888), p. 8.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 5.

of any particular scheme of universal language. Ellis found himself involved in a time-consuming correspondence. It had even been necessary for him to stop any rumors concerning the death of Johann Schleyer by writing to Thomas Hallam that the Volapükist had written him to say that he was "alive and well."¹³⁵

The furor over a universal language continued unabated among the members of the Philological Society. In 1889, Volapük claimed nearly a million adherents, and seven years later Esperanto received much attention. Had Ellis lived longer, it is more than likely that he would have taken a prominent role in the movement in a manner reminiscent of that which he had played in the Spelling Reform.

¹³⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 351), Ellis to Hallam, November 2, 1888.

CHAPTER IX

DEVISING PALAEOGRAPHIC AND GLOSSIC NOTATIONS FOR
TRANSCRIBING SOUNDS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Phonetic studies had long engaged Ellis' attention, particularly during the years in which he employed his energies on behalf of the Reading Reform. During the late 1850's he was already turning his attention to the possibility of writing a definitive phonetic history of the development of the English language. Recognizing that it was essential to employ a reliable instrument for recording a maximum number of phonetic representations, he constructed a notational system, Palaeotype, which utilized the existing type fonts by combining them in a variety of unorthodox ways to achieve great flexibility for indicating the many shades of sound.¹ Palaeotype became essential to Ellis' investigations. His ability to develop further modifications of Palaeotype as well as his skill in creating other phonetic systems earned for him the approbation of such men as Melville Bell, Isaac Taylor, and William Aldis Wright. The principal modification of this system,

¹Palaeotype has reference to the "old types" or
παλαιὰ ἑντυπία.

Glossic, enabled Ellis to undertake a survey to determine the dialectal boundaries of Great Britain. It is necessary to consider closely those events leading to the creation of Ellis' phonetic tools, Palaeotype and Glossic, in order to appreciate the work he undertook in connection with Early English Pronunciation. We shall now examine those steps directed towards the construction of these instruments.

Prior to examining in detail the development of Early English Pronunciation, attention will be paid to the part which Palaeotype played during the period 1866-90. Characteristic of every interest in which Ellis became involved was his thorough investigation of the literature of the field. In the 1840's he devoted himself to phonetics and read all the treatises dealing with the articulation of sounds and the means of representing those sounds by symbols in printed form. He considered the merits of grammars and dictionaries which shed light on the subject. The readers of the Phonotypic Journal were made aware that considerable literature on the subject had been appearing for many years. Ellis was anxious to familiarize his readers with those sources which were influencing the progress of phonetics.²

²A.J. Ellis, "Phonetic Literature," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (May, 1844), 136.

Ellis admired very much, for example, a work written by Friedrich Schmitthenner at Frankfort-am-Main (1828), Teutonia. Ausführliche deutsche Sprachlehre nach heuer, Wissenschaftlicher Begründung. Ellis observed with surprise that Germans "who as a nation, are decidedly deficient in a delicate perception of the distinction between spoken sounds" had given so much more than Englishmen to the science of phonetics. He believed the Germans had an ear for music rather than an ear for pronunciation.

According to Ellis there was no better work which exemplified the interchanges of the consonants and how the breath is forced out of the mouth to produce the different sounds than Jacob Heinrich Kaltschmidt's Sprachvergleichendes Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache (1839). Ellis could be very uncomplimentary about some of the studies on systems of sound analysis. V.D. De Stains had recently published an extremely diffuse work Phonography, or the Writing of Sounds; in Two Parts, Viz., Logography, or Universal Writing of Speech; and Musicography, or Symbolical Writing of Music; with a Shorthand for Both. Ellis dismissed the work as "rather fanciful than rigorous."³

In connection with his extensive reading, Ellis maintained a full bibliographical file on anything which remotely could be of use at a later time. Many of these

³Ibid., p. 138.

highly specialized phonetic treatises appeared years later as footnotes in the contributions he regularly submitted to the Philological Society's Transactions, and in the volumes of Early English Pronunciation. Ellis was particularly adept at making précis of many of these studies.

Throughout Ellis' accounts of the changes in English pronunciation from the early centuries through the eighteenth, he recognized that there existed no fixed and uniform system of indicating pronunciation, and his principal object became the discovery of the original value of those letters which were employed in the extant literary texts. The difficulties of symbolizing the sounds Ellis wished to discuss with precision were great, and it was apparent that there was an urgent need for a scientific phonetic investigation in order for him to accomplish his goal.

Ellis believed that the only reliable method was one which required listening to the natural speaking of someone who does not know he is being observed. He suggested that lectures and sermons were an excellent source, but danger existed if the speaker knew he was being recorded since his speech might become distorted if he knew someone was observing him speak. Such a method was popular among many nineteenth century phoneticians.

Thomas Hallam's notebooks contain pages filled with notations of the sounds taken from the conversations and speeches of many prominent clergymen and scientists in the Manchester vicinity. These notebooks provide a remarkable record of the speech of the 1870's and 1880's prior to the recognition of the phonograph as a satisfactory recording instrument. Hallam eventually became proficient in employing Ellis' notational systems, and the transcriptions, in all probability, were surprisingly good. Unfortunately, we do not have today an accurate determination of the symbols which Ellis assigned to what he believed he heard. Ellis admitted that most phonetic writing was a "rude symbolisation of sound."⁴ He refused to become completely discouraged in spite of the usual frustrating attempts to catch the elusive distinctions, and he was determined to strengthen the foundation of phonetic studies.

Palaeotype is the highest development of Ellis' early phonetic work which started in 1844. With this notation he attempted to make provision for all possible sounds which comprised the sound spectrum. Basic to this

⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1089. Of course Ellis' work in phonetics only considered audible distinctions in sounds, for this is long before the period when the notion of the phoneme began to appear in writings on phonetics.

system is his opening statement: "A word is not known till its sound is known."⁵ The idea of using a system of phonetic representation in order to provide a means for comparing the sound of words uniformly was developed by Moriz Rapp in the Vergleichende Grammatik (Stuttgart, 1852), but that work does not contain the historical orthography of any of the words cited. Ellis was convinced that only through a special system of notation could these comparisons be of any value.

Ellis believed that Melville Bell's Visible Speech (1864), a system of alphabetic symbols corresponding to the configurations of the vocal organs, noted English sounds with greater accuracy than any other previous system had been able to do. After attaining competence with the difficult system, Ellis analyzed minutely all the possible sounds which were illustrated by Bell's twenty-six key words. These words appeared at the end of Bell's treatise and had been selected to illustrate his symbols.

Ellis had been able to get a private explanation of Visible Speech from Melville Bell. With conviction Ellis wrote to Samuel Haldeman at the University of Pennsylvania praising the accuracy with which a learner could train himself to use Visible Speech. Ellis said, "I think

⁵Ellis, "On Palaeotype," p. 1.

that the result shows a wonderful perfection in the alphabet."⁶ Melville Bell's appreciation of Ellis' abilities as a phonetician was very deep. He looked upon him as the most accomplished of the age. Bell was, therefore, all the more flattered when Ellis magnanimously remarked that he [Ellis] valued very highly this unique system of Visible Speech. Ellis' endorsement mattered a great deal to Bell, and later Ellis did not neglect to announce his approval of that system before the College of Preceptors in 1870.⁷

Ellis was disturbed that the values of Bell's symbols were not to be taken from the reader's own pronunciation of the special key words, and accordingly, he urged everyone who was interested in Bell's system to study the position of the speech organs carefully. Ellis agreed that Bell's system of key words could be interpreted in a way which differed from his own. He was reminded of the wide variations of existing interpretations of the pronunciation of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew sounds in different countries during the course of several centuries.⁸ Ellis

⁶Letter of Ellis to Haldeman, July 16, 1866, in Robert V. Bruce, Alexander Graham Bell and the Conquest of Solitude (New York: Little, Brown, 1973), p. 50.

⁷A.M. Bell, Explanatory Lecture on Visible Speech: The Science of Universal Alphabets Delivered before the College of Preceptors, 2 September, 1870 (London: Simkin, Marshall, 1870), p. 6.

⁸Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 25.

PICTURED WORDS.

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V.



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VI.



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was acutely sensible of the fact that Bell's phonetic interpretations were those of an "Englishman with Scotch associations."⁹

Ellis recalled his own experience in Dresden where his teachers analyzed his English speech. He came to the conclusion that he was forced to differ radically with Bell in his interpretation of the sounds. Some of his contemporaries such as Haldeman, Bonaparte, Rapp, and March differed widely from both him and Melville Bell.

Though Ellis appreciated the ingenuity which lay behind the creation of the iconic Visible Speech, he saw that his own phonetic work would have to continue its development along purely alphabetic lines and that anal-phabetic representations were not likely to attract any kind of following. Bell certainly possessed an expert knowledge of the mechanics of speech, and in the volumes of Early English Pronunciation there are scores of references to Bell's views on various English sounds.

Realizing that a very comprehensive notational system was necessary, Ellis worked at the construction of an alphabet which would not require the casting of new type founts. Even though he admired the strengths of Visible Speech, Ellis went ahead with his own scheme. He knew that the organic alphabet which Bell had created

⁹ Ibid.

had not been publicized to any extent and that there was little likelihood of serious competition from that direction.¹⁰

Later, in 1868, Ellis was convinced that no longer could he accept Visible Speech as "perfect and final."¹¹ Bell's symbols had not been in type that could be utilized by ordinary printers. Ellis, therefore, was satisfied that it was possible to indicate some of the fine distinctions of Visible Speech by employing Palaeotype which required only the commonest existing types of all sizes.¹² Ellis, who had spent years in the printshop, knew from firsthand experience the limitations of phonetic distinctions inherent in the existing founts of type. He had often seen "kerned" letters break and had dealt with the problems connected with casting diacritical marks. The compositors often would confuse any special modifications of vowels; therefore, any arrangement which utilized accented vowels and consonants was out of the question. Frequently the accents were indistinct. He found that printers "seemed to take pride in making them as inconspicuous as possible."¹³

¹⁰Ellis, "On Palaeotype," p. 3.

¹¹Letter of Ellis to Haldeman in Bruce, op. cit., p. 58.

¹²Ellis, "First Presidential Address," p. 11.

¹³Ibid.

When Ellis had examined Lepsius' Standard Alphabet (1855), he had been obliged to make use of a hand lens. This made him critical of using Greek letters along with Roman ones. Ellis knew what he was talking about in printing matters. He used italics sparingly in his Palaeotype because the "eyes of Europe long ago decided than Roman types were far pleasanter to read."¹⁴

Ellis privately admitted to Prince Bonaparte, nevertheless, that his efforts to provide a satisfactory arrangement of the most important Palaeotypic letters was imitated from the work of Lepsius. Regarding that scholar's work, Ellis wrote, "I do not hold by it although it is occasionally convenient."¹⁵ Though Ellis admits in several places that the system of Palaeotype is "makeshift," he was convinced that the Roman and italic cases served to represent what he had been able to perceive. Helpfully, Melville Bell examined all the descriptions of Ellis' sounds and offered suggestions about symbols for those sounds which appeared to be missing, as well as for those sounds which required "organic" symbols, as in his own Visible Speech.¹⁶ Then Ellis added a few more symbols and

¹⁴Ellis, "On Palaeotype," p. 4.

¹⁵Newberry Library (Chicago), "On Palaeotype," Ellis marginalia on reprint sent to Prince Bonaparte, p. 9.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 35.

was convinced without any reservation that Palaeotype was the most complete phonetic system which had yet been published. He also noted that he still had available forty-nine additional signs within the resources of the Roman and italic alphabets should the need arise for furnishing Palaeotypic symbols for languages which had not yet been phonetically studied.¹⁷

Ellis was interested in showing that even educated men did vary significantly in their pronunciations and that educated pronunciation had to be considered in a general way only. When he listened to some of the voices, he did not allow subsequent impressions to affect his first observations. He chose the term "received pronunciation" to identify the type of speech employed by the educated,¹⁸ and he was the first to employ this label.

In February 1871, he had the opportunity of listening to Professor Jowett, Master of Balliol, Oxford, give three lectures on Socrates.¹⁹ Ellis noted down all the words which differed substantially from his own pronunciation. He also recorded at the Royal Society on November 30, 1872 the pronunciation of Sir G.B. Airy, Astronomer Royal and President of the Royal Society. Thus,

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁸ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1209.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 1210-11.

he had a good body of evidence on the pronunciations of the highly educated.

It is interesting to single out certain elements in Palaeotype for consideration at this point. Ellis retained the old Latin use for most of his letters. The letters v, w, z retained their "consecrated use." He used c, x in their Spanish value, as in ciudad, Quixote, and the symbol q for ng in sing. The letters h and j were used to modify the preceding letters and had no value of their own. He continued to use the capital H as an aspirate. Long vowels were doubled and stress was marked by a raised period after the accented syllable.

An examination of the Palaeotypic alphabet will show the great number of ways in which he used the type faces. Letters were reversed in order to provide additional phonetic values. Italics and small capitals were placed in the middle of words which were printed in other founts. The alphabet also used symbols for pronunciation existing in the compositors' cases. These, in turn, could be reversed so that they could take on new functions.²⁰

When Ellis first delivered his paper "On Palaeotype" before the Philological Society on December 7, 1866, the members thought that the alphabet would serve its purpose

²⁰ Henry Sweet, "Early English Pronunciation," rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I, II, by A.J. Ellis, Academy, 2 (June 1, 1871), 294.

very well, but they vigorously objected to the use of the letters g, c, x, for representing certain vowel sounds. In response Ellis offered the turned a, c, and e to overcome their objections.²¹

Throughout the more than a thousand pages of Early English Pronunciation filled with countless Palaeotypic notations, Ellis frequently reminds his readers of the system's limitations. He knew better than anyone else its pitfalls, and throughout his life he voiced his concern over the failure of philologists, in many cases, to see the relationships of symbol to sound. His system aimed to provide assistance for the "ill-qualified without special training."²²

Ellis was always practical in his approach to the utilization of his notational systems. Possibly his association with the College of Preceptors made him particularly sensitive to the needs of schoolmasters. He believed that the complex Palaeotype system had unlimited potential, and so he provided at the conclusion of his paper on Palaeotype several examples which were applications of the Palaeotypic notation. There are selections from the Odyssey, Voltaire's Henriade, Goethe's Faust, and Schmeller's Mundarten Bayerns.²³

²¹"Philological Society," Athenaeum, December 15, 1866, p. 800.

²²Ellis, "On Palaeotype," p. 3.

²³Ibid., pp. 36-48.

He annotated heavily a reprint of the paper on this system which he sent to Prince Bonaparte. This was a special mark of respect which Ellis wished to show His Royal Highness and he took care to give him a full account of certain proposed revisions in advance of anyone else. The marginalia indicate that Ellis was by no means satisfied with all of his own work.²⁴

As was his custom, Ellis could not resist changing his mind about the phonetic value of some of his own symbols. For example, he reconsidered the Sanscrit "cerebral D," which he had believed was formed with the tongue inverted so that the underpart of the tip touched the back edge of the palate. He noted to the Prince that there was reason to believe that the tongue was not inverted and that similarly the T, N heard in India were formed with a retracted tongue "similar to the Sardinian."²⁵

This serves as a good example of the occasional uncertainty which Ellis experienced. He did not hesitate to modify his ideas periodically. Without any sense of embarrassment or discomfiture, he admitted readily that he was presenting a new interpretation.

It is interesting to take note of Ellis' application of Palaeotype to sounds which were peculiar to certain

²⁴Newberry Library (Chicago), "On Palaeotype," Ellis marginalia on reprint sent to Prince Bonaparte.

²⁵Ibid., p. 13.

þe kynges ege ne dohter,
 He was met in þe gote,
 Heo loude so horn child
 þat neȝ heo gan wece wild :
 For heo ne miȝte at borde
 Wiȝ him speke ne weorde,
 Ne not in þe halle
 Among þe knyȝtes alle,
 Ne nowhar in non oþere floode :
 Of folk heo hadde drede :
 Bi daie ne bi niȝte
 Wiȝ him speke ne miȝte.
 Hire foreȝ ne hire pine
 Ne miȝte neure fine.
 In heorte heo hadde wo.
 And þus hire biȝoȝte þe.
 Heo fende hire fonde
 Aþelþrus to honde
 þat he come hire to,
 And also fohelde horn do
 Al in to bare,
 For heo gan to lare.
 And þe fonde feide
 þat sik lai þat maide
 And bad him come furȝe,
 For heo nas noȝing bliȝe.
 þe ſtuard was in herte wo,
 For he nuȝte what to do.

Dhe kynges eoghne dohter.
 Hir was e meest in thoht'e.
 Heo luv'de soo Horn Tshild
 Dhat neo gan weks'e wild.
 For neo ne mikht at boord'e
 With nim speek'e neo weord'e
 Nee nokht in dhe mal'e
 Among dhe kniȝhtes al'e.
 Nee in noon oodhr'e steed'e.
 Of folk neo mad'e dreed'e.
 Bi daie nee bi niȝht'e
 With nim speek neo ne mikhte.
 Hir sorȝhe nee nir pine
 Ne mikht'e nevr'e fine.
 In nert neo had'e woo.
 Dhus nir biȝokht'e dhoos.
 Heo fende hire send'e
 Antheþrus to send'e,
 Dhat he kum nir too,
 And also shold Horn doo
 Al in too nir bare,
 For neo gan to luv'e.
 And dhe send'e said'e
 Dhat sik lai dhat maide
 And bad him kum'e swiȝdhr'e,
 For neo n-as nooȝing bliȝdhr'e.
 Dhe Stiȝward was dher woo,
 For ne must'e what to doo.

Translation.

The king came in to hall
 Among his knights all.
 Forth he called Athelþrus
 That was steward of his house.
 "Steward take now here
 My foundling, for to teach
 Of thy craft,
 Of wood and of river,
 And teach him to harp
 With his sharp nails,
 Before me to carle,
 And serve of the cup."
 Athelþrus began to teach
 Horn and his companions.
 Horn received in his heart
 All that he taught him.
 In the court and out
 And else all about
 Loved one Horn Child.
 Most loved him Rimeschild,
 The king's own daughter.
 To her was he most in thought.
 She loved so Horn Child
 That she began to grow wild.

For she might not at table
 With him speak no word,
 Nor sought in the hall
 Among all the knights,
 Nor in no other place,
 Of people she had dread.
 By day nor by night
 With him she might not speak.
 Her sorrow nor her pain
 Might not ever cease.
 In heart she had woe.
 Thus bethought her then.
 She would send her messenger
 To the hand of Athelþrus,
 That he should come to her,
 And thus should bring Horn
 All into her bower.
 For she began to lower (lure?)
 And the messenger said,
 That sick lay the maid
 And had him come quickly (?)
 For she was in no wise blithe.
 To the steward was woe,
 For he knew not what to do.

languages only: the velar kaaf of Arabian tribes and the Polish "barred l". Ellis closely examined the findings of Brücke's Grundzüge and based his conclusions on the latest scholarly descriptions of the time. Ellis' familiarity with European languages, as well as with those of the Near East, was extraordinary with regard to phonetic distinctions.

He noted to Prince Bonaparte that the Indian vowels required careful study and were "not at all securely understood as yet."²⁶

Because Max Müller was so familiar with the phonetic distinctions of the Sanscrit phonologists, he found himself pleased with the possibilities of Palaeotype's "exquisite artistic machinery." The ability to illustrate all possible shades of sound appealed greatly to Müller; however, he was dubious of there being many who would successfully employ it.²⁷ Müller's pre-eminence as the greatest English Sanscritist in the world outside of India lends importance to his observations on Palaeotype. He considered Ellis the most accurate observer and "analyser" in the field of phonetics.²⁸

In the United States, C.A. Bristed of the American Philological Society found some of the Palaeotypic

²⁶ Ibid., p. 23.

²⁷ Max Müller, "On Spelling," Fortnightly Review, 19 (May, 1876), 576.

²⁸ Max Müller, "Lectures on the English Language," quoted in Thomas Hallam's collection of excerpts, Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 19).

combinations "odd and repulsive" such as the use of g for ng.²⁹ He felt the greatest respect for Ellis, however, and carefully indicated that the latter's mistakes were of a type that no ignorant man would make.³⁰

The harshest response to Palaeotype appeared by an anonymous reviewer of Early English Pronunciation in the Saturday Review in 1871. He wrote, "Ellis has made his labours hard and repulsive!" The strange forms were considered a deterrent to reading the book because the symbols had sounds assigned to them which no one would ever have thought of ascribing. The same reviewer, likewise, dismissed all of Ellis' notational system as a "weariness of the flesh" each time one had to turn back for every word. He observed, "In such cases the flesh is sometimes too strong for the desire of knowledge."³¹

We are able to get an insight into an educated man's response to Palaeotype in another criticism appearing in the Athenaeum: "He has planted a hedge of thorns about any ordinary reader who may desire to grasp his system in detail."³²

²⁹C.A. Bristed, Some Notes on Ellis' 'Early English Pronunciation' (Hartford: n.p., 1872), p. 3.

³⁰Ibid., p. 24.

³¹"Early English Pronunciation, I, II," anonymous rev. of Early English Pronunciation I, II by A.J. Ellis, Saturday Review, July 1, 1871, p. 19.

³²Anonymous, "Palaeotype," Athenaeum, July 11, 1870, p. 775.

James Murray felt sufficiently confident to use Palaeotype to show the values of the sounds used in the Scottish dialects of the Southern counties and their relationship to English sounds. Such an endorsement of his system afforded Ellis a great deal of encouragement for his attempt to find a symbol for every sound that is possible.³³ Not all serious scholars shared Murray's confidence in the system. Inventing different symbols for "one and the same sound" solved little according to Karl Elze. He dismissed any system which did not adhere closely to the existing alphabet.³⁴

Ellis also provided a system of Approximative Palaeotype with forty-six different symbols. Alongside the complete Palaeotype with its 180 characters which could be augmented with long vowels, diphthongs, and optional characters, Approximative Palaeotype served when the distinction of a particular shading of sound was unimportant for the discussion in hand. He used a symbol to represent a group of slightly differing sounds or, as Ellis called them, "sets which would be confused by ordinary English ears." For

³³James A.H. Murray, "The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland," Transactions of the Philological Society (1870-72), Part 2, p. 98.

³⁴Karl Elze, Gründriss der englischen Philologie (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1889), p. 335.

example, in Approximative Palaeotype the symbol n corresponded in complete Palaeotype to the symbols n, n, N, .n, Nh. Ellis, however, noted in the margin of the reprint "On Palaeotype" which he sent to Prince Bonaparte that shortly after he had constructed the Approximative Palaeotype he had to give up the idea of using this special modification of his system.³⁵

Sweet acknowledged his own indebtedness to "the pioneer of scientific phonetics in England."³⁶ Ellis had procured from other scholars every possible interpretation of difficult sounds in order to establish the distinctions of received English. When invited, Henry Sweet obliged him by writing out a selection using many Palaeotypic modifications. It was considered by Ellis "one of the most remarkable analyses of spoken sounds which has yet been published."³⁷ Sweet was disturbed that the reader of Palaeotype had so much difficulty in interpreting the vowel symbols, and also believed that the fundamental distinctions were all that were required because added descriptions would take care of any "exceptional sounds."³⁸

³⁵Newberry Library (Chicago), "On Palaeotype," Ellis marginalia on reprint sent to Prince Bonaparte, p. 34.

³⁶Roman Jakobson, "Henry Sweet's Paths Towards Phonemics," in *In Memory of J.R. Firth*, ed. by Bazell, C.E. et al. (London: Longmans, 1966), pp. 243-44.

³⁷Ellis, *Early English Pronunciation*, IV, p. 1196.

³⁸Henry Sweet, *A Handbook of Phonetics* (London: Macmillan, 1877), pp. 100-108.

Henry Sweet, always hypercritical of the work of others in the same area as his own investigations, recognized the importance to practical phonetics which Palaeotype represented. He admitted that Lepsius' phonetic alphabet was impracticable and felt that Ellis had made fine provision for the adaption of the ordinary alphabet to represent minute distinctions of sound. When Sweet drew up his own alphabet, *Narrow Romic* (1877), he observed that he had based his alphabet, like Ellis' Palaeotype, on the Roman letters and had also utilized more "consistently" Ellis' experiments and practical knowledge.³⁹ Sweet also acknowledged his use of Ellis' earlier symbols from phonotypy in which a large number of letter forms had been used. For example \int = sh; \mathfrak{z} = zh. Sweet adopted these symbols in *Broad and Narrow Romic*.⁴⁰

Sweet had examined minutely Palaeotype and noted sounds which Ellis did not seem to recognize like the "mixed" varieties of the letter o. For example, in the words homme and dot (Fr.), Ellis regarded the letter o as an ordinary open "back" sound, whereas Bell, Storm, and Sweet looked upon it as an approximation of the front vowels in peu. Sweet said that it should be written as oh in

³⁹ Ibid., pp. viii-ix.

⁴⁰ Henry Sweet, "Phonetics," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition (1911), pp. 459-62.

palaeotype. In his Narrow Romic, Sweet carried out the system of noting mixed vowels by an h after the vowel, which was a principle initiated by Ellis.⁴¹

In his observations regarding Palaeotype, Sweet disagreed strongly with Ellis on the matter of using new type faces in order to get "minute accuracy." He did not approve of the extensive use of digraphs (that is, two symbols) which are prevalent in Palaeotype, especially for the simple sounds: sh, th, dh. Sweet was critically cautious. He recommended that accent marks and macrons should be cast separately. Ellis, of course, being realistic about any excessive demands on the printing room compositors, did not agree with Sweet's proposals. Sweet conceded that the use of digraphs would be acceptable in Ellis Glossic and in his own Broad Romic.⁴²

When the Handbook of Phonetics appeared, Ellis carefully read Sweet's remarks on Palaeotype. He angrily informed Hallam that Sweet had made misstatements about the notation and the errata in Early English Pronunciation. This, in turn, resulted in some of the passages in Ellis'

⁴¹Henry Sweet, "English and Germanic Philology" in 'Presidential Address to the Philological Society,' 1878, in Collected Papers of Henry Sweet (1913), pp. 117-20, quoted in The Indispensable Foundation, ed. by E. Henderson (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 234.

⁴²Ibid., p. 235.

volumes appearing nonsensical. "He certainly pronounces off-hand judgments too hastily!"⁴³ Henry Nicol agreed that Sweet should have verified his assertions about Palaeotype before printing them.⁴⁴

Another scholar who favored Ellis' system was Isaac Taylor, who in his exhaustive work, The Alphabet,⁴⁵ gave consideration to the matter of scientific alphabets which seemed essential for the study of dialects and the representation of unfamiliar languages. Taylor indicated that Ellis' Palaeotype and Glossic were more convenient than the other proposed alphabets such as Lepsius' Standard Alphabet, which caused problems for the printer, and Sweet's Narrow Romic, which was more difficult to learn. Max Müller's Missionary Alphabet had been employed in his Sacred Books of the East, but Taylor felt that Ellis' two systems were less objectionable than Müller's with their italicized "palatals and cerebrals."⁴⁶

⁴³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 368), Ellis to Hallam, October 1, 1878.

⁴⁴Henry Nicol, rev. of A Handbook of Phonetics, by Henry Sweet (London: Macmillan, 1877), in Academy, 14 (July 6, 1878), 17.

⁴⁵Isaac Taylor, The Alphabet: An Account of the Origin and Development of Letters (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co., 1883), 2 vols., II, 186.

⁴⁶Ibid., II, 299.

Johan Storm's association with Ellis had been of long duration; nevertheless, when Storm's Englische Philologie appeared in 1881, the author did not hesitate to write openly against Palaeotype. At that time, the notation for Part V of Early English Pronunciation had not been revised, and Storm's remarks referred only to the first four volumes of the work. He was perturbed by the ambiguity of the phonetic presentation in Ellis' investigation and criticized the examples from foreign languages which Ellis had chosen as illustrations. He agreed that the notation was suitable with regard to the printing problems but not satisfactory with respect to the phonetic values of the symbols for the reader.⁴⁷

In the opening pages of Early English Pronunciation, Ellis gave the original list of Palaeotypic symbols. He had to supplement the listing and improve many points during the publication of the five parts though he was particularly anxious about the notation in Part IV. Accordingly in Part IV he noted in summary all the changes which he had made throughout the previous volumes.⁴⁸ Anticipating a sixth volume to his work, Ellis stated that he would

⁴⁷Johan Storm, Englische Philologie: Anleitung zur wissenschaftlichen Studium der englischen Sprache (vom Verfasser für das deutsche Publikum bearbeitet), I-Die Lebende Sprache (Heilbronn: Verlag Gebr. Henninger, 1881), pp. 60-62.

⁴⁸Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV. pp. xii-xiv.

refer to each letter and symbol in an alphabetical arrangement.

In order to show the range of educated pronunciation Ellis provided a comparison of his own speech with that of Melville Bell's based on a selection taken from pages 13 and 14 of Visible Speech. He transcribed Bell's special symbols into Palaeotype and attempted to show the representation of aspirate, marks of emphasis, and glides from the vowel to the untrilled r. After palaeotyping his own reading of the same selection, Ellis made a careful analysis of the differences between his speech and that of Bell's.⁴⁹

By the time Ellis got down to serious work on Part V, he saw that it was imperative to revise the palaeotypic notation so extensively that he organized an entirely new table. At this point he believed it possible to differentiate among many minute shades of dialectal speech. A comparison of the two elaborate tables shows many changes over the years. He continued to employ the old letters (palaoi tupoi) using the Roman and italic types, turned letters, inversions, and some digraphs.

The principal difference in the system for the fifth volume of his work is in the employment of "modifiers" consisting either of exponential numbers or reversed letters

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 1168-71.

next to a particular letter. Occasionally he also used black letter because this fount, too, was available in the compositor's case. For example, the letter A could have as many as sixteen possibilities still using the "old type" and therefore sixteen A pronunciations. This system had six grades of vowel length, which often reflected a purely subjective interpretation of any single pronunciation. There were provisions for very short, ordinarily short, medial length, lying between short and long, long, drawled, extremely long. It is necessary to refer constantly to Ellis' list of palaeotypic symbols in order to interpret the renderings of a particular dialect. It is, however, difficult to interpret many of the symbols and one can only accept with reservations some of the notations. Fortunately, Ellis had the assistance of Thomas Hallam who shared the same enthusiasm for the fine distinctions which he wished to indicate.

As Ellis continued to work on the dialectal survey, he could not refrain from even further modifications of the Palaeotype. By 1884 he had given up the use of capital letters in names. He replaced the capital with a colon before the initial letter. Hallam was hard pressed in 1884 to keep up with Ellis' continual changing because it meant he was obliged to revise huge lists of transcribed words employing these new modifications.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, May 5, 1884.

In 1911 another scholar noted the seminal qualities of Palaeotype. Hans Raudnitzky did not find Sweet's notation original, but considered Romic nothing more than a revised form of Ellis' Palaeotype. The latter, in his view, offered the best possible example of a Latin-based phonetic alphabet utilizing turned-about letters as well as digraphs.⁵¹

Palaeotype tried to record the infinite differences of phonetics. It was Ellis' opinion that most phonetic writing is only an approximate symbolization of sound, which, however, answers its end if it suffices to distinguish dialects and enable the reader to pronounce the dialect which the speaker means to imitate. He believed that only broad generic differences could be symbolized by an "outsider." He emphasized that it is only by a strict investigation of the nature of fine distinctions that we can account for the existence of broad distinctions-- "Hence phonologists occasionally endeavour to symbolize even the smallest."⁵²

The phoneme principle was not explicitly enunciated in Ellis' lifetime, but it would appear from some of his

⁵¹Hans Raudnitzky, Die Bell-Sweetsche Schule; Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der englischen Phonetik (Marburger Studien zur englischen Philologie, Heft 13), Marburg: N.G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1911, p. 118.

⁵²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1089.

remarks that he did perceive it. Throughout the extensive writings which he contributed to the Phonotypic Journal during the period when he was working with Pitman, he observed that no letter represents absolutely the same sound except in conjunction with the same letters. He noted in his early treatise on phonetics, The Essentials of Phonetics (1848), for example,

In the English phonetic alphabet, we employ wun improper distog sja, q; but on acount ov the great difficulti in distiggrifig dearelli betwix the sonda, (fua), (iua); y(fua), yw; (fua-), (iua-); y(fua-), yw-, and determining wid certentl hwiq ov the 4 descriptjanz ov sonda is used in eni giv'n case, we practicali als el 8 cases tu be represented bj the sam sja, q, indifferentli; thus, (foasly, presame; yw, yowth; accurate,) qv rit'n dqtli, presque; q, qf; oqret; addo dar strict pronunsiafjanz ma, perhaps, be properli represented bj d(fua)fi, prf-a(iua)u, y(fua), ywf, ac(fua-)ret, hwar we hav used the parenthesis tu indicat dat fua, iua, etc., canli form wun sillabl, dat is, reali distogjiz. ⁵³
We hav uder improper distogs in English, but man ov so muq impertena.

In this same 1848 phonetic treatise Ellis recognized the great difficulties in determining the qualities of the vowel sounds which had to be practically considered as consisting of an infinite number of sounds, "each

⁵³ Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. 36.

infinitely little different from those which immediately precede and follow it. It would be, of course, impossible to symbolize every one of the resulting infinite number of vowels; and all we can hope to do practically, is to establish certain groups of sounds producing about the same effect upon the ear, and call each group a single vowel." He noted that since no two speakers used the same vowel series and that no two writers would agree on the symbols that should be employed.⁵⁴

Ellis conducted his phonetic studies without the benefit of modern sound-recording devices. He had no equipment to play and replay for himself and others' ears. His work with Palaeotype probably varied considerably regarding certain words owing to a variety of factors such as his own auditory perception from day to day and the ability of some of his dialectal informants to enunciate clearly. In all probability Ellis, Hallam, Goodchild, and other members of the Philological Society pronounced certain words with different accents, which reflected their own regionalisms. Ellis must have been obliged on certain occasions to modify some of their renderings into Palaeotype.

All attempts at determining Ellis' pronunciation of each symbol in Palaeotype must be purely conjectural because the instructions which he furnished the users of this

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 85.

notation may be interpreted in a variety of ways. Even his colleagues Hallam and Goodchild, who worked so closely with him, expressed considerable disagreement over the interpretations of the symbols; yet they had had the advantage of holding many conferences with Ellis to fix the sounds of those symbols in their memories. Ellis' friends in the Philological Society also surely had strong differences of opinion on those interpretations. In addition, Ellis and Sweet wrangled continually over some of the phonetic distinctions. With the passing of a hundred years it has become almost impossible to ascertain precisely those sounds which Ellis had heard the informants use.

Ellis was the first to propose a system of reference points for vowels. Melville Bell used the word "cardinal" in connection with this kind of a system ("on the analogy, of course, of the way the word is used about points of the compass").⁵⁵ In The Alphabet of Nature (1844), Ellis wrote:

The list of vowels, just given, form a circle, and, consequently, every other vowel sound must have a place in this circle between some of the principal vowels there given. We may, therefore, take these seven principal vowels as fixed points in the circle of vocal sound from which to measure others.⁵⁶

Twenty-three years later Bell wrote in his Visible Speech about the nine fixed points of tongue position which could

⁵⁵David Abercrombie, Elements of General Phonetics (Edinburgh: University Press, 1967), p. 151.

⁵⁶Ellis, Alphabet of Nature, p. 52.

indicate the "precise place of any vowel in the mouth" by lines of longitude and latitude. Bell referred to the combinations of "cardinal degrees" of tongue position from front to back.⁵⁷ Ellis' notions concerning the vowel circle were thus expanded by Bell, who, in turn, had passed on the idea to his pupil, Henry Sweet. The latter adopted the concept, referring to the fixed points as "cardinal vowel positions."⁵⁸

When Ellis first conceived the possibilities of Palaeotype, he mathematically analyzed Bell's diagrams in Visible Speech with their nine cardinal positions. He calculated the possible variations resulting from "rounding" and from other modifications of the "aperture of the mouth" to equal 8748 forms for which Palaeotype would have to account. (He cautiously recommended that all experimenting of this sort be conducted privately because of the "unearthly sounds.")⁵⁹

Today, one is obliged to examine with interest mixed with caution the interpretation of Palaeotype symbols after the lapse of so many years. In a recent contribution to the Philological Society's Transactions in 1969, S.S. Eustace attempted to determine what had been the values of

⁵⁷Abercrombie, Elements of General Phonetics, p. 176.

⁵⁸Sweet, Handbook of Phonetics, p. 11.

⁵⁹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, pp. 1279-80.

A.J. Ellis' pronunciation by analyzing the voices on two tape recordings taken from wax cylinders of nineteenth century speeches: W.E. Gladstone's message to Edison and some remarks by Miss Flora Russell (1869-1967), niece of the Duke of Bedford. Ellis, himself, had viewed the phonograph with suspicion. Considering the diversity of speech recorded in Hallam's notations, Eustace's evidence is very slight to relate to the Palaeotypic symbols, and, in any case, Ellis' hearing might not have been normal when he devised the symbols. Professor Brandl observed that Ellis was "schwerhörig" and his opinion was corroborated by Canon Greenwell of Durham.⁶⁰

This alleged affliction could have affected Ellis' own conceptions of the symbols. With resignation Ellis admitted that Palaeotype was a "makeshift."⁶¹ Eustace

⁶⁰ Bruno Schulze, ed., Exmoor Scolding and Exmoor Courtship (Berlin: Mayer and Müller, 1913), p. 45. (Palaestra xix).

⁶¹ "It appeared to me desirable to have an alphabet consisting entirely of those types which we may expect to find in every printing office, and hence consisting only of Roman and Italic letters without any superadded accent marks whatever, and employing them in such a way, that all the most usual characters should be Roman, while the Italics should be used for modifications of occasional occurrence. Such an alphabet would be in a certain sense makeshift, and hence convenience, rather than any strictly consistent use of Roman letters according to any one European custom, has to be consulted. Nevertheless the old Latin pronunciation should give the tone to the whole scheme, which in contradistinction to the many neotypic alphabets in existence, I term Palaeotype." (Ellis, "On Palaeotype," pp. 3-4).

makes no mention of the hundreds of Palaeotypic modifications which Ellis made in the later years, but he does believe that Ellis was clear in his own mind concerning the phonetic value of the symbols. He points out that the production of the vowels is based on Bell's "conception of the locus of the tongue."⁶² Eustace believes that this is a gross fallacy and states that Jones' kite-shaped diagram today distorts much of Ellis' reasoning. He believed that Ellis had no problem in recognizing or reproducing the sounds, though he forced them into an "erroneous framework."⁶³ Eustace's analysis is displayed by his putting the Palaeotype letters, rounded and unrounded, on the quadrilateral along with the present IPA vowels.⁶⁴

Previous scholars have attempted to interpret Ellis' symbols and much effort has been expended in order to arrive at Ellis' precise values. Eustace has not mentioned either Raudnitzky's or Franzmeyer's studies of the vowels. Both these investigations contain some speculations on Palaeotype that merit careful attention.

Eustace's interpretations of Ellis' symbols raise very grave doubts regarding his [Eustace's] reliability.

⁶² S.S. Eustace, "The Meaning of the Palaeotype in A.J. Ellis' Early English Pronunciation," Transactions of the Philological Society (1969), pp. 34-35.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 37.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

By placing the Palaeotype vowel symbols on definite locations of the quadrilateral, he is assigning tongue positions for sounds which he actually has not heard. If two people were to assign these Palaeotypes to the Jones Cardinal Vowel quadrilateral, assuming they could actually hear Ellis saying them, it is possible that even then the points would vary considerably. It is a questionable procedure today when Eustace, who has not heard the sounds, offers these interpretations in terms of absolutes. It is both guesswork and conjecture. We have to accept the fact that Ellis' phonetic symbolizations will never be completely defined.

A.C. Gimson considered that Ellis' Palaeotype had been put to good use in the historical studies as well as in the dialectal ones, but he regretted that it is not always possible to determine the precise value of the letter. Like many commentators, he observed that the complexity of the system renders it difficult for many readers to assimilate.⁶⁵ We have seen, therefore, that later critics, Ellis' valued colleagues, and even Ellis himself were not clear in their minds about the value of the Palaeotypic symbols.

Alongside Ellis' Palaeotype stands his other major sound notational system, Glossic, which figures so

⁶⁵ A.C. Gimson, An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), 2nd ed., pp. 65-66.

prominently in the dialectal work in the years following 1870. In contrast to the limited confidence in Palaeotype with its highly scientific basis and minute detail, Glossic became widely known to a host of amateur glossarists who were trying to capture on paper the fleeting sounds of an English that was steadily losing ground to standardization and received English. In order to understand the progress of Ellis' dialectal survey, it is necessary to examine the development of the Glossic system's relationship to his investigations.

Ellis' chief contribution in the 1870's to the Spelling Reform was his new system of alphabetic notation, Glossic. Though its principal use was to be the transcription of provincial dialects, the scheme was a direct outgrowth in many respects of his work with Isaac Pitman in the development of phonotypy. On April 6, 1870 Ellis presented before the College of Preceptors, and two weeks later before the Society of Arts, his practical solution to the problem of taking down, without ambiguity, the precise sounds making up every word in English: "On Glossic, a New System of English Spelling Proposed for Concurrent Use in Order to Remedy the Defects without Detracting from the Value of Our Present Orthography." (T.P.S., 1870-71, pp. 89-113). He implied that the system would be useful for recording the speech of even a village

farmer. He deplored the failure of the existing systems which aimed at recording dialects, and he felt that there was nothing printed on the subject worth reading.⁶⁶ Ellis did, however, readily acknowledge that others who had struggled with this vexing problem could appreciate the difficulty of "extracting the grains of wheat from the sacks of chaff."⁶⁷

He did not hesitate to admit the shortcomings of his own elaborate system of Palaeotype, based on Roman letters, which required supplementation by an italic alphabet, and he was careful to point out that printing establishments had to encounter difficulties also with a similarly involved scheme like the one which Lepsius had devised with diacritical marks and Greek letters. Ellis then admitted that he saw further problems other than typographical when he tried actually to use Palaeotype for collecting provincial words and noting sounds of the words.

When Ellis wrote to W.A. Wright of Cambridge in 1868, he realized that his system of Glossotype, another simplification of Palaeotype, would require an improvement. Upon revising the scheme, he termed it "Glossic." It was to be used principally for collecting provincial

⁶⁶Ellis, "On Glossic," p. 98.

⁶⁷Ibid.

glossaries. Ellis wanted something that would be "thoroughly English."⁶⁸ A few days later he wrote again to Wright about this new alphabet, indicating that he had decided that its thirty-six letters might serve very well for recording Suffolk dialect.⁶⁹

Ellis expressed great confidence in his Glossic because it did not contain any new or modified letters. He envisioned its use, however, beyond the recording of glossaries. Quite carried away with enthusiasm, he declared that Glossic could be used to help the illiterate acquire reading skills. He reinforced his statement by adding that during the earlier years (1848-49), when he promoted phonotypy, he had actually paid out many hundreds of pounds for cutting and casting new letters, and they had proved "entirely useless."⁷⁰ Ellis called on the Phonological Society to give its endorsement though he knew that it was frustrating to expect many of his colleagues to develop a "phonetic sense" and also recalled the efforts of the Alphabetic Congress at Chevalier Bunsen's home in London back in 1854 when Max Müller and Professor Lepsius offered their respective schemes, which had proven fruitless.⁷¹

⁶⁸Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS, Ellis to Wright, April 22, 1868.

⁶⁹Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS, Ellis to Wright, April 25, 1868.

⁷⁰Ellis, "On Glossic," p. 102.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 103.

APPENDIX.

KEY TO ENGLISH GLOSSIC.

Read the large capital letters always in the senses they have in the following words, which are all in the usual spelling except the three underlined, meant for foot, then, rouge.

nEET	BAIt	»AA	cAUl	cOAl	cOOL
KNIt	NEt	»NAI	nOI	nUt	<u>FUOI</u>
	HElGHt	FOIl	FOUl	FEUD	
	Yea	Way	WHEy	Hay	
PEa	BEE	TOE	DOE	CHESt	JEST
KEE	KEE	KEE	KEE	KEE	KEE
FIE	VIE	THIN	<u>DHEN</u>	SEAl	ZEAl
				nUSH	<u>ROUZHIE</u>
	EAR	R'ING	LAIR'ING	LAY	MAY
				NAY	»NG

R is vocal when no vowel follows, and modifies the preceding vowel, forming diphthongs, as in »EER, »AIR, »OAR, »OOR, »ERs.

Use R for R', and RR for RR', when a vowel follows, except in elementary books, where r' is retained.

Separate th, dh, sh, zh, ng by a hyphen (-) when necessary.

Read a stress on the first syllable when not otherwise directed.

Mark stress by (') after a long vowel or ei, oi, ou, eu, and after the first consonant following a short vowel.

Mark emphasis by (') before a word.

Pronounce ei, ou, oi, er, oi, a, obscurely, after the stress syllable.

When three or more letters come together of which the two first may form a digraph, read them as such.

Letters retain their usual names, and alphabetical arrangement.

Words in customary or NOMIC spelling occurring among GLOSSIC, and conversely, should be underlined with a wavy line ~, and printed with special letters, or else in a different type.

Specimen of Inglish Glossic.

OBJEKTS.

Too fasit-itait Lerning too Reed.

Too mark Lerning too Spel unnes'escri.

Too asim'ilait Reeding and Reiting too Hoerring and Speeking.

Too mark dhi Risce'rd Proanunsi'chen ov Inglish aks'es'ibl too aal Reederz, Proav'n'shel and Foren.

MEENZ.

Leev dhi Oald Speling untucht.

Introduca's along' seid ov dhi Oald Speling a Neu Aurthog'rafi, konsisting ov dhi Oald Leters euzd intai'rriabli in dhai best noun sensaz.

Emplai' dhi Neu Speling in Skoolz too Teech Reeding in both Aurthog'rafiz.

Abou eni Reiter too reit in dhi Neu Speling eanli on aul ekan'zhenz, widhout loozing knast, prov'eided hee euzez a Risce'rd Proanunsi'chen; dhat is—

Aknol'g dhi Neu Speling konkur'entli with dhi Oald.

In 1869 Ellis felt that his own system of national Glossic would also ensure an improved teaching of phonetics.

His enthusiasm for this new and improved Glosso-type led him to get from his assistant, Thomas Hallam, some of the palaeotyped specimens of Midland dialect in order to transfer into Glossic this large quantity of material that Hallam had already so laboriously transcribed. The very fine Palaeotypic distinctions were thus being summarily cast aside in favor of this new sound notational system.⁷²

Some of the ardor which Ellis first had for Glossic gradually cooled. In his report to the Philological Society, he observed that it was simply a "transitory tool for digging in the phonetic mine."⁷³ He seems to have developed second thoughts about its use in English philology and saw it only as an auxiliary scheme which possibly was worth trying.

Ellis' correspondents had no choice but to submit themselves to an indoctrination into this new scheme because all of Ellis' letters, except those dealing with business, were written in Glossic in order to test its effectiveness. Ellis boldly told William Aldis Wright that in a few years, he [Wright], too, would be utilizing a similar system if he took a "real interest in the

⁷²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, September 6, 1869.

⁷³Ellis, "On Glossic," p. 104.

preservation of dialects."⁷⁴

Ellis was glad to furnish details of his Glossic to the readers of the Athenaeum. He indicated that particulars would readily be provided to anyone "on application."⁷⁵ He never shirked the onus of additional correspondence with anyone who wanted to share his phonetic interests.

Melville Bell was later to criticize Glossic, which, of course, was in competition with his own Visible Speech. He did not approve of Ellis' combining letters (digraphs) "to denote the physiological elements."⁷⁶ But Ellis' friends were more sympathetic. Thomas Hallam chose two selections from the Second Chapter of the Song of Solomon and rendered them in Glossic notation so as to record the local dialect as spoken in the Peak of Derbyshire. The first was in the variety used in his own village, Chapel-en-le-Frith, and the other, in the variety of the neighboring town Taddington. The transcriptions were presented at the conclusion of Ellis' article on Glossic which appeared in the Transactions of the Philological Society⁷⁷ and also reprinted later at the close

⁷⁴Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MSS, Ellis to Wright, May 5, 1870.

⁷⁵"Intelligence," Athenaeum, June 25, 1870, p. 836.

⁷⁶Melville Bell, University Lectures on Phonetics Delivered Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A. and Oxford University, England, with an Appendix on the Phonetics of Roman Letters (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887), p. 21.

⁷⁷Ellis, "On Glossic," p. 118.

of the third volume of Early English Pronunciation. In 1873 the Reverend Walter W. Skeat circulated copies of Hallam's Glossic efforts with the Peak dialect varieties to all the members of the English Dialect Society in order to encourage local glossarists to employ Ellis' system.⁷⁸

On the other hand, Prince Bonaparte, who figures so largely in Ellis' dialectal work, "couldn't bear Glossic." Ellis was amused that the difficult Palaeotype presented no problem to the Prince; yet studying Glossic called for the Prince's having to learn a "new alphabet."⁷⁹

If a dialectal collector could not handle the challenges of Glossic when preparing a glossary for the English Dialect Society, he was able to call upon someone like the Reverend Skeat who obliged by indicating in brackets on the printer's proofs the Glossic symbols. For example, Edward Peacock's work on the Lincolnshire Wapentakes of Manley and Corringham, containing large numbers of words connected with water, banks, and drainage, are all rendered into Ellis' Glossic as repeated by the author of the study to Skeat.⁸⁰ H. Jenner likewise obtained

⁷⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33), Skeat to Hallam, October 17, 1873.

⁷⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 234), Ellis to Hallam, September 6, 1876.

⁸⁰ Edward Peacock, A Glossary of Words Used in the Wapentakes of Manley and Corringham, Lincolnshire (London: Trübner, 1877), p. iv.

skeat's help in spelling all the words obtained in his extensive researches at Mounts Bay in the Cornish language.⁸¹

Ellis was pleased when he saw Glossic's first appearance under journalistic auspices in the Manchester Guardian, August 7, 1876. This was a specimen written by Hallam in the Goosnargh dialect of the Midlands.⁸² Hallam informed John Nodal, Secretary of the Manchester Literary Club, of the misprints of the Glossic sounds in this same version, which actually were reproduced on page 1262 of Early English Pronunciation. Ellis learned about these minute errors and arranged to set the record straight in the Corrigenda of Part V.⁸³

In 1876 Nodal had the responsibility for devising programs for the Manchester Literary Club; accordingly, he invited Hallam to deliver "an explanatory paper or address" on Ellis' Glossic system.⁸⁴ This offered an excellent opportunity to disseminate information about the new phonetic scheme.

⁸¹ Henry Jenner, "Traditional Relics of the Cornish Language in Mounts Bay in 1876," Transactions of the Philological Society (1875-76), p. 535.

⁸² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, August 28, 1876.

⁸³ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37), Hallam to Nodal, August 16, 1876.

⁸⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37), Nodal to Hallam, August 17, 1876.

In 1877 Ellis confidently expanded the Glossic system; however, it appears that he was indulging his customary propensity towards excessive modification of his own schemes. He was in danger of devising further symbols for sound representation in the same manner he had treated Palaeotype. At this stage Ellis had raised his number of Glossic symbols to 130 though he did have misgivings about the large number that a glossarist was obliged to employ. Since local clergymen rather than trained philologists submitted many of the dialect specimens, Ellis was aware of the likelihood of their being frightened away by such a formidably augmented list.⁸⁵ Seven years after Ellis had first spoken to the Philological Society about its possibilities, the system was already starting to get out of hand.

During these years he was diligent in writing about the virtues of Glossic and saw to it that scholars abroad also learned of its possibilities. He sent a reprint of his article on Glossic to O.H. De Beer, his Dutch correspondent at the University of Leiden.⁸⁶

Henry Sweet's opinion regarding Glossic notation is particularly important. In A Handbook of Phonetics

⁸⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, September 21, 1877.

⁸⁶University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, April 17, 1876.

(1877) he considered Glossic's dependence mainly on the phonetic use of a limited number of unphonetic combinations (i.e., combinations whose pronunciation does not depend on that of their elements) as the system's principal weakness. He objected to the "puzzling cross-associations." Sweet preferred Romic's six simple vowel symbols over Glossic's more than twenty symbols which the learner had to master.⁸⁷

Because Ellis had to deal with the complex manifestations of provincial r's in his recording of dialects, he read Sweet's criticism of his Glossic treatment of that r with indignation. Sweet had claimed that Ellis' distinctions for the consonant (r) and the vocalized (r) broke down because some spellings, such as faadher and soafa represented the same sound in different ways since soafa or soafer required the user to consider what kind of r was brought out by the final vowel.⁸⁸

When Hallam examined the chapter in Sweet's book treating Glossic and Romic, he immediately wrote to Ellis ("on yr account") to express his distress at the way Ellis' system had been presented. Hallam, who appeared only too ready to get himself involved in Ellis' affairs, submitted to Ellis a full account of Sweet's opinions which had been made available to him to see while they were still in

⁸⁷ Sweet, A Handbook of Phonetics, pp. 169-208.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

proof form.⁸⁹

Ellis was so offended by Sweet's criticism after it appeared in print that he sent a letter of protest on the matter to the Academy in which he observed that he would have expected Sweet to have been the last man to have misrepresented his Glossic interpretations. Uncharacteristically, Ellis resorted to rhetorical excesses and denounced Sweet's arguments as "absolutely and unconditionally erroneous." He expostulated at length on the interpretations of his symbols for r and declared that Glossic symbols were specified for every shade of sound in both received and dialectal speech. He added that his own work, Pronunciation for Singers was the fullest realization of the possibilities of Glossic. Ellis was furious over Sweet's criticism which had dwelt at inordinate length on "the weakest part of Glossic."⁹⁰

Two days later Henry Nicol rushed into the fray, observing that Ellis had indeed violated the fundamental principle of phonetic spelling, which held that the same sound had to be always represented by the same symbol.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 274), Hallam to Ellis, January 9, 1877.

⁹⁰ A.J. Ellis, "Mr. Sweet and Glossic," Academy, 12 (December 22, 1877), 576.

⁹¹ Henry Nicol, "Mr. Sweet and Glossic," Academy, 13 (January 5, 1878), 12.

Then from Uppsala, Henry Sweet promptly responded in a conciliatory manner for his having unintentionally distorted Ellis' views and attempted to excuse himself. He attributed the mistakes to the fact that there were about a half dozen sound systems in his head and put himself on record as rating Glossic the best possible alphabet which retained the present values of the letters.⁹² Ellis' diatribe in the Academy conveyed to Sweet that he had unwittingly offended a scholar of considerable reputation.

Yet it was not easy to mollify Ellis, who replied publicly to these peace-making overtures. Ellis took a different approach regarding the comparison of Glossic with Romic and airily dismissed any further discussion on Glossic and Romic by accusing Sweet of having indulged in shallow thinking. What really bothered Ellis was Sweet's tone of censure suggested in the first remarks.

Ellis also rebuked Sweet and Nicol for their failure to face up to the need for a practical system of phonetic writing. Reproachfully, he pointed out to them that they both had had much greater opportunity for studying phonetics than had been available to him thirty years previously in 1848.⁹³ Henry Sweet, however, remained firm in his views

⁹²Henry Sweet, "Mr. Sweet and Glossic," Academy, 13 (January 26, 1878), 78.

⁹³Ellis, "Mr. Sweet and Glossic," Academy, 13 (March 9, 1878), 213.

in spite of his protestations to Ellis, and the Academy controversy only strengthened his convictions about the shortcomings of Glossic.⁹⁴

"The ignorance of phonetics is awful!" lamented Ellis in 1881. He deplored the unwillingness of "linguistic dilettanti" to devote themselves seriously to a scientific approach to philology. Ellis was particularly worried lest the publications of the English Dialect Society would become unacceptable to readers because the glossarists used the Glossic symbols carelessly. He also was becoming disheartened over the small number of skilled phoneticians among his colleagues in the Philological Society.⁹⁵

By 1886, nonetheless, Glossic had already become well established in dialect circles. Hallam corresponded with an obscure country gentleman, Robert Holland of Norton Hill, Runcorne, an amateur who had undertaken the compilation of a Cheshire glossary for the English Dialect Society. Hallam never neglected any opportunity for promoting Glossic, and he was pleased to help others share by means of a Glossic transcription Holland's "aural sensitivities."

⁹⁴Henry Sweet, "Sixth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, the 18th of May, 1877," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1877-78-79, p. 9.

⁹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 212), Ellis to Hallam, May 10, 1881.

In a first draft of a letter he was writing to Holland are the names of the "first phoneticians," i.e., those who could utilize Glossic: Ellis, Sweet, Prince Bonaparte, and J.G. Goodchild. The rankling jealousy which Hallam felt towards Goodchild, moreover, later led him to ink out that name among those who were singled out for this distinction.⁹⁶

In spite of the increasing acceptance which Glossic was acquiring, problems arose. Ellis was fairly patient with the clergymen who changed the Glossic system, but he was not tolerant of those who complained to him [Ellis] about such changes. He warned Hallam to stop finding fault with the Reverend Mr. Elworthy's handling of Glossic for Somersetshire dialect.⁹⁷ Shortly after this stern rebuke came from Ellis, Hallam received a letter from Elworthy indicating that Ellis had indeed approved of the use of accent marks and diacritics. Ellis, nonetheless, became angry if those same assistants took it upon themselves to change Glossic according to their own interpretations without consulting him. With asperity he wrote, "The mutilation of a system which it has taken years of thought and practice to perfect, by one who just begins to use it, has, I trust,

⁹⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 51), Hallam to Holland, August 22, 1886.

⁹⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 385), Ellis to Hallam, November 12, 1886.

only to be deprecated in order to be prevented."⁹⁸

But certain scholars were highly critical of Ellis. Karl Elze felt that Glossic's first form, Glossotype, ought to have been called "Glossariotype." He also noted that in Part II of Early English Pronunciation, the normal spelling is called "Romanic" whereas in Part II it is called "Nomic" without cancelling the first designation or referring to it. Elze objected to Ellis' making use of different terms for the same thing. He wrote, "Mr. Ellis suffers from a phonetic hypertrophy." To support his view, Elze noted that Sweet's History of English Sounds had not taken up Glossotype. Throughout Elze's remarks concerning Glossic there is a tone of ridicule directed at its spelling and reading goals. He scoffed at a system of spelling which aimed at remedying only "some (!)" of its defects, and he wanted to know why Ellis' aim was not the elimination of "all defects."⁹⁹

Another collector of dialectal materials who attempted to use Glossic was Arthur Benoni Evans, who was distressed at what he considered the problems inherent in the scheme. For a while he could not make up his mind whether to include it in his own Leicestershire Words since he had tried to use it as far as the letter O. In despair he joined the opponents of Glossic and fell back on his

⁹⁸ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 1264.

⁹⁹ Karl Elze, op. cit., p. 334.

original plan though it was "cumbersome, conventional, and incomplete." He abandoned Glossic because he was aiming for a transcription that would be intelligible to a reader without phonetic training.¹⁰⁰ Like so many nineteenth century amateur philologists, Evans sadly realized his own limitations but gracefully admitted that no better system than Glossic could be adopted for dialectal purposes. Evans had to rely on words with similar sounds for comparison with the dialectal one.¹⁰¹

Another disaffected scholar was Samuel Ramsey. His work on the English language completely dismissed the possibilities of Ellis' Glossic because the system did not provide for indicating "nice" distinctions of sound. He computed that in a sample selection of speech which had 472 letters with 455 corresponding Glossic letters, there was a saving of only 3½%, and this obviated the value of the system as a time-saver.¹⁰²

On the other hand, Zachrisson notes in his study Anglic that since Glossotype and Glossic are the first

¹⁰⁰ Arthur Evans, Leicestershire Words, Phrases, and Proverbs (London: Trübner, 1881), p. 3.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁰² Samuel Ramsey, The English Language and Grammar: An Historical Study of the Sources, Development, and Analogies of the Language and of the Principles Governing Its Usages (London and New York: n.p., 1892), p. 131.

consistent systems of "Anglo-Romo" spelling or phonetic spelling of English on the basis of the Roman alphabet, "Ellis may well be looked upon as the Father of English Spelling Reform in modern days."¹⁰³

Ellis was thoroughly familiar with the work which scholars of other countries had also produced by way of creating a subsidiary alphabet based on the characters of their national "nomic" to help citizens to read and write any native word with certainty. Édouard Paris, for example, had provided a kind of French Glossic for the Picard dialect of Amiens. Prince Bonaparte, too, had produced one for indicating sounds of the langue d'oïl. In Germany, Schmeller's Mundarten Bayerns made provision for a type of German Glossic. Ellis rigorously criticized such attempts, however, because they used unknown symbols and represented combinations which were unfamiliar in standard English.¹⁰⁴ In a sense they were relying on a kind of workable phonetics, looking towards IPA.

Believing that a knowledge of Glossic would enable a person to move from national to universal phonetics with

¹⁰³ R.E. Zachrisson, Anglic: An International Language with a Survey of English Spelling Reform (Uppsala: Almqvist, 1932), p. 29.

¹⁰⁴ "The ordinary letters should be used as far as possible in their most ordinary accepted senses, so that a Passage written in Glossic, when only representing such sounds as are acknowledged in received pronunciation, should be immediately intelligible to a nomic reader, without instruction." (Ellis, "On Glossic," pp. 96-97).

ease, Ellis provided a section with additional symbols which he called "Universal Glossic." In this part he discriminated among minute shades of sound and stated that every student needed to be able to write his own language phonetically before he could even start to appreciate the science of comparative philology.¹⁰⁵ Universal Glossic, thus, aimed at establishing a complete phonetic transcription system. Ellis was so pleased with the possibilities of his alphabet that he offered reprints of the scheme free of charge to any interested party.¹⁰⁶ Sweet could not approve of Universal Glossic, because it seemed to be more cumbersome and difficult to remember than Palaeotype.¹⁰⁷

Ellis' Glossic made considerable headway about the beginning of the first decade of the twentieth century because of Joseph Wright's advocacy of the scheme for recording Yorkshire dialects. Even so obdurate a writer as the Reverend Thomas Clarke of Yorkshire acknowledged the value of its alphabet, and he apologized for not having used it in the paper delivered before the Yorkshire Dialect Society at its 1903 meeting in Barnsley Town Hall.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁰⁶Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. xx.

¹⁰⁷Sweet, "Phonetics," Encyclopaedia Britannica (1911), 462.

¹⁰⁸Thomas Clarke, "The Importance of Phonology in the Study of the Popular Speech," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, I (1903), 47.

Glossic, then, had its practitioners and detractors among scholars and students of dialect. Towards the end of Ellis' life, efforts to found the International Phonetic Association bore fruit in the early versions of the International Phonetic Alphabet (1888), and this new standardized transcription system eventually eclipsed Glossic completely. In spite of the value which some of Ellis' contemporaries saw in Glossic, the system achieved its maximum use only with the publication of Early English Pronunciation, Part V.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹Glossic must not be considered to have been primarily a system for teaching an illiterate person to read. The system aims at effecting much more educationally, socially, and linguistically.

CHAPTER X

PLANNING AND EXECUTING THE PRELIMINARY STUDIES FOR

A PHONETIC HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE:

EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION, PARTS I AND II

(1868-70)

With the support of the three principal learned societies engaged in furthering philological scholarship, Ellis undertook studies designed to reconstruct the history of the sounds of the English language. Much of his investigation was directed at determining Chaucerian sounds as well as the pronunciation of the Elizabethans. Assistance came from many scholars interested in the nature of Ellis' study, and who willingly shared their own views and manuscripts of their work in progress. His inquiries spanned the phonetic changes occurring during many centuries. F.J. Furnivall, William Aldis Wright, and F.J. Child rendered invaluable assistance to him. During the early stages of his work Ellis made tentative plans for utilizing information about the sounds of the provincial dialects in order to provide reliable clues to the historical development of the sounds of English. In 1868 he had first contact with Thomas Hallam, the amateur philologist, who

would play the principal role in Ellis' scholarly career as his confidant and chief assistant. Ellis' study, entitled Early English Pronunciation, was then altered to permit a major expansion of those sections which would deal with the Anglo-Saxon period and to allow for a chapter on the provincial dialects. Though maintaining a steady pace in his search for data about the early sounds of English, Ellis experienced many unforeseen delays which resulted in his having to delay the publication of the materials which were to comprise the remaining three parts of his work. Reconstructing the sounds of early English, however, was to prove a massive task. Let us now consider in detail the many efforts which Ellis was making towards the realization of his investigation. Then we shall better be able to see the ambitious nature of his project by watching him assemble his materials with discrimination and skill.

For several years Ellis had been working on philological papers which were primarily historical in their content. They served eventually as preparatory to his monumental work On Early English Pronunciation and were judged sufficiently valuable by him to be incorporated in their entirety later in the principal work itself. Early English Pronunciation appeared in five parts, with Part I published in 1869 and the concluding Part V in 1889.

One of his early contributions to the Philological Society was a study "On the Diphthong OY" which he read on December 6, 1866. In this study he traced the existence of that vowel combination throughout the early phonetic treatises from Palsgrave's Lesclaircissement de la Langue Francoyse (1530) to John Jones' Practical Phonography (1701). The treatment of the diphthong included its occurrence in French, Latin, and Greek, and Ellis concluded that the conception of the original identity of English oi, French oi, Latin oe, oi, Greek oi with the principal diphthong [vɪ] agrees with the etymological relations of the words in which these forms occur and "explains the varieties of pronunciation which exist."¹

Prince Bonaparte received a reprint of Ellis' article on the diphthong with additional marginalia in Ellis' handwriting, noting that it was one of his first attempts "in the line of" Early English Pronunciation.²

Alexander Ellis was accustomed to spending hours at a time in the British Museum, where he pored over some of the manuscripts of the country's ancient authors in order to test his theories on the development of some of the sounds of English. Often among the manuscripts which

¹A.J. Ellis, "On the Diphthong OY," Transactions of the Philological Society (1867), Supplement I, p. 66. Copy with Ellis' marginalia made available through courtesy of the Newberry Library, Chicago.

²Ibid., p. 53 (marginalia).

he examined he would find a possibility for further investigation.

In February 1859, he found in the British Museum William of Salesbury's A Dictionary of Englyshe and Welsh Moche Necessary to All Such Welshmen as Will Spedly Learne the Englyshe Tongue Thought unto the Kynges Maiestre Very Mete to Be Set Forthe to the Use of Graces Subiectes in Wales: Whereunto Is Prefixed a Little Treatyse of the Englyshe Pronunciation of the Letters (1547).

Ellis looked upon Salesbury's work as one of such importance that he later chose it as the first illustration of sixteenth century English to appear in Chapter VIII in Part III of that work. He had examined the two perfect copies of the Welsh treatise in the British Museum and arranged with Mr. E. Jones of the Hibernian Schools, Liverpool, to make a translation into English of the work with a revision later by Dr. Benjamin Davies of the Regent's Park College, London. Ellis was firm in his conviction that the explanation of English sounds by means of Welsh letters was an important key in determining the pronunciation for that period.

An authority on Welsh, T.H. Parry-Williams, acknowledged later the role that Ellis played in bringing to the attention of the public the importance of this Salesbury work. Ellis' consideration of Welsh sources is basic to his extensive researches in the history of the

development of English sounds.³

The first of Ellis' many addresses before the London Philological Society took place on January 18, 1867. He had made himself sufficiently familiar with the little treatises written by some of the early English and French writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries regarding the pronunciation of English sounds. It was impossible to determine just how reliable these early works were, but Ellis studied these historical accounts of pronunciation with care. He felt confident in speaking before that learned body. At that time his choice of topic was certainly ambitious. His paper carried the ambitious title of "On the Pronunciation of the English Language during the Sixteenth Century Compared with the Pronunciations Prevalent in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries and Applied to Elicit the Pronunciation of Chaucer in the Fourteenth Century with Especial Reference to William Salesbury's Welsh Account of English Pronunciation in 1547." Ellis had prepared his paper very carefully by checking the old authorities on the subject of contemporaneous pronunciation and frequently quoting from their writings. He was familiar with the works of Palsgrave (1530), Cheke (1555), Hart (1569), Wallis (1653), Wilkins

³T.H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh (Cymmrodorion Records Series 10), London, 1923, p. 18.

(1668), Miège (1668), Dyche (1710), and Franklin (1768). His main thesis was that sound changes took place when language was transmitted from one generation to another.

He read extracts from E. Jones' translation of Salesbury, and he also distributed to the Society's members a 2,000 word vocabulary list of the sixteenth century which he had recently compiled from many of the sources which he had located in the British Museum. The paper which he delivered on that evening was of particular significance because Ellis also recited some connected specimens of spoken English from earlier centuries by using his new uniform system of sound notation, Palaeotype, which employed existing printing founts. He passed out copies of the texts. This was the first demonstration to the public of one use of his Palaeotype. The ultimate goal of his paper on sixteenth century pronunciation was to help the audience hear Chaucer's probable sounds by means of the poet's rhymes. The Philological Society heard Ellis read his conjectured pronunciation from passages in Shakespeare and Chaucer along with the "Cuckoo Song" and a portion of the Ormulum. The response of the Society to Ellis' attempts at uttering the old sounds was very favorable, particularly since such a performance was "entirely novel."⁴

⁴"Philological Society," Athenaeum, January 26, 1867, p. 81.

The Philological Society was so interested in his presentation, which took two meetings to complete, that it offered him the chance to expand the reconstruction into a book which would come out under the combined auspices of the Philological Society, the Chaucer Society, and the Early English Text Society, an arrangement devised to share the publication costs. In connection with supporting research for its scholars, societies were obliged to pay the costs of amanuenses who copied out manuscripts in out-lying libraries and museums.

In one of the "Committee Reports" issued at stated intervals by the Early English Text Society, it originally had been decided that Ellis' essay on the pronunciation of Chaucer would best form a part of the "Introduction" to Chaucer's Prose Works shortly scheduled for publication under the aegis of the Society. Then the plan was changed so that the revision of Ellis' paper with much additional material would be published simultaneously and jointly as the first issue of the Chaucer Society's publications. Confidently the Early English Text Society Committee stated that the Ellis treatise "will begin a new era in the criticism of Early and Middle English poetry and phonetics."⁵

Among the mass of uncatalogued letters comprising the Furnivall Papers at King's College, London, is a

⁵Early English Text Society, Fifth Report of the Committee, pp. 8-9.

communication from Henry B. Wheatley, Treasurer of the Early English Text Society to F.J. Furnivall, its Secretary, expressing concern about finances as early as June 1867, only several months following Ellis' memorable delivery of his paper on the sounds of the sixteenth century pronunciation. Money was always a problem to scholarly organizations. Now the Early English Text Society found itself in an alarmingly bleak financial condition. The proceeds from the 1867 publications of the Extra Series were not up to expectations. The receipts had been only £260 derived from subscriptions, and of the £324 set aside for expenses, already £174 had been spent on copying costs along with the high expenses connected with the edition of William of Palerne. Ellis' study by this time had run up the printer's expenses to £150. With growing dismay Wheatley reported that Ellis has "got us into a hobble." The Honourable Treasurer advised the Honourable Secretary, Mr. Furnivall, the most prominent figure in the affairs of the Chaucer Society, that the Early English Text Society did not want to injure Ellis' book by insisting on a curtailment. Yet, based on the anticipated receipts from 1868, it looked as if the Early English Text Society would not be able to spend more than had been budgeted for the year's publication expenses.

To their distress, Ellis frequently stated that he was "incorporating something else." It was awkward to

remonstrate with him, and it required the most delicate scholarly diplomacy. Furnivall, therefore, was appointed to handle the unpleasant task of bringing the problem to his notice. The subscribers of the Extra Series were expecting to receive for their money a certain number of books published during the year, and Wheatley blamed Ellis for "breaking faith" with them.⁶

Furnivall had shown many kindnesses and had given encouragement to Ellis on countless occasions. Nonetheless in the private correspondence between Walter Skeat, the eminent Middle English scholar, and Sir Frederick Madden, the Librarian of the British Museum, it is possible to sense the irritating effect which Furnivall had upon some of the members of the organizations who were not sympathetic to Ellis' erratic working habits and his plans for additions to the proposed work.⁷

In spite of the irksome situations arising from the Society's concerns about finances, Ellis did not permit himself to be diverted from his investigations. By this time interest in pronunciation of earlier stages of the language had become widely recognized by other scholars.

⁶ King's College, University of London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Wheatley to Furnivall, June 24, 1867.

⁷ British Museum, Sir Frederick Madden Correspondence, Volume XII, Egerton MS 2848, Skeat to Madden, September 28, 1867.

His reputation was steadily growing so that when Furnivall discussed with Henry Bradshaw, the Librarian of Cambridge University, some directions for scholars to explore with reference to the origin of Chaucerian vocabulary, Ellis' abilities came into the discussion. Bradshaw, a leader in the Early English Text Society, cautiously suggested to Furnivall that basic to such work there would have to be made a "solid advance in English grammar." He wrote Furnivall that among the membership of the Philological Society there would be no difficulty in finding people who would be willing to undertake new grammatical studies and suggested that Alexander Ellis and Richard Morris possibly would be interested in the idea.⁸

It will be seen that with the passing of time Ellis proved himself to be ever his "own man." Rarely did he accept suggestions from others concerning projects for him to investigate. Bradshaw never liked Ellis, and the feeling was reciprocated through the years. This animosity worked against Ellis because the Librarian was in a position to approve of the requests which Ellis had to make in order to have access to some of the manuscript sources of priceless value.

⁸Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MS 2591, fol. 348c. Bradshaw to Furnivall, August 16, 1867.

A typical example of Ellis' method of dealing with the beleaguered Early English Text Society's officers may be seen in one altercation with Bradshaw. Ellis intended to add a brief section concerning Palaeotypic notation which would appear as an appendix to the work which the three Societies were sponsoring for him. He planned to compare his symbols with those of Melville Bell's iconic Visible Speech.⁹

Bradshaw could only fulminate in vain, but Ellis would not listen though he was in most matters very practical. At times he would lose all perspective concerning the realities of the publishing world. It is all the more surprising since he had devoted so many years to the exigencies of publishing when he was working for the cause of spelling reform. He certainly knew how expensive any kind of printing became if changes and additions were made unexpectedly. Bradshaw's suggestion that Ellis prepare a grammatical study elicited no response at all.

Once again Bradshaw's suggestion to Furnivall that Ellis could "work up" a new paper on Chaucerian grammar came to naught. The only thing which Ellis volunteered was a contribution on Chaucer's versification because he had just been reading again the Canterbury Tales. His paper

⁹Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MS 2593, fol. 393, Ellis to Bradshaw, October 10, 1867.

for the Societies was occupying all of his time. Had the officers of the Early English Text Society known that Ellis was entirely recasting his paper to make it an essay, they would have been thoroughly shocked. What was even worse now was that Ellis had made plans for uniting the three chapters on the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries which treated the pronunciation changes.¹⁰ In October 1867, Ellis at last began the manuscript for Early English Pronunciation. Later he expanded the title into a very descriptive one that indicated the sources he used in his investigation.

At the same time, in a popular vein, he lectured on early pronunciation at the London Institution. He avoided too technical an analysis of philological matters, and this made him a very entertaining speaker, particularly when he read in his conjectured pronunciation such famous Shakespearean speeches as "The quality of mercy . . ." and "All the world's a stage" Among those who attended the hundreds of lectures which found favor in nineteenth century London, there were a great many who liked hearing Ellis read Chaucer's "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales in a new manner. The general public were thus brought into close contact with certain scholarly projects then under

¹⁰Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MS 2591, fol. 393, Ellis to Bradshaw, October 10, 1867.

way.¹¹

Towards the end of 1867, Ellis resumed his labors on Salesbury's work because he believed that the Welsh treatise was of paramount importance for the project which he was beginning to form in his mind. He analyzed the Salesbury work with the minutest care and enlisted the aid of many Welsh scholars in clearing up some of the questions of orthography and the difficulties of Welsh pronunciation in the sixteenth century work.

On occasion he was forced to consult Bradshaw at Cambridge regarding the necessary introductions that would enable him to see documents which were in private hands. Ellis went ahead and constructed an index to all of the words in the Salesbury treatise and made Palaeotypic renderings of them. Ellis was sure that he could trace fairly well the way in which sixteenth century pronunciation developed into that of the seventeenth century.¹²

With renewed zeal Ellis attacked his expansion of the paper on sixteenth century pronunciation in the form of a book. At the beginning of 1868 he had definitely decided once again to reorganize his treatment to the distress of

¹¹A.J. Ellis, Syllabus of a Lecture on the Pronunciation of English in the Sixteenth, Fourteenth, and Thirteenth Centuries Illustrated by Passages from Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Others Delivered as They Might Have Been Read at That Time (London: Waterlow, 1867).

¹²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 26.

the Philological Society which had agreed to lend the greater part of the financial support. He was able to envision to the very end the direction which he expected to take and confidently requested Furnivall to put him on the agenda of the Society's January meeting so that he could explain patiently to the irate members the nature of his planned approach and to consider those principles which guided him in determining the pronunciation of Chaucer.

Ellis optimistically notified his colleagues that he expected to have the entire task completed for press within three months and that the first draft was almost ready though he anticipated a long and careful revision. Little did Ellis realize that the work would not see completion until twenty-five years later.¹³

Prior to the 1848 edition of his Essentials of Phonetics, Ellis had been devoting much thought to the discovery of the precise sounds indicated by Chaucerian orthography. Since he believed that Chaucer had several French traits in his lines such as accent on the last syllable, he proposed at that time a theory of final e which was never pronounced before a word beginning with a vowel. In the 1840's Ellis held that the spoken lines of the fourteenth century had to be made as modern as possible without changing words and to give the most current

¹³Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MS 2591, fol. 450, Ellis to Furnivall, January 10, 1868.

pronunciation of a word. To illustrate the uses to which his phonetic alphabet could be put, Ellis gave a specimen taken from the "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales which could serve in a phonetic edition of Chaucer. The description of the prioress is presented in Ellis' own contemporary pronunciation, and the phonotypic letters are comfortable to read. This early consideration of the matter twenty years before the publication of Early English Pronunciation indicates the extent of his interest in the sounds of earlier centuries.¹⁴

Chaucerian pronunciation was to form an integral part of Ellis' treatise. Enlarging upon the idea that the vowel sounds had altered in a direct line from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth century, Ellis deduced that one could determine something about fourteenth century pronunciation by examining, for example, the rhymes in the texts. He believed that if the words rhymed together in Chaucer's couplets but did not do so in the sixteenth century, "one [of the two] must have altered in the line of change." In addition, he hoped to go beyond the reconstructed pronunciation of Chaucer's lines to Orrminn and even to Anglo-Saxon pronunciation.¹⁵ Though Ellis had conceived his theory

¹⁴Ellis, Essentials of Phonetics, p. 181.

¹⁵Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, pp. 26-27

clearly in his own mind, in 1868 he did not realize the enormous quantity of grueling research which awaited him in the coming years. The solution was by no means as readily available as he had anticipated.

Furnivall, meanwhile, proceeded with his own activities in connection with the Chaucer Society's publications, frequently calling upon Ellis for help with some of the problems involving the textual interpretations. Furnivall's work was ground-breaking in its approach to arranging reliable Chaucerian texts. Ellis received bundles of impossibly difficult proofs, and he willingly reviewed, criticized, and emended a great many of Furnivall's readings. He was a reliable assistant and was glad to help so influential a scholar. Furnivall knew just about everyone of importance in the philological world. Professional contacts in the best quarters were essential to Ellis' progress. Though Ellis was now fifty-four years old and had already distinguished himself in phonetics, mathematics, and physics, he was a relatively new figure on the philological scene.

Always cautious in agreeing with some of Furnivall's proposed Chaucerian readings, Ellis obligingly examined the proof of his "Temporary Preface" to the Complete Works. He suggested that Furnivall was right to provide an exact account of each manuscript employed in the order in which it was to be printed, but he felt that Furnivall's accounts of the manuscripts were much too involved. Ellis insisted

on the need for knowing the size, quality, writing, locality, appearance, binding, state of preservation, and all other particulars about the Chaucer manuscripts. He expected Furnivall to be just as meticulous as he himself was on such matters.¹⁶

Although his association with Furnivall was gratifying, it was necessary for Ellis to maintain outwardly cordial relations with Henry Bradshaw. In 1867, Ellis mentioned another ancient manuscript he was studying and would willingly offer a separate paper on a proclamation of Henry III.¹⁷

For many months he had been at work upon a document of the thirteenth century which he had examined in the Public Record Office. The English and French versions of the document were compared scrupulously three times in order to assure accuracy. With his wonted thoroughness Ellis compared all of the fourteen extant versions. This required him to put aside his work on Early English Pronunciation, and on January 17, 1868, he read to the Philological Society his paper "On the Only English Proclamation of Henry III, the 18th of October, 1258."¹⁸

¹⁶King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, January 12, 1868.

¹⁷Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 393, Ellis to Bradshaw, October 10, 1867.

¹⁸"Philological Society," Athenaeum, February 15, 1868, p. 257.

The Society printed the venerable document in its entirety in the Transactions for 1868-9, and Ellis thought so highly of his edition that he arranged to have the work printed separately in book form by Asher, who planned to use the same plates.¹⁹ Ellis hoped that the work would be a valuable contribution to history as well as to philology, but still there was criticism from an anonymous reader of the Athenaeum who pointed out minute errors in his work.

Ellis had attempted to make his edition letter perfect. One can easily picture Ellis returning with great irritation to the Public Record Office to examine the parchments under his "condensing light" with a strong glass so as to decipher again the crabbed handwriting.²⁰

Eighteen years later the Reverend Walter Skeat re-examined Ellis' early study of the thirteenth century proclamation. He had discovered a text of the Oxfordshire Version of Henry III's Proclamation which Ellis never knew existed, thinking that the Huntingdonshire represented the only extant one. Skeat compared his own discovery with Ellis' edition and was preparing to publish his own

¹⁹ A.J. Ellis, The Only English Proclamation of Henry III, 18 October 1258, and Its Treatment by Former Editors and Translators, Considered and Illustrated, to Which Are Added Editions of the Cuckoo Song and The Prisoner's Prayer, Lyrics of the XIII Century. Reprinted from the Transactions of the Philological Society for 1868 (London: Asher and Co., 1868).

²⁰ A.J. Ellis, "The Only English Proclamation of Henry the Third," Athenaeum, May 8, 1869, pp. 637-38.

transcript of the Oxfordshire MS.²¹ He did succeed in making several corrections to the Ellis version,²² but no response came from Ellis, who by that time was at work on the dialect survey of the 1880's.

As was to be his custom, Ellis incorporated his investigations of the Henry III document in toto within that section of Early English Pronunciation which provided illustrations of the prose of the thirteenth century. There is, however, some minor revision of his text. He was not satisfied that the public already had had the opportunity of studying his work, and he saw nothing inappropriate in introducing the investigation into the body of his larger work.

Though Ellis had by no means completed his analysis of Chaucerian sounds, during 1868 he was engaged in hypothesizing the sounds which had been uttered by Shakespeare. In the January 25th issue of the Athenaeum, Ellis gave a preview of his theory concerning the possible pronunciation of the sound of ea in the sixteenth century, briefly touching on all the authorities who gave clues, at the same time assuring the readers that everything would soon be minutely established in the treatise On Early English Pronunciation

²¹Walter W. Skeat, "The Only English Proclamation of Henry III," Academy, 21 (April 29, 1882), 304.

²²Walter W. Skeat, "The Only English Proclamation of Henry III," Academy, 21 (May 13, 1882), 339.

which was then in preparation "for the Societies."²³ He felt reservations, however, about the tone of his statement in the Athenaeum. Lest he had appeared too boastful to the many readers of that periodical regarding his plans for the pronunciation of Chaucer and Shakespeare, he hastened to inform people in the following issue that he had used an "abbreviated expression."²⁴ Ellis meant that he wanted to furnish a detailed account of the speech of those poets who read or heard their works read during their lifetime. In this same letter to the editor he observed, "Of their personal individual pronunciation, I, of course, know nothing!"

By April 1868, Ellis was working again on the section of his study treating the sounds of the sixteenth century. He raised many points in a letter to William Aldis Wright, the editor of the Globe Shakespeare. It disturbed Ellis to discover that the lines in Wright's edition did not correspond with those in the Cambridge one. In addition, several of Ellis' ideas about the pronunciation of words in Henry V seemed to be at variance with those held by Wright.²⁵ Turning to his work on Chaucerian sounds, he

²³A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Athenaeum, January 25, 1868, pp. 129-30.

²⁴A.J. Ellis, "To the Editor," Athenaeum, February 15, 1868, pp. 253-54.

²⁵Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69³⁰, Ellis to Wright, April 7, 1868.

wrote that it was essential to have some of the manuscripts at Cambridge verified. Wright, unlike the formidable Bradshaw, generously shared his knowledge and often tried to arrange for Ellis' access to some of those manuscripts. On a trip to Cambridge Ellis had examined the Pepysian copy of the Canterbury Tales and informed Wright that in spite of the fact that metrically defective lines were of importance with respect to the final e, the Pepysian version had given "much trouble in vain."²⁶

Not only did Wright himself painstakingly check for Ellis the Chaucer versions on hand at Cambridge, but he also obliged him further by looking over details of the manuscript of the "Cuckoo Song," which he [Ellis] needed in connection with further work on the thirteenth century. Ellis sent along to Wright an edition of that work edited by Rimbault, the author of Ancient Vocal Music of England, which purported to be printed from "an ancient transcript in the Pepysian Library," which Professor Walmisley had given to Rimbault back in 1838. Ellis had written to the Librarian of the Bibliotheca Pepysiana at Cambridge, who confused it with the "Agincourt Hymn." Wright, nevertheless, was asked to check the Pepysian Library in order to make a copy of the words and music at Ellis' expense. In the past Ellis had had a great many aggravations over unreliable

²⁶ Ibid.

copiers and felt that only Wright would be able to check the work meticulously.²⁷

To make sure of every textual variation in the "Cuckoo Song," Ellis even thought about writing directly to Dr. Rimbault about the Walmisley copy he had received in 1838. Ellis feared that it was lying lost among the large collections of manuscripts at Cambridge, or what was even worse, hidden in the pages of some printed volume. He knew Walmisley casually and admitted to Wright that he did not rely too much on his work. "He was certainly not a man of laborious research!!"²⁸

Ellis worked incessantly during 1868 and 1869, maneuvering his way back and forth among the centuries as new materials turned up from unexpected sources suggested by his cooperative colleagues. In many ways, Ellis' great study was a venture shared by numerous outstanding scholars. As one can see, however, it did not proceed in any orderly fashion. Ellis experienced a mounting excitement as he found that he was able to fill in a few of the many gaps in this effort to reconstruct the elusive sounds from the printed symbols in the old books and manuscripts of previous centuries. It was for him a time of rewarding intellectual activity.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69³¹, Ellis to Wright, April 23, 1868.

Of course there were times when some of the research appeared to come to an impasse. The sounds of the sixteenth century writers, so much closer than Chaucer's time, were tantalizingly difficult to establish. Frequently an inquiry would come directly to him from a reader of the Academy or Athenaeum which would lead him on a long and involved investigation that almost brought progress on the book to a standstill. One of the reasons that the subscribers to the publications of the Societies did not get their books on schedule may be that Ellis was frequently enticed into by-ways of related, though time-consuming, searches.

He again shared his ideas with Wright regarding some of these unexpected queries. The two scholars exchanged many letters on such matters as the sounds in the word suiter which by the end of the seventeenth century had the sh sound. He utilized all his own printing experience in arriving at his conclusions. Ellis was determined to have the last word on matters of pronunciation, and in order to support his theories he copied at great labor for Wright's edification long lists of words from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which were found in the treatises of the early orthographers. He even conjectured about the possibility of printed spellings representing a compositor's

own pronunciation. "They make such awful blunders:"²⁹

So much attention was paid to the pronunciation of suitter since a Mr. Viles had sent Ellis a quotation from Lyly's Euphues which contained a pun on the words suitter and shooter. Ellis felt that the word in all likelihood was chosen by Shakespeare deliberately when he was writing Love's Labour's Lost. We can get a fine picture of Ellis at work in trying to resolve a linguistic problem. All his researches on "suitter" and "shooter" led him to the conclusion that the esteemed pronunciation down to Shakespeare's death was "sutor," and it was not pronounced as "shooter" in influential classes until more than fifty years after his death. Ellis rationalized that variant pronunciations could exist side by side; therefore, "shooter" could have been an "unacknowledged sound" during Shakespeare's time. He decided to offer Mr. Viles the explanation that the use of the words represented a bad joke and that in Love's Labour's Lost Rosalind deliberately heard it as "shooter."³⁰

Ellis also mentioned the history of u that he planned to include as a "curious chapter" in his book. It appears that Ellis entered into these labyrinthine explanations of his theories in Wright's letters because it

²⁹Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁸, Ellis to Wright, April 22, 1868.

³⁰Ibid.

provided an opportunity for him to submit a 'trial run' prior to writing it in polished form as part of the manuscript of Early English Pronunciation.

There are hundreds of items similar to the above point in its pages. His industry was phenomenal, and each special point would launch him into the most comprehensive correspondence imaginable, a task which he never shirked. In his complicated explanations concerning Chaucerian pronunciation which he sent to Wright, it was necessary to copy out in advance very long sections of the text so that he could illustrate his points. This became highly irritating to Ellis because he became fatigued by this kind of effort. He suggested to Wright that inasmuch as the Clerke's Tale contained so many imperfect lines in the Harleian MS it would expedite their discussion if Wright sent one of the printed copies of his own edition of Chaucer so that Ellis could make notes in the margin and "economically" receive answers from Wright to his questions about Chaucer variants.³¹ Ellis could only "glance" at Wright's edition when it arrived. He found it quite different from the Harleian text.

Ellis aimed at completing Early English Pronunciation by May 15 of that year.³² As time went on and the

³¹ Ibid.

³² Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁷, Ellis to Wright, May 5, 1868.

target dates passed without a volume being completed, he could only continue as if nothing had happened. He did admire Wright's edition of Chaucer published by Richard Griffin and Company and used it as his working edition because the 17,368 lines were consecutively numbered. Richard Morris' edition of Chaucer in six volumes (Bell and Daldy, London, 1866) used fresh sets of numbers for each tale, and when Ellis encountered important or doubtful variants, he would refer, however, to the Morris edition. On the whole he was not at all satisfied with the printed editions of Chaucer owing to the great variations among the manuscripts. He was critical of the techniques employed by the editor. So many problems seemed incapable of solution. Sadly he wrote, "Would that we had a text corrected by Chaucer's hand!"³³

Wright, of course, was busy at Cambridge pursuing his own concerns and responsibilities. Ellis often had to prod him to get responses to his questions. He had made plans to address the Philological Society on May 1, 1868 about the first draft of Early English Pronunciation, but was upset because he had to finish the section on the "Cuckoo Song." Tactfully he indicated to Wright that it would be "pleasant" to have the information immediately

³³ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 249.

which had been promised from the Pepsyian Library.³⁴

On May 1 and 15, 1868, Ellis presented before the Philological Society his paper titled "On Early English Pronunciation, Especially That of Chaucer." The principal thrust of this paper was a detailed account of the method which he had been following for determining the probable pronunciation of Chaucer. He showed the members how the rhymes before the invention of printing had to be perfect if the lines were to be intelligible to the audience. Ellis argued that if one of the rhyming words was definitely known from the sixteenth century, the sound of the other fourteenth century word could be inferred.³⁵

The excitement which Ellis felt when presenting the paper before the Philological Society soon passed away, and the readings of the Chaucer manuscripts continued to plague him because there were so many variants even in rhyme words. He continued the grinding work of analyzing the Chaucerian rhymes, relying a great deal on Morris' edition for evidence which would support the theory that in certain words the termination y, was pronounced as I. Thus, courtesy, fy, cry, and enemy were pronounced as the pronoun I. With disappointment he was obliged to report

³⁴Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁸, Ellis to Wright, April 22, 1868.

³⁵"Philological Society," Athanaeum, May 23, 1868, pp. 733-34.

to Henry Bradshaw in Cambridge that the search was not rewarding and that he was going to examine all the Gower manuscripts. Ellis, it seems was fearful that he would come upon a variant that would render his entire theory worthless. Bradshaw was in a position to know what scholars were involved in searching Chaucer manuscripts both for the Chaucer Society and for their own studies.

Ellis requested Bradshaw to secure for him variants of a particular passage in the "Chanounes Yeomans Tale" for the word sey meaning saw and rhyming with the French graunt mercy. With unflagging energy Ellis told Bradshaw of his plans to go the following week to the British Museum to examine Harleian MSS 7333, 7334, 7335, 1758, 1239, Lansdowne 851, and many others which could possibly yield some clue. He was disturbed over this problem, and the completion of Early English Pronunciation was lamentably delayed.³⁶

By July 1868, Ellis had received from G. Parker, a paid researcher, details from six Oxford Chaucer manuscripts in addition to the six manuscripts he had himself examined at the British Museum. Harleian 3869 seemed to him to be the most reliable as far as spelling was concerned (though in this letter he did not state his criteria).³⁷ Making a

³⁶Cambridge University Library, Department of Mathematics, Add. MS 2591, fol. 573, Ellis to Bradshaw, June 25, 1868.

³⁷Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 583, Ellis to Bradshaw, July 2, 1868.

statistical summary of the forms of say, he then combed the Gower manuscripts, ignoring the orthography which Pauli provided in his edition of Gower's works.³⁸ Ellis believed that his long search finally yielded a remarkable conclusion. "Gower opened my mind!" he noted with satisfaction.³⁹ He promptly wrote to the Duke of Sutherland asking for permission to see the Stafford Manuscript.

Ellis ran into some difficulty in locating the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, who did not appear to be listed in the Directory or British Almanack. He searched out every possible source so that he could examine more of the Gower manuscripts.⁴⁰ None of the major manuscript censuses so necessary to scholarship existed for his use.

When Ellis continued to have difficulties in securing collations of the Chaucer variants from the obdurate Bradshaw, he again was fortunate in getting aid from Furnivall. The Secretary of the Philological Society pleaded with Bradshaw to cooperate: "He really deserves it of you on public grounds alone!"⁴¹ Grudgingly, Bradshaw

³⁸ John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, ed. Reinhold Pauli (London: Bell and Daldy, 1857), 3 vols.

³⁹ Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 582, Ellis to Bradshaw, July 1, 1868.

⁴⁰ Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 583, Ellis to Bradshaw, July 2, 1868.

⁴¹ Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 586, Furnivall to Bradshaw, July 7, 1868.

complied with Furnivall's request, and accordingly Ellis was able to summarize the eight forms of say occurring with mercy. Joyfully he sent his findings to William Aldis Wright.⁴²

Ellis' herculean labors in establishing the pronunciation of early English is related in many respects to similar efforts made as early as 1860 by Francis James Child at Harvard, who was then laying the groundwork for his own Chaucerian essays. It must be emphasized that Child's part in what later came to be the section on fourteenth century pronunciation in Early English Pronunciation is of paramount importance.

Both men drew continually on the British Museum because of its magnificent holdings. Child could not avail himself of these books and manuscripts to the extent he wished, owing to his residence in America; but he wrote to the Librarian, Sir Frederick Madden, in reference to an edition of Chaucer he was planning. Ellis was later to be spared some of the great difficulties in finding a truly accurate text because Child had already paved the way with respect to the sounding of the final e in the texts, i.e., the e at the end of tale. Child found Wright's text of the Canterbury Tales "full of error" and allowing that some

⁴²Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁶, Ellis to Wright, July 16, 1868.

of the faults lay in the manuscripts, he boldly raised the possibility of editorial carelessness. In 1860 Child had no more confidence in Wright's edition than he had for the very early one which had been made by Tyrwhitt in 1775-78. Ellis, it may be recalled, had great respect for Wright's edition in spite of some of the shortcomings.

Ellis, though, was not at this time aware of the critical views held by Child. The latter was also critical of the work which Wright had done for the Percy Society. It is startling to observe the sang-froid with which Child earlier had requested Madden, an acerbic individual, to collate selected Chaucerian passages containing seemingly incorrect terminations as printed by Wright in his edition.⁴³

By the summer of 1868 it seemed to Ellis that the work on Early English Pronunciation would not be complete without taking into consideration the investigations which Child had made of the language of the Canterbury Tales based on Wright's edition of the Harleian MS 7334.⁴⁴ Child had also drawn extensively in his investigation on the diplomatic edition of Gower's Confessio Amantis edited by Dr. Reinhold Pauli (1823-82). Ellis' progress slowed down

⁴³British Museum, Sir Frederick Madden Correspondence, Volume VII (1859-62), fol. 160, Child to Madden, November 19, 1860.

⁴⁴Francis J. Child, "Observations on the Language of Chaucer," Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, New Series, 8 (1861-63), 445-502 and 9 (1866), 265-314.

because of the crucial work which Child had been doing. The American scholar's account emphasized that the number of syllables in words must be determined by the final e which was sometimes pronounced or sometimes silent.

Correspondence between Child and Ellis has not been located, but Ellis must have requested reprinting Child's findings in England; Child graciously consented to allow Ellis to introduce it in an abridged form for inclusion in Early English Pronunciation.⁴⁵

The minutely detailed analysis of all the fourteenth century vowel sounds convinced Ellis that he had arrived closer to the truth than any "haphazard" reading founded upon modern analogies without historical investigation. Confidently he stated that the conjectured pronunciations of Chaucer's and Gower's lines would have been easily understood by Richard Rolle of Hampole and Dan Michel.⁴⁶

Along with the further details which the Child study and Pauli's Gower had brought to his work, Ellis had to divide his time between the materials of the fourteenth century and those of the sixteenth century. The latter demanded a great deal of his attention. He was engaged in studying the sounds of different periods and had to move from one time period to another on short notice should new

⁴⁵Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 343.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 411.

materials suddenly come to his notice. Sometimes he would go back long before the Middle Ages for some of his theorizing or would move ahead into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Unfortunately, Ellis' treatment of the sixteenth century would not be fully developed until the third part of his work, which appeared in 1871, but the basis for his opinions lies in the opening volume of the investigation in which he evaluates the numerous authorities for his treatment of early Tudor and Elizabethan pronunciation.

A.C. Gimson acknowledges that Ellis' chief contribution was the application of objective techniques in Early English Pronunciation for describing the past and present states of English. Ellis was the man who initiated the study of the old grammarians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whose works are still providing the evidence for many scholarly studies at the present time.⁴⁷

In the perplexing pages of Early English Pronunciation lie chronological sections which deserve special consideration owing to their originality of material. Ellis gathered together documents and printed treatises for the first time from a wonderful variety of sources. There is merit in examining some of the works he studied in order to acknowledge his contributions to historic phonology.

⁴⁷A.C. Gimson, An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English, 2nd ed. (London: Arnold, 1970), p. 66.

Precisely three hundred years after John Hart, Chester Herald, offered in the twelfth year of Elizabeth's reign his treatise on the orthography of the sixteenth century (1569), Ellis attempted to carry out the original goals: "to write or painte thimage of mannes voice, most like to the life or nature."⁴⁸ Ellis' representations in Palaeotype of Hart's descriptions of the sounds were aimed at achieving the same result that his early predecessor had. It was not an easy task for Ellis because Hart's Orthographie with its detailed descriptions of English sounds appeared in an unusual orthography. Ellis wrote, "This is a most disappointing book . . . [Hart] has in fact chosen a pronunciation then [1569] coming in, heard by few, and distasteful to the old school."⁴⁹ Modern scholars have expressed a diversity of opinion regarding Ellis' treatment of Hart's work.

⁴⁸ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 35.

⁴⁹ Rupert Palmer criticizes Ellis for having relied on the "slimmest and actually invalid evidence" that Hart was born a Welshman. (Rupert E. Palmer, Thomas Whythorne's Speech: The Phonology of a Sixteenth Century Native of Somerset in London, Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1969, p. 15). Bror Danielsson concludes that Hart spoke an uneducated English and retraces much of Ellis' work. (Bror Danielsson, John Hart's Works on English Orthography and Pronunciation -1551, 1569, 1570. 2 vols. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1948, p. 37). Jespersen also based much of his thinking on Ellis' study of Hart. (Otto Jespersen, John Hart's Pronunciation -1569 and 1570, Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1907, p. 1).

The authorities upon which Ellis based so much of his study show us just how thoroughly he researched the old orthoepists and orthographers. He rescued from oblivion some of the lesser known sources. For example, in order to institute a comparison of English and Flemish in the sixteenth century, he turned to H. Stephanus's collection De Vera Pronunciatione Graecae et Latinae (1587), an adaptation of Cheke's work on the presumed pronunciation of Greek with English words printed in Greek letters.⁵⁰ Ellis also examined John Baret's Triple Dictionary in English, Latin, and French (1573). Among other unusual tracts which he studied for his work was the anonymous A Short and Easy Way for the Palatine to Learn English (1710), listing English words for the distressed people of the Upper Palatinate.⁵¹

Ellis did commend William Bullokar's Booke at Large for the Amendment of Orthographie for English Speech (1580) which made its appearance in the twenty-third year of Queen Elizabeth's reign. The complexity of the dots, hooks, and other diacritical marks placed above and below the letters admittedly created a great deal of confusion. These were subject to many interpretations, but to Ellis the work represented a "tolerably consistent" account of English pronunciation. He believed, however, that Bullokar's

⁵⁰ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 36.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 36.

pronunciation was already definitely antiquated in some respects and was closer to John Palgrave's work (1530) rather than John Hart's Orthographie of 1569. Ellis relied heavily on Bullokar for the earlier part of the sixteenth century though he remained critical of Bullokar's "overpowering cloud of words."⁵² For his chapter on illustrations of sixteenth century pronunciation, Ellis palaeotyped with difficulty only the twelfth chapter of Bullokar's work, omitting as valueless some of the tiny and confusing markings.

Another sixteenth century authority whom Ellis highly regarded was Alexander Gill, whose Logonomia Anglica (1621) had been published only ten years following the appearance of the Authorized Version. According to Ellis, Gill's pronunciation was probably the same as Shakespeare's and was the best authority. It annoyed Ellis that there was

⁵² Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, pp. 838-45. R.E. Zachrisson evaluated the Bullokar items in Ellis' sixteenth century word list as faulty and pointed out that only a twentieth part of the Bullokar material had been investigated. He also felt that Ellis misinterpreted by not viewing Bullokar's forms as an attempt to "amend the historical spelling" but rather as phonetic notations which were correct for the period. (R.E. Zachrisson, The English Pronunciation of Shakespeare's Time as Taught by William Bullokar with Word-Lists from All His Works, Uppsala: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1927, p. xii). H.C. Wyld, however, had the highest praise for Ellis' copious pronouncing vocabularies of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because he felt they served as readily convenient material for phonological investigation. (H.C. Wyld, The Historical Study of the Mother Tongue, London: Murray, 1906, p. 309). R.E. Zachrisson described the "great pioneer" as very "dictatorial" in his treatment of sources (R.E. Zachrisson, Pronunciation of English Vowels -1400-1700, Goteborg: Wald. Zachrissons Boktrycker A.B., 1912, pp. 1-3).

not a clear account of either long i or of the diphthong [au]. Adding to the complexity of the problem, Gill wrote in Latin. Though Ellis was a superb Latinist himself, the paragraphs were sometimes "curious" and not always helpful.

A praepositur e, ut in aerj AERIE aereus. o nunquam; saepius i, et u, ut, in aid auxilium; bait esca; laun sindonis species; & a paun pignus: ubi aduerte au nihil differre ab â. Eodem enim sono proferimus a bâl, BALL pila; et tu bâl, BAULE vociferari: at ubi vere diphthongus est, a deducitur in â, ut âu AWE imperium; âuger terebra⁵³

Ellis recognized its importance because Gill illustrated his description by citing Psalms 62, 67, 96, 97, and 104. Ellis reproduced the wretched printing in Gill's book and attempted to explain partially the confusing symbols which Gill employed. The most significant selections which Gill offered were taken from Spenser's Faerie Queen and Sydney's Arcadia. Ellis noted that Gill provided a reasonable collection of literary examples differing materially from those furnished by Hart and Bullokar. Ellis believed that one could not go too far wrong in following Gill.⁵⁴

Ellis' authorities are numerous and there are all types represented among them: foreign language grammars, spelling and pronunciation treatises with attempts at introducing purely phonetic alphabets and treatises on the physical formation of speech sounds. Henry Sweet was, for

⁵³Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 145.

⁵⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 846.

his part, very critical of them, for they employed vague "metaphorical" descriptions such as "hard", "soft", "thick", "thin" and others which did not really give clear information and which each writer used arbitrarily. Sweet did praise the "general corrections" of the results in Ellis' analysis but sternly warned that the exact determination of each sound would "probably be a subject of dispute for many years to come."⁵⁵

Ellis' pioneering work in the authorities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries has been followed by a distinguished modern study in the history of English pronunciation, E.J. Dobson's treatment of the standard spoken language from 1500-1700. Like Ellis' work a hundred years earlier, it, too, considers the complexity of the "standard" language and its relationship to class and regional dialects. Dobson reappraised the English authorities of the period, while properly acknowledging Ellis' work, the "first in the field." He believed, though, that Ellis had an imperfect understanding of what the old orthoepists were attempting to do.⁵⁶

Dobson admits that he does not refer often to Ellis, not because he is "neglectful" of his importance, but

⁵⁵Henry Sweet, rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I, II, by A.J. Ellis, Academy, 2 (June 1, 1871), 295.

⁵⁶E.J. Dobson, English Pronunciation, 1500-1700. 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968 [1957]). Preface.

rather because the subject has advanced. One cannot help but feel vaguely uneasy at such an excuse because the two volumes, one on the orthoepists and the other on phonology, have their entire presentation based on most of the same sources that Ellis surveyed. Though Dobson had his own theoretical approach to the reconstruction of the sounds for the two hundred years and did not build on Ellis, it is surprising to see the small amount of acknowledgment which he has given to Ellis throughout the two volumes of his work.

Even while Ellis in 1868 was delving into the important Renaissance period, he advanced in his reconstruction of the pronunciation of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The sixteenth century, nevertheless, continued to frustrate him for years because the existing reports were filled with hundreds of contradictions which cancelled each other out whenever Ellis seemed to have arrived at a solution.

One medieval text was the "Cuckoo Song" (c. 1240). Like the elusive bird whose name evokes the English rural scene, the "Cuckoo Song" continued to present problems. Ellis was very disappointed because he had been unable to discuss it in his important paper before the Philological Society in May 1868. He had carefully examined the Harleian MS in the British Museum and had arranged to call upon William Aldis Wright in Cambridge in order to hear

him recite the modern version of the "Song" in the Suffolk or East Anglian pronunciation. He was convinced that by this means he would arrive at the establishment of the sound of the song by testing the early version against the modern one. He would thus be able to arrive at valid conclusions.⁵⁷ Promptly Wright obliged Ellis, and accordingly Ellis was now satisfied that he could rule out the sounds of the East Anglian pronunciation for the original of the "Cuckoo Song."⁵⁸

He had a great deal of confidence in the opinion of William Chappell, author of Popular Music of the Olden Time, a Collection of Ancient Songs, Ballads, and Dance Tunes, Illustrative of the National Music of England (1855-59). Both he and Sir Frederick Madden of the British Museum informed Ellis that in their opinion the "Cuckoo Song" had been written by a Reading monk of Fornsett in Norfolk. Ellis had sent William Chappell an autographed copy of his work on the Henry III Proclamaation. Inadvertently the copy which Chappell received and later deposited with his own effects in the British Museum contained within it a letter from Ellis acknowledging Chappell's assistance with the problems of dating the "Cuckoo Song." The Ellis letter must have been used as a bookmark, and has just been

⁵⁷Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁶, Ellis to Wright, July 10, 1868.

⁵⁸Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁶, Ellis to Wright, July 16, 1868.

included in the holdings of the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum.⁵⁹

Ellis' colleagues in the Philological Society carefully followed his progress in establishing the sounds of older periods of English, and, for the most part, they wished him success. One of these was Percy William Smythe, 8th Viscount and Baron Strangford (1826-69), who devoted his energies to philological studies and the writing of articles on the Near East. As a student attaché at Constantinople he mastered Persian, Greek, Turkish, Arabic, and Hindustani. Strangford served as Oriental Secretary during the Crimean War and was among the members with whom Ellis frequently came into contact during the first years of his work on Early English Pronunciation.

He regarded Ellis as one of a small handful of working philologists who believed that the language of Chaucer and Shakespeare was not pronounced in the same manner as the "English of Winchilsea" (George William Finch-Hatton, 1791-1858). Strangford respected Ellis because he [Strangford] also believed in dealing with the living sounds whether spoken in earlier times or spoken in the 1870's.⁶⁰

⁵⁹British Museum, Department of Manuscripts (Uncatalogued MS), Ellis to Chappell, July 10, 1868.

⁶⁰Percy William Smythe, Baron Strangford, Original Letters and Papers of the Late Viscount Strangford upon Philological and Kindred Subjects, ed. by Viscountess Strangford (London: Trübner, 1878), p. 276.

When Ellis would come to an impasse in his research, he would place in the Athenaeum a request for assistance. Such was the case on July 18, 1868 when he was trying in vain to find illustrations of modern pronunciation of i and long i which could be used to discover the sound of that symbol in the time of Chaucer. Though he seemed to have solved many problems of Chaucerian pronunciation, by no means was he ready to believe he had said the last word on the subject. He invited "gentlemen" familiar with any provincial dialects in the United Kingdom to substantiate his claim that the sound was the Italian i.⁶¹ This attempt to enlist the services of those who knew the dialects was to characterize Ellis' method for the next twenty years. His call for help in July 1868 is of great significance for it was his first effort in the establishment of fourteenth century sounds through an examination of the dialects.

A wide variety of people responded to his request in the Athenaeum, and they supplied him with information based on their personal knowledge. For example, he heard from Reverend C.Y. Potts of Ledbury for South Shields, a Mr. Brown of St. Peter's College, Peterborough for Kendal, and Messrs. Jackson, Fielding, and Axon for Lancashire as well as from a "lady near Norwich."⁶² Throughout the course

⁶¹A.J. Ellis, "Announcement," Athenaeum, July 18, 1868, p. 86.

⁶²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 277.

of the dialect survey, which was to take place later, his indebtedness to the schoolmasters and country parsons ever increased. Probably the educated clergy welcomed the opportunity to participate briefly from their rural seats in the scholarly efforts in progress in sophisticated London. Ellis generously acknowledged his gratitude, for without the help of his obscure dialectal correspondents, the work on Early English Pronunciation would never have advanced.

It was at this time when he attended a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Norwich, that he met Cecilia Day, daughter of the rector of Kirby Bedon, a little town close to Norwich. She dictated to him a list of Norfolk words. Miss Day had resided from childhood in the little town and had frequently spoken with country folk. A Mrs. Luscombe, her sister, was able to add a few more words to Ellis' list. The real significance of this trip to Norfolk for Ellis was that these lists were the first pieces of dialect that he attempted to write down from actual audition.⁶³

This effort was part of his attempt to trace the existence of the sort of Italian i as a relic of Chaucerian pronunciation. He hoarded every scrap of dialect recording from that important visit, and in Section D 19, V iii of

⁶³A.J. Ellis, "Report on Dialectal Work from 1st May, 1885 to 7th May, 1886," Proceedings of the Philological Society, 1885-86, p. xvii.

the dialect survey in Early English Pronunciation there is printed almost eighteen years later the conversation uttered by an omnibus passenger who was reminiscing about two farmers from his boyhood who were spending time in a country pub. Some of the dictations which Ellis transcribed in Palaeotype were colorful and vivid, particularly that portion in which one inebriated farmer threatened to knock the pipe out of the mouth of his companion. Ellis recorded the altercation. He also took down the three different pronunciations of the street cry for the Yarmouth bloaters.⁶⁴ He realized the value of preserving these viva voces and was sufficiently farsighted as early as 1868 to appreciate these dialectal phrases which already were beginning to become modified with the passage of the years. Already the search for Chaucer's pronunciation was leading to a related undertaking of the greatest magnitude.

Among the correspondents who answered the call for information in the Athenaeum was an unidentified schoolmaster at Tenby in Pembrokeshire, Wales. He provided an account of the difficulty which Matthew Arnold encountered on his tour of inspection among the British schools. Ellis learned that local children could not distinguish between the vowel in the word "feet" and "fight." It was this kind of modest detail which Ellis was starting to set aside for

⁶⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 277.

future investigations.⁶⁵

Ellis does not appear to have minded the delays arising from the search for the Chaucerian sound of i. The submissions from the provinces were proving particularly interesting, and he was fast becoming intrigued with some of the information. For example, a communication came from John Shelly of Woodside, near Plymouth, who was not sure whether or not he had heard two hundred school children sounding the r in "send her victorious, happy, and glorious." The problem of the retracted r had already caught his attention in the late 1860's.⁶⁶

After many such investigations and interruptions, by October 1868 part of the first volume of Early English Pronunciation reached the printer. Ellis sent his friend, Sir John Herschel of the Royal Society, a proof of the first two sheets of the work.⁶⁷ It was always gratifying to Ellis to secure the approbation of as many eminent people as possible. Enough progress on the first volume had taken place by the close of November for Ellis to invite Furnivall to his home for an evening of discussion. In an effort to improve the personal relations between Ellis and Bradshaw,

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 272.

⁶⁶Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 165-66.

⁶⁷Royal Society of London, Manuscript Collections, HS7.42, Ellis to Herschel, October 28, 1868.

Furnivall asked for permission to bring Bradshaw with him.⁶⁸ In spite of the contrived effort at peace, the two men never really became anything but coldly civil to one another.

The initial plea for help in the July Athenaeum was the beginning of scores of friendships based on dialectal interests which were of inestimable value to Ellis in the following decades. The name of Thomas Hallam has appeared previously in the previous discussion, and he figures chiefly among the correspondents who offered to help with dialectal questions. This remarkable man from Manchester was to become Ellis' closest associate and his mainstay in time of difficulty in the following years. On November 9, 1868 Hallam timidly addressed himself to the attention of Ellis. He expressed his admiration for the Essentials of Phonetics and tactfully welcomed the forthcoming Early English Pronunciation. Hallam offered to send Ellis unlimited information on the dialectal pronunciation of the Peak of Derbyshire, an area of the Midlands rich in dialect variations.⁶⁹

Impressed by the importance of the provincial dialects as possible keys to unlocking the pronunciation of Chaucer and his contemporaries, he welcomed Ellis' request

⁶⁸Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2591, fol. 451, Furnivall to Bradshaw, November 1, 1868.

⁶⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 5), Hallam to Ellis, November 9, 1868.

and began a correspondence which would last twenty-two years. Ellis was delighted with news of the generous offer and indicated that hitherto he had received practically no information for that region.⁷⁰

Early English Pronunciation, of course, would develop an increasingly amorphous structure owing to its author's persistent modifications of his approach and of his reported results. Beginning in November 1868, the devoted Hallam was inextricably involved in Ellis' historical study and dialectal survey which were to become the substance of the great five-part work. Let us consider briefly the background of this extraordinary man in Ellis' scholarly career.⁷¹

Thomas Hallam was born in the little village of Raglow in the parish of Chapel-en-le-Frith ('Forest'), in Derbyshire. He qualified himself to become a schoolmaster in the neighboring village of Flagg. Later he took a position with the Peak Forest Canal Company doing survey work and then with the goods auditing department of the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, purchasers of the canal. Hallam moved to Manchester,

⁷⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 1), Ellis to Hallam, November 10, 1868.

⁷¹"Thomas Hallam," The Methodist Reporter, October 24, 1895 (clipping), The Taylor Institution, Oxford University: The Joseph Wright Papers (Uncatalogued).

attending the Grosvenor Street Chapel, Chorlton-on-Medlock.⁷² His enthusiasm during these years was the study of words and their sounds. This interest was to bring him in daily correspondence with Ellis, whose studies were to become also Hallam's own life interest.

When Hallam first came to Manchester, he joined a small private essay and debating club. The essays which he composed about words and dialects did not always delight his fellow members, but they appreciated his enthusiasm for the subject.

When he first made contact with Ellis, he was familiar with every tiny hamlet in the Peak area because for years he had led groups on Saturday excursions and used the Ordnance map of the district.⁷³ Unfortunately, none of these essays on local language have apparently survived. During 1862 he translated the "Song of Solomon" into the Chapel-en-le-Frith and Taddington varieties of Derbyshire dialect. His skill in recording sounds elicited the admiration of many of his friends because he could indicate the differences between Chapel and "Tidza" varieties of speech with precision.⁷⁴

⁷²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 21, fol. 16), "Miscellaneous Notes."

⁷³"Thomas Hallam." See note 71.

⁷⁴Ibid.

Integrity and simplicity accurately characterize Thomas Hallam. He had no patience with people who had "got on more or less in the world" and yet were ashamed of their origins. All that was necessary was that the occupation was lawful and honest.⁷⁵ He was pleased with his ability to use phonetics. As early as 1841 Hallam had heard Pitman lecture in the Manchester Town Hall on his new system of shorthand.⁷⁶ His extant letters show the use of shorthand in the first drafts of many of the letters which he wrote to Ellis. The symbols are very carefully executed and correspond in clarity with the beautiful cursive hand which he employed in all of his letters and notebooks. In the correspondence with Ellis he would often lapse into shorthand if he were pressed for time. As a result of the years he had spent in the neighboring township of Flagg, Hallam was able to respond to Ellis' letter about i in modern dialects and to call upon many of his old friends and other local residents for help. For example, he interviewed Thomas Oldham, a timber merchant, who helped Hallam get a clear notion of the local i.

This was the sort of man who offered to help Ellis in his dialectal queries. Since Hallam was eager to assist,

⁷⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 108), Hallam to Ellis, November 8, 1873.

⁷⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 21, fol. 14), "Miscellaneous Papers."

Ellis was anxious to get better accounts than those which had been sent to him for the ou, ow diphthongs which were written eaw in books which tried to represent the Lancashire dialect. He was "much at sea" and flattered the obliging Hallam by requesting the information from him.⁷⁷

Ellis recognized full well that he had at last encountered a fellow spirit who shared his dedication and patience concerning phonetic distinctions, one who would be willing to debate with him on those points which were of paramount interest to them both.

Since Hallam was familiar with his Essentials of Phonetics, Ellis explained to him that he had been obliged to use a modification of the notation which he had earlier employed and proceeded to furnish him with a detailed account of his views as they had been changing over the course of twenty years since the publication of the phonetic work of 1848.

He took Hallam into his confidence by sending him the proof of the first sheet of Early English Pronunciation which contained the Palaeotype and Glosso-type systems he had devised. Lest Hallam be discouraged by the intricacies of the systems, Ellis assured him that there would not be difficulty "for one who has studied phonetics." Ellis made it

⁷⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 1), Ellis to Hallam, November 10, 1868.

absolutely clear that Hallam would not be permitted to share in the work unless he learned Palaeotype. Upon further reflection, Ellis compromised his own feelings and indicated that he would be willing to settle for Hallam's attaining a mastery of Glossic.⁷⁸

Ellis realized that Hallam could be of considerable assistance to him and was careful not to be too inflexible. He knew that an invitation to an obscure railway employee from the exciting milieu of scholarly London and its Philological Society could not be resisted. Profusely thanking Ellis for his trust in him, Hallam promptly set about learning the complicated Palaeotypic notation at the end of November 1868.⁷⁹

A month later Hallam felt himself on good terms with Ellis and expressed his opinions on Bell's Visible Speech with its strange symbols for indicating the part played by the speech organs in the production of each sound. He noted that Visible Speech had "enlarged" his views.⁸⁰ In the future Ellis felt obliged to refer cautiously to Bell's theories in his correspondence with Hallam.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 1), Hallam to Ellis, November 17, 1868.

⁸⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 12), Hallam to Ellis, December 2, 1868.

With reservations, Ellis coolly acknowledged his obligations to Bell's work, but explained to Hallam that he was convinced that his own system of Palaeotype was still the most complete series of phonetic symbols ever yet published.⁸¹

Early English Pronunciation was progressing slowly, but by December Ellis saw 320 pages of Part I set in type. The members of the Societies had no choice but to wait further for him to complete the first part.⁸² He continued his work on another borrowed Chaucer manuscript obtained from Cambridge through Furnivall.⁸³

As Hallam became more familiar with Palaeotype, he exhibited a reluctance to adopt all of Ellis' interpretations. The only sensible approach for him was to make viva voce experiments with the informants from the native areas. In his "Notes" he remarked that he was angry with himself because he had neglected to experiment before a mirror with his own utterances and believed that, had he done so, he would have been on firmer ground in his arguments with Ellis concerning the rounding of the u.⁸⁴

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 14), Ellis to Hallam, December 14, 1868.

⁸³King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, December 31, 1868.

⁸⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 201), "Miscellaneous Notes," n. pp.

Admittedly Hallam was awed by Ellis' recognition of him in connection with his work, but as the years of association passed, he became less disturbed by Ellis' outbursts of disagreement. He was not discouraged by Ellis' apparent unwillingness to involve himself in long phonetic disquisitions. He continued to ply Ellis with page upon page of queries and personal observations so that Ellis was almost obliged to reply in self-defense. Hallam did not always accept the scintillas of difference which Ellis aimed at indicating by the Palaeotype, but the latter was forced to admit that Hallam's symbols were indeed good in isolated words and phonetic discussions. Hallam indicated in his "Notes" that some of the Palaeotypic combinations "would be enough to drive a reader mad."⁸⁵

In the next few months Hallam made himself a master of the system, thereby becoming indispensable to Ellis' work in the Manchester area. He awaited eagerly the publication of Early English Pronunciation, particularly the chapter on dialects which was to serve as an important basis for determining the Chaucerian sounds of the fourteenth century. Ellis had to calm the importunate Hallam who kept urging him to speed up the publication schedule. In February 1869, Ellis was able to promise him that only four or five months remained until the section on dialects would be in proof

⁸⁵Ibid.

form.⁸⁶ Originally, Ellis planned to include this chapter in Part II.

Hallam was, however, becoming more accustomed to the delays in the publication of Ellis' book because they gave him the opportunity to gather information about the dialect of the Peak District "more deliberately."⁸⁷ No longer was Hallam upset if the writing inched along. Unlike Ellis, who worked at a feverish pitch of activity, he enjoyed dawdling along the way, making meticulous revisions. Hallam's casual attitude towards Ellis' work inadvertently infuriated Ellis, a man of exacting work habits who took advantage of every hour of the day in order to carry forward his ambitious projects.

At last his essay revised in book form appeared. February 1869 saw the publication of Early English Pronunciation Part I. In the First Report, F.J. Furnivall oratorically announced that the Chaucer Society "in conjunction with its mother and grandmother societies, the Early English Text and the Philological" proudly issued Ellis' work.⁸⁸

He closely followed the growth of the Chaucer Society which planned to publish reprints of several Chaucer

⁸⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, February 3, 1869.

⁸⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 5), Hallam to Ellis, February 8, 1869.

⁸⁸F.J. Furnivall, First Report to the Chaucer Society, March, 1869, pp. 1-2.

ON
EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION,

WITH ESPECIAL REFERENCE TO

SHAKSPERE AND CHAUCER,

CONTAINING AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CORRESPONDENCE OF
WRITING WITH SPEECH IN ENGLAND FROM THE ANGLOSAXON
PERIOD TO THE PRESENT DAY, PRECEDED BY A SYSTEMATIC
NOTATION OF ALL SPOKEN SOUNDS BY MEANS OF THE ORDINARY
PRINTING TYPES.

INCLUDING

A RE-ARRANGEMENT OF PROF. F. J. CHILDS'S MEMOIRS ON THE LANGUAGE OF
CHAUCER AND GOWER, AND REPRINTS OF THE RARE TRACTS BY SALESBURY
ON ENGLISH, 1567, AND WELCH, 1567, AND BY BARCLEY ON FRENCH, 1521.

BY

ALEXANDER J. ELLIS, F.R.S.,

FELLOW OF THE CAMBRIDGE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY, MEMBER OF THE LONDON MATHEMATICAL
SOCIETY, MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY, FORMERLY
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PART I.

ON THE PRONUNCIATION OF THE XIVTH, XVTH, XVIIITH, AND
XVIIIITH CENTURIES.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED FOR THE PHILOLOGICAL SOCIETY BY
ASHER & CO., LONDON & BERLIN,
AND FOR THE EARLY ENGLISH TEXT SOCIETY, AND THE CHAUCER SOCIETY, BY
TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1869.

23. A.J. Ellis, On Early English Pronunciation with
Especial Reference to Shakespere and Chaucer,
Part I, 1869: Title Page

manuscripts. Ellis indicated that these would "inaugurate an entirely new system of studying ancient forms of language" and stressed the absolute necessity for a system of uniform orthography for presenting the Chaucer texts.⁸⁹

Life's demands needed to be faced in spite of the absorbing projects upon which he was then engaged. The demise of his sister-in-law ("lying dead in my house") required him to leave London for Yorkshire in order to bury her there.⁹⁰ He was very impatient with these unexpected demands on his time and expressed his feelings in his letter to Hallam.

At this time plans were being made for a special edition of Chaucer's works to be published by the Clarendon Press. Henry Bradshaw, the hostile Librarian of Cambridge, had tentatively been appointed editor of the large project. G.W. Kitchen of the Oxford University Press had sent Bradshaw an abstract of an essay on Chaucerian pronunciation which Ellis had prepared for his evaluation. Vehemently, Bradshaw replied that the diacritical marks employed to represent fourteenth century vowels such as the ě for e, written by the scribe and not sounded and ē for e, written and sounded in the fourteenth but not sounded in the nineteenth centuries had to be credited to Child.

⁸⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 43), Ellis to Hallam, February 10, 1869.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

Bradshaw expressed great shock, and disdainfully remarked that the pages which Ellis had written contained Child's remarks frequently and "betrayed a want of scholarship which it is not pleasant to have to notice."⁹¹

Bradshaw minced no words in stating his reservations about having the Delegates of the Press commit themselves to Ellis' essay. He had not been convinced about Ellis' theory which he scornfully noted required a volume of six to seven hundred pages to prove. He especially criticized Ellis' suggested oral reading of Chaucer's "Prologue" at the end of the first volume of Early English Pronunciation. Bradshaw's attitude is singularly unfortunate and displays a want of courtesy not typical of nineteenth century scholars in their private correspondence. He was completely wrong in his treatment of Ellis. Ellis could be severe, but he was never cruelly caustic. Bradshaw's personal animosity towards Ellis triumphed over his sense of fair play.

It is interesting to note here that Richard Morris' six volume edition of Chaucer contains an Appendix called "An Essay on the Pronunciation of English in the Time of Chaucer." Morris knew that Ellis "alone of all Englishmen" was best equipped to write this contribution to his edition.⁹²

⁹¹Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 2592- 1, fol. 9, Bradshaw to Kitchin, February 24, 1869.

⁹²Richard Morris, Ed., The Poetical Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (London: Bell, 1893), 6 vols.

In all likelihood this was the same essay which Henry Bradshaw had rudely rejected at the same time he sent a hypercritical evaluation of Palaeotype. In spite of the scathing tone taken by Bradshaw, the first part of Ellis' work met with a great deal of approval from most other scholars. From Harvard College, F.J. Child praised Ellis as a scholar whose book would add "character" to Chaucer studies.⁹³

Ellis now turned to the next sections of Early English Pronunciation. He needed to examine a volume of Wynken de Worde, but he hesitated to make the request of the Cambridge Librarian. William Aldis Wright tried to console him, referring to eight hundred unanswered letters already lying on that scholar's desk.⁹⁴ While Ellis continued to sift the elusive Chaucer materials, he aimed at pinning down more vagaries of Shakespearean pronunciation. Letters were exchanged in large numbers between Wright and Ellis concerning the variations of some of the words and their pronunciation from Romeo and Juliet as well as Two Gentlemen of Verona. Ellis finally came to the conclusion that no great importance could be attached to Shakespeare's rhymes because Spenser, in the same generation, had begun to rhyme imperfectly.

Shortly after the publication of Part I of Early English Pronunciation, Ellis made arrangements for Hallam to

⁹³King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Child to Furnivall, July 27, 1869.

⁹⁴Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁰, Ellis to Wright, May 17, 1869.

come up to London to meet him in March 1869 because Ellis needed to clarify some of the debatable interpretations of the Palaeotypic notations. Ellis still expected to shed further light on the Chaucerian vowels and welcomed the opportunity to ascertain some of Hallam's local sounds in Derbyshire. Ellis felt that written symbols often deceived in spite of the strengths of Palaeotype, and he did not believe that Hallam was as accurate as he could have been. By meeting with Hallam, probably some of the problems could be resolved. Hallam, on the other hand, had great confidence in his own phonetic proficiency and did not anticipate his visit to Ellis in any spirit of humility.⁹⁵

Three months after the publication of Part I of Early English Pronunciation, Ellis was startled to find that the Athenaeum had generously described his work as "exhaustive." He confessed to Furnivall that such a description of his work was accurate only with reference to his "own powers."⁹⁶

With Part I finally printed, Ellis proceeded with renewed vigor to write some of the sections for the second part of the ambitious undertaking, scheduled for publication in August 1869. Fortunately, much of the spade work had already been done, particularly the editing of the thirteenth

⁹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 25), Ellis to Hallam, March 29, 1869.

⁹⁶Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

century texts which he had selected to serve as illustrations for his theory of the sounds of that time. Ellis was now planning to include more material on Chaucer's Canterbury Tales in a later part of the work. The Societies which were publishing Ellis' investigations preferred to divide them into four parts, instead of two as previously planned. This, of course, gave Ellis an opportunity to expand some of his chapters because the schedule for publishing was more flexible.

In connection with the studies relating to these thirteenth century texts, Ellis worked with the manuscript of the popular romance Havelok the Dane and Sir Frederick Madden's edition thereof. Walter Skeat, then engaged in re-editing the early Madden edition, made specifically for the limited number of members of the Roxburghe Club, graciously allowed Ellis to borrow the proof sheets of his study before the Early English Text Society brought out the new edition. In addition, he provided Ellis with many hints on the evidence of Havelok's composition. Ellis, notwithstanding Skeat's latest textual readings, went ahead and recorded his disagreements about interpretations of the meanings of the heavily Norse vocabulary and included his own opinions in Part II of Early English Pronunciation.⁹⁷

Among the examples of thirteenth century prose which Ellis would include in Part II is the Ormulum, written about

⁹⁷Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, II, p. 471.

a hundred years after the Norman Conquest. His interest in this work went back as far as 1846 when he was writing a popular account of this old phonetic representation of the English language for the Phonotypic Journal.⁹⁸ It seemed to Ellis that the old poem was very contemporary in terms of the Spelling Reform and believed that had Orm's mode of spelling been adopted, the English language would have been one of the "best spelt in the world." Ellis returned to the Ormulum again twenty years later in choosing it as one of the chief documents to illustrate the language of the thirteenth century, which would serve as a clue to the sounds.

Old Norman presented an unexpected difficulty for him while he was preparing Part II. He utilized every personal contact who could possibly yield information, but often the effort proved futile. For example, in May 1869, Ellis invited M. Francisque Xavier Michel (1809-87), the editor of the three volume Chroniques Anglo-Normandes, to dine with him at his home, but to Ellis' exasperation, the old man appeared to be interested in talking about everything except Old Norman. Fortunately, his dinner guest redeemed the occasion by promising him a real manuscript concerning the pronunciation of the names of the English nobility, but Ellis felt skeptical about its arriving sufficiently in time

⁹⁸A.J. Ellis, "English Phonography Nearly 700 Years Old," Phonotypic Journal, 5 (November 1846), 333-35.

to be of any use to him. At the close of the evening the French scholar did read some Norman in a modern style though Ellis could only regard this performance as "simply throwing up the question."⁹⁹

A comprehensive treatment of the part played by the Norman element in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries had appeared in the Philological Society's Transactions for 1868-69. Independently, Joseph Payne had developed a theory which held that the phonetic elements of both the Norman-French dialect and the language spoken in London "were, for the most part, identical." Payne had a deep respect for Ellis and assured the readers of his own study that he was not presuming to compete with that author's "multifarious learning." He took care to acknowledge the quality of Early English Pronunciation. Payne complimented Ellis for using Palaeotype to indicate the Norman sounds.¹⁰⁰ He believed that Ellis' treatment of what is assumed to be Chaucer's usage had not sufficiently taken into account what writers before Chaucer had employed. He emphasized Chaucer's reliance upon established usages, including iambic measures. In a footnote, Payne dismissed Ellis' view that the French e

⁹⁹ Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Payne, "The Norman Element in the Spoken and Written English of the 12th, 13th, and 14th Centuries, and in Our Provincial Dialects," Transactions of the Philological Society (1868-69), p. 367.

final, which has now disappeared, was in general conversation "as late as the sixteenth century" and must have formed part of the rhythm of the French verses with which Chaucer was well acquainted.¹⁰¹

Claiming that Ellis had ignored the Anglo-Norman pattern of versification, which was less "strict" than the French spoken in Paris, Payne concluded from his researches that many of the words ending in e were silent at the end of a line in both Norman and English.¹⁰² His rendering of the first eighteen lines of the "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales differed from Ellis' interpretation by making the utterance of the final e the exception and "silence the rule."¹⁰³ Because of his familiarity with Anglo-Norman versification, he was inclined to disagree with Ellis.

Ellis was of the opinion that since our knowledge of English pronunciation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is fairly certain, it is possible to arrive at a determination of Old Norman sounds by using rhymes of English and Norman.¹⁰⁴ Although Ellis was aware of the deficiencies of his own study of thirteenth century pronunciation, he still could not agree with Payne's conclusions.

¹⁰¹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 329.

¹⁰²Payne, op. cit., p. 434.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 445-46.

¹⁰⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, II, pp. 460-62.

Regretfully, Ellis became aware that he had failed to examine properly all the manuscripts of a single work written by scribes in different parts of the country. He knew that the writing of his book would never progress substantially if he became diverted to gather information concerning the English dialects. He was just a beginner himself in that field. The lure of dialect study had to be resisted; the writing of the work had to proceed.¹⁰⁵

Here it may be observed that Ellis' Early English Pronunciation served, to some extent, as a model for Charles Thurot's study of French pronunciation of the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁶ Thurot's study was intended to develop completely for sixteenth century French what Ellis did "cursorily" in Early English Pronunciation. Thurot cited Ellis' Part I for his oldest authority, Alexander Barclay (1521), and he was familiar with Peter Erondel's French Garden (1605), also used by Ellis.¹⁰⁷ Professor Payne had originally brought to Ellis' attention the authorities on pp. 226-28 of Early English Pronunciation. The nineteenth century was a period of generous sharing of source materials among scholars of all

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 582.

¹⁰⁶E. Braunholtz, "Dialectologie Anglaise" in Révue des Patois Gallo-Romans, 1 (1887), 150.

¹⁰⁷Charles Thurot, De la Prononciation Française Depuis du XVII^e Siècle d'après les Témoignages des Grammairiens (Paris, Imprimerie National, 1881-3). 2 vols.

disciplines. Ellis later acknowledged with some satisfaction that Thurot's work was partially modelled on his own, though actually it was a much more exhaustive treatment. Unfortunately, Thurot died prematurely and Ellis regretted that the second volume had not been left in a state "fit for publication."¹⁰⁸

During the period when Ellis was preparing the second part of his study, Henry Sweet won the approbation of Ellis during an informal discussion following the delivery of a paper at the Philological Society. His phonetic abilities and his power of "appreciating languages" pleased Ellis very much, and this judgment was corroborated by Graham Bell, who admitted privately to Ellis, that he had never met anyone who understood so well the complete system of vowels in Visible Speech. Sweet had acquired his phonetic sensitivity as a result of self-instruction. In a sense Ellis, at a later date, would be laying the "mantle of Elijah" upon Sweet's shoulders, and he admitted to F.J. Furnivall in correspondence that he had hopes that Sweet would eventually work out all the details of his [Ellis] phonetic investigations.¹⁰⁹

Sweet, for his part, took great care to be laudatory in his remarks about Early English Pronunciation, which he later would place in the Academy, going so far as to say

¹⁰⁸Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," p. 24.

¹⁰⁹Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

exact analogue of Chaucer's English, as which I in nature a very brief notice & expression (with the pronunciation as furnished by Haldemann, in every respect a competent authority) in the introductory part of Chap. III. § 1.

I hope that good work is to come from Henry Sweet. I was much struck with him during my little talk on Friday. Besides having great power of appreciating languages, he is well up in phonetics. Young Bell told me he never met any one who so readily & perfectly appreciated the full vowel system, which he pronounced almost perfectly from mere study without instruction. I do hope that he will hereafter find time to correct and continue & carry into proper detail, the investigations which

I have commenced. The last Appendix calls mine "exhaustive." I know better. We must have an examination of English and French, & perhaps Norwegian & Frisian dialects, phonetically, then we may be able to attack the old English dialects of which we know so little & that imperfectly. In one sense my treatise is exhaustive - viz. of my own powers, for I cannot at any time of life think of such an extensive field of labour, ~~etc~~ especially when I went to work at another for which I have been long preparing. I hope Sweet will do something in this line. And I should be glad of his fully examining the ai, ei & long e & othth (for i.e.), which require much more examination. Truly yours
A. J. Ellis

24. A.J. Ellis Praises Henry Sweet to F.J. Furnivall,
May 23, 1869.
(Courtesy of the Henry Huntington Library)

that the investigation was like discovering the living sounds of French and German "whereas one could only read the letters."¹¹⁰ He also expressed his approval of the presumed Shakespearean pronunciations because the puns had at last been rendered plausibly. Sweet believed that anyone who had fully comprehended and mastered the correct pronunciation would never care to return to the modern.¹¹¹ All this public comment by the twenty-four year old scholar assured him the approval of Ellis and his colleagues, who were in a good position to effect important professional introductions for him.

Both the Chaucerian and Shakespearean studies of Ellis and Henry Sweet's acquaintance with Bell were vital factors in Sweet's development. They contributed to the revolt against antiquarian philology.¹¹² H.C. Wyld, in a later appreciation, noted the importance of these figures in bringing Sweet to the forefront of nineteenth century philological studies in Britain.

Though everything appeared to be moving along at a reasonable pace by May 1869, the three supporting Societies--the Early English Text, the Philological, and the Chaucer

¹¹⁰Henry Sweet, rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I and II, by A.J. Ellis, Academy, 2 (June 1, 1871).

¹¹¹Henry Sweet, rev. of Early English Pronunciation, III, by A.J. Ellis, Academy, 2 (June 15, 1871), p. 321.

¹¹²H.C. Wyld, "Henry Sweet," Modern Language Quarterly, 4 (1901), 74.

society--began to express great alarm at the frequent delays in the publication schedule. With resignation Ellis indicated to Furnivall that he had no choice but to do whatever was in their best interests. He willingly acknowledged that the project had greatly exceeded the estimated scope and length. He knew the work could not form part of one year's issue; therefore he gave his first indication that the several parts would have to stretch over a three year period. Ellis could only hope that the patient subscribers would send in their money so that he could go ahead and complete the entire book. He now faced up to the fact that only the first portion of the investigation had been accomplished.

Ellis gravely warned Furnivall that the full meaning of his theories and historical explanations would not appear until all the sections were worked out thoroughly. All of the material for Part II was in Austin's hands except for a few sheets. Ellis, too, was experiencing those aggravating delays which other scholars encountered. The diligent Henry Sweet had promised to provide information about his latest investigations on Icelandic alliterations. To Ellis' intense chagrin the material still had not arrived as Part II was being readied for the press.

Ellis advised Furnivall, further, to apprise the Societies about the progress of Part III, but wrote him that

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Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections,
Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

he was afraid that this volume would run to three hundred pages. Trying hopefully to appease Furnivall, Ellis invited him to consider reducing the sheets and to go over the entire manuscript with him. Ellis expressed true amazement on learning that the share of the Early English Text Society for just Part I already had reached the sum of \$140 and that the expenses were calculated at five guineas a sheet.¹¹³ The financial realities were unpleasant.

For most of his adult life, Ellis had been vitally connected with the printing and publishing world of London. As a printer himself during the productive years of association with Isaac Pitman, he had been able to become completely conversant with all related aspects of the trade. Since his work with Early English Pronunciation necessitated very complex printing arrangements during the 1870's and 1880's, it may not be amiss at this point to make a few observations concerning the printing of his works. He brought to these problems a deep practical knowledge and competence.

Ellis had maintained close and cordial relationships with the firm of Stephen Austin and Sons. Because his printing requirements were so highly specialized, Ellis frequently conferred with the director of this old company founded long before in 1768. The company was particularly distinguished among its London counterparts because it had obtained orders

¹¹³ Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

from the East India Company for the printing of grammars in Indian scripts for its employees who were going to India.

Ellis often alludes in his correspondence to hundreds of visits he made to the Austin firm for a variety of reasons. Requesting special type founts in all probability brought him to confer with type experts. Ellis, a printer, enjoyed the atmosphere, which was so similar to the activities of the many years he had spent with Isaac Pitman in the phonotypic adventures. Palaeotype required an inordinate amount of verification and correction with the type setters.¹¹⁴

Meanwhile, the analysis of the Chaucerian sounds still went forward. In order for us to get a clearer picture of this scholar's method, we are obliged to bear in mind that the crucial months prior to the publication of Part II were also given over to gathering additional Chaucerian material for Part III. Progress on Early English Pronunciation was decidedly erratic. Though the Table of Contents in the first volume sets forth the organization of his entire investigation, the second part consisting of eight chapters and noted as "Unpublished" originally was already starting to receive different emphasis for some of the chapters. The section on dialects at this point had been tentatively included as a subsection in the eleventh chapter on illustrations of English and Lowland pronunciation during the

¹¹⁴R.L.S. Harrison to R.A. Sanders, Stephen Austin and Sons, Hertford, July 13, 1971.

nineteenth century. It would later develop into the culmination of his investigation of the historical sounds as preserved in the provincial dialects.

In the relentless search for philologically defensible Chaucerian pronunciation, more difficulties continued to plague Ellis. For example, some of the readings in the available manuscripts were faded or illegible, and this necessitated his having to spend hours over the blurred lines.

He found himself interpreting the meaning of a crux in order to get additional information on the pronunciation of the poet. Ellis would slowly follow with his magnifying glass the closely lettered columns on the parchments in the British Museum as he hopefully looked for a linguistic variant. For example, he had been puzzled by the word "compame" in the "Miller's Tale" (v. 3709, Wright's edition). He believed that the word somehow related to the verb ba ("to kiss"). Then, in June of 1869 he found examples of the word "ba" which confirmed his reading of the "ba" form in the longer word. Seizing a sheet of British Museum letter-head, he immediately dispatched a triumphant note to Furnivall, exclaiming "Eureka!" Earlier he had incorrectly interpreted "compame" as "compagne" and now the discovery in one manuscript of "combame" revealed a phrase "com ba me." He was able to verify the use of the word uttered by the Wife of Bath.¹¹⁵ No task was too heavy for him in his

¹¹⁵King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, June 3, 1869.

relentless search for a true reading. He did not like to use the services of professional researchers because they rarely satisfied his expectations. He had to make the decisions on the true readings himself.

Ellis never hastened to conclusions and cautiously sought more help in Cambridge from Wright. He asked him to corroborate what he had joyfully found in the British Museum. Ellis believed that the point was well worth further examination and accordingly, wrote to Cambridge for information about the manuscripts there.¹¹⁶ Wright quickly sent notes to Ellis containing additional authorities for "com, ba me!" Ellis saw the intended sense at last emerging from the line. It was this kind of search which helped him establish many sounds in troublesome words and also parts of the fourteenth century sound-system.¹¹⁷

Because he was so pleased with this solution of a problem in the "Miller's Tale," he addressed a long letter to the Athenaeum indicating that he had changed his earlier reading of "compame" on page 254, note 3 of Early English Pronunciation to the new interpretations which he had just verified.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c75¹⁸, Ellis to Wright, June 6, 1869.

¹¹⁷Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69²⁴, Ellis to Wright, June 9, 1869.

¹¹⁸A.J. Ellis, "Corrections in Chaucer," Athenaeum, June 19, 1869, pp. 829-30.

He never dismissed any matter until the search had been conducted to his fullest satisfaction. He was still fascinated with the meaning of "ba". By late August 1869 he was pleased when Parker, a researcher, sent him another reading "combame" from the New College MS at Oxford. Only the manuscript in Christ Church required his attention. "I felt quite certain of the "ba" by this time!"¹¹⁹

It was Furnivall who had to stave off the impatient subscribers of the supporting Societies while Ellis slowly made his way down the difficult lettering on the Chaucer manuscripts.

Ellis' situation presented a particular source of concern for the Chaucer Society. It was becoming very difficult to get subscribers for the publications. Costs were alarmingly high, and every time that Ellis planned to extend his investigation even by a few pages, the Chaucer Society became worried. Child tried to encourage Furnivall by promising to raise subscribers in America. The Ellis work was dragging on, and the Society was turning its plans towards the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Canterbury pilgrimage by publishing a "magnificent" edition of the text.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, August 29, 1869.

¹²⁰ King's College, University of London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Child to Furnivall, July 27, 1869.

Ellis tried to be of assistance to Furnivall in connection with the interpretation of some of the readings of the Cambridge MS of the Canterbury Tales. Ellis believed that the manuscript was like Audelay's Shropshire Poems, with their dialectal peculiarities.¹²¹ Furnivall turned to Ellis frequently on matters pertaining to the Chaucerian sounds possibly found in the provincial dialects.

After making a detailed analysis of the orthography of Harleian MS 7334, Ellis advocated a uniform system of orthography for Chaucer and other fourteenth century writers.¹²² He was convinced that the use of such an orthography would enable people to read, after a little practice, a fourteenth century as well as a fifteenth century text. It seemed to Ellis that those exasperating variations in spelling made by scribes of the Canterbury Tales were not intentional. His uniform orthography arose in connection with his efforts "to discover" what kind of a symbolic system the scribes were attempting to follow back in the fourteenth century. Ellis stressed, however, that an autographed manuscript such as Orminn's and Dan Michel's had to be followed literatim.¹²³

¹²¹F.J. Furnivall, A Temporary Preface to the Six-Text Edition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales": Part I Attempting to Show the True Order of the Tales and the Days and Stages of the Pilgrimage, Etc., Etc. (London: Chaucer Society: Trübner, 1868), p. 116.

¹²²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, I, p. 403.

¹²³Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 634.

He recognized that conventional definitive editing attempted to reconstruct what the scribe or ur-scribe wrote. James Hadley of Yale University disagreed with his proposal because it seemed reminiscent of those old phonotypic works which Ellis had brought out years earlier. Hadley felt, on the contrary, that the popularization of Chaucer could be achieved only by modernizing the orthography rather than by adopting a uniform orthography.¹²⁴ Furnivall refused even to consider the possibility of forcing a uniform spelling on Chaucer in any of his editions for the Chaucer Society that he was planning to issue. He felt that assenting to such a plan would be falsifying the history of the English language.¹²⁵

Ellis had planned the whole of his work very carefully and printed in Part I the Table of Contents, but he did not adhere to it as his collecting of material and writing the text proceeded. In August 1869, he carefully detailed to Thomas Hallam his plans for publishing the remaining parts of Early English Pronunciation. Hallam eagerly received all the details of its appearance and was surely flattered at this further evidence of Ellis' confidence in him. The eleventh chapter which was to treat the dialects was a source of major concern to Hallam who fretted over its content.

¹²⁴James Hadley, rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I, by A.J. Ellis, in North American Review, 110 (April 1870), 434.

¹²⁵Furnivall, op. cit., p. 114.

Ellis had vainly hoped to be writing it from his completed manuscripts by October 1 of that same year.¹²⁶ It was called in the original contents "Illustrations of English and Lowland Pronunciation during the Nineteenth Century." Section 1 of that chapter was to be designated "Varieties of English Pronunciation in the XIXth Century." Ellis expressed his hope to Hallam of shortly making some headway on this particular chapter.¹²⁷ Plans were made to issue the work in four parts. Part III, containing all the new Chaucer material, was to be issued in January. Above all else the preparation of Part IV caused the greatest anxiety to Ellis.

In the late summer of 1869, Ellis seized upon an excuse to get away for a brief time from the demands of his work and the social invitations of his philological and mathematical colleagues. He, therefore, accepted an invitation to pay a brief visit to Totnes in Devonshire, where he had the chance to hear dialect. Exeter was so corrupted dialectally that even the excursions he took on Dartmoor afforded him little satisfaction. The significance of this journey in 1869 to the little village of Harberton near Totnes lay in the fact that this was the first time that Ellis specifically made a trip for the purpose of writing

¹²⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 30), Ellis to Hallam, August 24, 1869.

¹²⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 32), Ellis to Hallam, September 6, 1869.

down English dialect speech. He lodged with J. Paige of Little Inglebourne, Harberton, and listened carefully while his host chatted with farmers. Unfortunately, Ellis' recollection of the sounds was not strong, and when he returned to the house to write out this Devonshire speech, he could not utilize his notes satisfactorily. F.J. Furnivall received an account of Ellis' efforts, and plans were made to discuss with Furnivall the visit to Devonshire upon his return to London.¹²⁸

There were always disagreeable or irritating situations arising during the course of the research on the Chaucerian sounds. In order to oblige those who were accommodating him in his efforts to secure information about the provincial dialects relating to those Chaucerian sounds, Ellis had to conceal his own impatience and annoyance. Everyone seemed to bother him at this time. Hallam, with justification, requested Ellis to procure for him some remuneration from the Philological Society, for the expenses which he was incurring in his travels in the Midlands in search of lists of provincial sounds. Expenses for hotels, food, and occasional gratuities provided in appreciation for time given by some of the informants were mounting up. He felt that such remuneration should be provided for his part

¹²⁸King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, August 29, 1869.

in the Ellis research. Ellis wrote that he presented Hallam's request to the Philological Society, but he held out no hope to him whatever.¹²⁹ From Exeter, Ellis broached the matter to Furnivall, at the same time remaining sufficiently objective in his observations to point out that there had been no commitment or promise made. Ellis decided to be very brief and efficient in dealing with the anxious Hallam. He confidentially wrote to Furnivall that he "hoped to get the pith out of him hereafter."¹³⁰ The unpleasant duty of notifying Hallam of the Society's decision naturally fell to Ellis. There were no funds to help out in such matters, and the Society's printing costs had already used up almost everything that had been budgeted.¹³¹

Along with the strain of having to get his plan for the remaining two parts of Early English Pronunciation modified, in September Ellis also had to cope with Hallam's temperament. Hallam had completed for him his dialect papers based on his home village, Chapel-en-le-Frith. Hallam's labor had been time-consuming, and Ellis, prepared to relieve himself of the duties relating to Hallam's contribution, decided to send these papers to James A.H. Murray, whose reputation as

¹²⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 30), Ellis to Hallam, August 24, 1869.

¹³⁰King's College, London, Furnivall-Skeat Papers (Uncatalogued), Ellis to Furnivall, August 29, 1869.

¹³¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fo. 32), Ellis to Hallam, September 6, 1869.

a first-rate philologist was widely known. Ellis wrote, "I don't know anyone more competent than Mr. Murray."¹³² Hallam was only too delighted to attain recognition from Murray, particularly since he had little opportunity to be part of the London scene. Ellis was doing him a favor by forwarding the dialect papers to Murray for judgment.

Although Part II had been published in September 1869, he was still having problems regarding some of its content. He had carefully prepared the remarks on Anglo-Saxon for inclusion in the section on "Teutonic and Scandinavian Sources of the English Language." He wanted to complete the investigation and his remarks on that stage of the language were of considerable interest to his fellow scholars. Skeat, though impressed with the conclusions which Ellis had made in Early English Pronunciation, II concerning the reconstruction of Anglo-Saxon pronunciation, was critical because they did not differ materially from those made much earlier by Rask in 1817.¹³³ Ellis' work on Anglo-Saxon sounds appears to contain few references to alliteration, and his discussion of some of the combinations such as hl, hn, hr, and hw prompted Professor Francis A. March, when addressing the American Philological Association in 1871, to disagree

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Walter W. Skeat, "The Problem of Spelling Reform," Proceedings of the British Academy (London: Henry Frowde for Oxford University Press, 1906), p. 5.

with Ellis because he asserted that those combinations alliterated with h. Ellis has stated that they alliterated, however, with words beginning with the second letter of the combination.¹³⁴

Henry Sweet, on the other hand, regarded Ellis' opinions on Anglo-Saxon with deep respect. The feelings which he had for Ellis' authority may be seen in a brief reference to the latter in connection with certain philological notes accompanying the text of a poem which had been sent to him [Sweet]. The latter was frequently engaged by Furnivall to examine certain scholarly editions of poems which their authors hoped would be published by the Early English Text Society. One particular submission was utterly worthless, and Sweet, in a complimentary tone, remarked that some of the editorial comments on Anglo-Saxon pronunciation "would astonish Mr. Ellis!"¹³⁵

By April 1870, Hallam was still awaiting Ellis' treatment of the Peak District and urged him to forward as soon as possible the part of Chapter XI which dealt with that area so that he could correct any little error or "slip" before sending it to press.¹³⁶

¹³⁴Frederick A. March, "On Anglo-Saxon Pronunciation," Transactions of the American Philological Society, 2 (1871), 108-09.

¹³⁵British Museum, W. Carew Hazlitt Correspondence V.IV, Add. MS 38,901, fol. 201, Sweet to Furnivall, September 1, 1870.

¹³⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-4, fol. 11), Hallam to Ellis, April 6, 1870.

Reviews of Ellis' publications began to appear at this time. In June 1870, the Athenaeum categorized Early English Pronunciation, II as "a work which stands unrivalled in any modern language and is the sure foundation of English philology." The principal criticism directed to this volume by the reviewer concerned Ellis' discussion of Gothic which appeared to be no more than a resumé of different theories held by German writers.¹³⁷

When Sweet reviewed both parts of the Ellis work, he ominously predicted that since there were so few competent dialectologists, it was probable that the phonetic tools suggested by Ellis would "rust away from want of work or else to be blunted by unskillful hands."¹³⁸ Sweet eventually revived his own optimism and produced "tools" in the form of Narrow and Broad Romic.

The principal American review of these volumes was made by James Hadley, Professor of Greek at Yale College and President of the American Oriental Society. In a very comprehensive analysis he stated that Ellis had surpassed all his predecessors in the field. He particularly admired his scientific precision as well as his "simple love of truth."

¹³⁷"English Pronunciation," rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I, II, by A.J. Ellis, Athenaeum, June 4, 1870, p. 326.

¹³⁸Henry Sweet, rev. of Early English Pronunciation, I, II, Academy, 2 (June 1, 1871), 296.

On the other hand, he did recognize that some of the evidence was very involved and inconsistent.¹³⁹

Hadley could not agree with Ellis on the pronunciation of long u in the fourteenth century. It seemed incredible to him that Englishmen pronounced the vowel like the French u in spite of Ellis' statement that it was so spoken in the fourteenth century dialects of East Anglia, Devonshire, and Cumberland.¹⁴⁰ Hadley, on the other hand, genuinely respected Ellis' efforts to determine the "actual living utterances of Henry VIII and Elizabeth."¹⁴¹ He strongly disagreed with Ellis that since the fifteenth century, as well as the seventeenth, were both periods of disturbance and revolution because of the political agitation and great mobility of people, the sounds were drastically affected in those centuries. Hadley felt that the sounds of the English language had been changing uninterruptedly from the beginning.¹⁴²

The publication of Part III of Early English Pronunciation was announced in the Academy of November 15, 1870. It was to contain the normalization of Chaucer's orthography based on the Harleian MS along with specimens from Gower and Wycliff.¹⁴³

¹³⁹Hadley, op. cit., p. 420.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 426.

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 428.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 432.

¹⁴³"Intelligence," Academy, 2 (November 15, 1870), 56.

Ellis' investigation was already becoming awkward in some places, and the subscribers were bound to have some difficulty in making use of the work. It was filled with valuable material that was distributed among numerous foot-notes and among chapters that do not follow a chronological sequence.

In January, a further announcement appeared in the Third Report of the Chaucer Society. Part III of Early English Pronunciation had been "promist" [sic] but would have to be delayed because Ellis, suffering again from one of his bouts of nervous exhaustion, had had a severe "breakdown." We do not know the exact nature of his illness. Ellis, however, had recovered sufficiently to be able to devote himself to his work for a single hour a day. The society hoped that Part III would appear by February, but Ellis' delays were a great embarrassment to those who were responsible for notifying the disappointed subscribers. Originally the Chaucer Society had scheduled Part III as an 1870 book.¹⁴⁴ Its membership was getting little for its money in 1870. Shortly afterwards Ellis felt able to resume his work. Fortunately, much of the section on Chaucer already had been researched while Part II was awaiting publication. In February 1871, to everyone's surprise, Part III was published.

¹⁴⁴ Third Report of the Chaucer Society, January 1871, p. 1.

CHAPTER XI

INITIATING PLANS FOR AN ENGLISH DIALECT SOCIETY

Setting aside momentarily the progress of Ellis' historical investigations, we shall examine his important contribution to the growth of English dialectal studies since he provided the prime impetus for the creation of the English Dialect Society. Securing the endorsement of both William Aldis Wright and F.J. Furnivall, two of England's most distinguished philologists, Ellis enthusiastically dwelt at length on the goals and possible organization of such a group and offered detailed plans for enlisting the help of the nation's amateur collectors of the rapidly-disappearing provincial pronunciations in order to preserve a record for posterity. His efforts also took their origin in his need to acquire reliable information in connection with his work on Early English Pronunciation, Part III.

By engaging the respected scholar, Walter Skeat, to implement the plans for such a society, Ellis was soon able to return to his own pursuits. His foresight in recognizing the necessity for a dialect society is laudable. Nineteenth century philological scholarship is indebted to A.J. Ellis. His role was an important one because he was

the principal scholarly authority behind all of its extensive, but all too frequently amateurish, studies. His views carried great weight on many matters. Let us examine carefully the part which he played in connection with the Society, for the last twenty years of his life were inextricably associated with its progress.

At this juncture we must first examine the ideas which Ellis proposed in the "Notice" prefaced to Early English Pronunciation, III, in which he observed that it would take him three or more years before the remainder of the work could be produced. He was still bent on writing Chapter XI of his original Table of Contents so that it could provide some account of the existing varieties of English pronunciation: dialectic, antiquated, American, colonial, vulgar, etc., in order to illustrate his investigation of the sounds of earlier centuries.

In 1871 Ellis took a giant step, one that was far more significant than the request which he had earlier made for some provincial dialect specimens illustrating the Chaucerian i. He recognized the need for extensive cooperation from those who were familiar with individual dialects and invited the general assistance of all who read the "Notice." Up to this point in his investigation he had been collecting words of high dialectal interest with regard to pronunciation, but he was disturbed by the difficulty of persuading his informants to give him the

so-called mispronunciations of the words as well. He particularly wanted those forms of words which were common to all parts of the country.¹

The results obtained from the earlier announcement in the Athenaeum were disappointing, and by 1871 Ellis realized that he would require literally hundreds of dialectal communications in order to compare with validity the large number which he was beginning to amass. Ellis sets forth the reason for all this labor: "understanding the unmixed dialectic English of the XIIth and XIIIth centuries and to find traces of the pronunciations prevalent in the more mixed forms of the XIVth, XVth, XVIth, and XVIIth centuries."² He now earnestly invited the help of resident clergymen, non-conformist ministers, national and British schoolmasters and country gentlemen with literary tastes.

In connection with his "Notice" Ellis took advantage of every possible useful contact. For example, he sent a letter at this time to his friend J. Hammond Trumbull in Hartford, Connecticut, an ethnologist who shared much of the same interests in dialectal matters. Ellis was anxious he wrote, to collect "genuine Americanisms" inasmuch as the "vulgarest vulgarisms," he believed, contained seventeenth

¹Ellis, First Dialect Report, p. xix.

²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. vi.

century usages which would assist him with his project. Ellis was anxious, he wrote, to include notes on such matters in his proposed twelfth chapter, which he optimistically designated as "Results of the Preceding Investigation."³

In the "Notice" on page xii of Early English Pronunciation, III, he also briefly solicited readers to state if they would be willing to join in the creation of an English Dialect Society. The public now had the opportunity of participating in a remarkable series of scholarly activities which were to culminate in Joseph Wright's great English Dialect Dictionary of 1905.

While covering some of the highlights in the growth of the dialect movement, Wolfgang Viereck's recent study on Wright's work makes only a brief reference to Ellis' announcement in the preliminary pages of Early English Pronunciation, III. He gives scant acknowledgment to the impetus that Ellis gave to launching the English Dialect Society.⁴ His pioneering spirit, nonetheless, deserves recognition for implementing the existence of such a group.

In Notes & Queries of March 12, 1870 Wright had voiced the need for such a body, believing that the

³Trinity College, Hartford (Conn.), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, March 18, 1871.

⁴Wolfgang Viereck, "The English Dialect Society and Its Dictionary," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 1970, pp. 28-29.

preservation of the dialects could best be accomplished by enlisting clergymen in the effort. Wright did not develop the plan to any degree after the initial suggestion in Notes & Queries, but he did indicate his willingness to assist with such a project.⁵

When Ellis saw the idea which Wright had posed, he promptly wrote to Furnivall that he wanted to include himself among the organizers of such an English dialect society and suggested enlisting the support of Skeat, Morris, Murray, Payne, and Barnes. He emphasized that the use of one orthography was the only possible way to deal systematically with the dialects and, therefore, proposed the use of his own Glossic. Ellis also recognized the need for utilizing those glossaries which had already been compiled by various local enthusiasts. He had been "brooding" over the whole idea of this kind of society for a long time, he said, but had not written about the idea to anyone. To emphasize his commitment to the formation of such a society, Ellis wrote his letter completely in Glossic, thus making it necessary for Furnivall to decode all of his thinking on the subject. Immediately, Furnivall sent a copy of this Glossic letter to William Aldis Wright in Cambridge. At the top of this copy Furnivall wrote

⁵William Aldis Wright, "Announcement," Notes & Queries, 4 S. V, March 12, 1870, p. 271.

that the use of Glossic "seemed" like a good notion inasmuch as it would be necessary to employ some kind of a fixed alphabet for the publications of an English dialect society.⁶ In his letter of March 12 to Furnivall, Ellis referred to himself as having originally "broached" the idea of an English dialect society and expressed the desire that Wright would assume leadership of the body. Ellis felt that it was better to wait for the scheme to be developed before actually getting in touch with Wright. Furnivall's eagerness to share Ellis' idea with Wright seems to give the impression that he believed that Ellis alone was responsible for the idea of a dialect society.

Several weeks later Notes & Queries received some endorsements of the original idea which Wright had proposed about the formation of a dialect society. Joseph Payne, for one, indicated that there was a strong need for a uniform system of spelling and heartily recommended Glossic because Ellis was one "whose whole life has been devoted to phonetics."⁷

Ellis presented in a subsequent letter to Wright a "crude" plan for the society, though in fact it is comprehensive. He suggested that in spite of the fact this plan

⁶Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69³², Ellis to Furnivall, March 12, 1870.

⁷Joseph Payne, "To the Editor," Notes & Queries, S. V, April 9, 1870.

was not polished and was premature, the Reverend Walter Skeat, who evinced much interest in dialects, might also be willing to offer additional suggestions about the operation of such a society.⁸

Ellis, on the other hand, was disturbed that Furnivall had precipitated matters by sending the Glossic letter to Wright. Therefore, when Ellis sent Wright his letter in which he had presented the tentative plan, he pointed out that the notion of a suitable alphabet had been in his mind for a long time and was necessary in order to make comparisons that would be valuable. Ellis carefully explained to Wright that he was planning for Notes & Queries an account of his British Glossic, a reduction of the Universal Glossic, which was as accurate as Melville Bell's Visible Speech.

Ellis was anxious about securing Wright's approval of the Glossic scheme, and with feeling he wrote at great length about the progressive erosion of the English dialects in their time. His letter decidedly gives the impression that he was preventing Wright from exercising any initiative at all in the founding of such a society.

He also pointed out the need for securing adequate financial support from an organization like the Early English Text Society. In this letter to Furnivall, Ellis

⁸Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69, Ellis to Wright, May 5, 1870.

25 Argyle Road
 W. Aldis Wright Kensington W
 Trin. Coll. Cambridge 5 May 70
 Dear Sir

By a note from Furnivall last night I find he sent off to you a letter I wrote him in Glottic in which for the first time I broached an idea of an English Dialect Society, which I was delirious of going to the head. I had not intended to write to you about it till the scheme was better prepared in my own head, and especially till my paper to be read at the Philological Socy on 20 May was in type. But as Furnivall has pressed a printed matter I will send you a short ^{account of the} notion of the plan which had occurred to me, & is still very crude. Why it is all the better after all that you have it in the crude state as you will be much better able to digest it than I can, & will probably talk it over with Deat. Your letter to N & Q has recently set the matter afloat. The Cttee of the Phil. Socy on orthography led me to perfect my scheme of spelling, in which I have been for a long time endeavouring to find a really practical means of writing all English dialects in one alphabet - for I have had this object steadily before me ever since in elaborating my 18th & 5th Chapters of Early English Pron. I recognise the

25. A.J. Ellis Explains to William Aldis Wright Detailed Plans for Establishing an English Dialect Society, May 5, 1870.
 (Courtesy of Trinity College Library, Cant.)

necessity of knowing the modern form of English dialects in order to understand the old form of English which is purely dialectic. Without a single alphabet for all proper comparisons can be made. I send you a proof (which you can keep) of my universal classic, which goes beyond dialectic use, and is as delicate as Melville Bell's Verba Speech. The British Classic will be a reduction of this. A note of mine in N & R, already in type, which will probably appear this week or next, gives a notion of the reduction but I have to get the complete form first. The examples in the proof gives a notion of the power of this.

What we want is - all dialects in one alphabet - existing glossaries verified & respelled - existing examples. 30 - new & better chosen examples (the choice is of extreme importance & must be a matter of much deliberation - Songs of Solomon are book) - idiomatic turns of phrase in diff. dialects (compare what do you want in my examples) - careful pronunciation to discriminate distinct - new & simultaneous collections. Hard work & would directly. Dialects have worn much (as I know) in the last 30 years are now difficult to catch, both in sound & word, & in 30 more years may be dead.

Now how to do this? My notion is an English dialect socy. An association that will work, & a large constituency to pay for printing, which shd not be done expensively, but cheaply, like the E.E.D.S.

(Continued)

The peculiarity of my notion consists in having a set of referees for keeping the work together. You would make the best possible general referee, Morris or Skeat or both the grammatical referees, I could undertake the part of phonetic referee.

Then the local referees, should in each district form a centre of operation for ^{collection} collection, revision, re-writing, & reporting. It is essential that each local referee should be orally acquainted with the dialect of his neighbourhood. Barnes for Dorset, Atkinson for Cleveland, Murray for Scotland, are examples. Others will find themselves if we ever set the scheme afloat. These local referees hunt-up people who have been making collections. Heaps of small collections exist, which when brought together, a society become important. Half a dozen words thus receive a value and a place. We must not wait to print collections, but give rough notes as they arise; subsequent arrangement is clerical work, under a digested plan which can't be settled till the nature of the collections is known. Hence a quarterly journal and be necessary, containing condensed accounts of progress, ^{and progress} indices yearly with index available, each yearly index extending over the whole matter previously published, that is incorporating the previous index — a most important matter. We should want a little pamphlet explaining devoted to the mode of working, & the points requiring particular attention in phonetisation. This I shall concoct soon, not just yet, for I have too much on

(Continued)

hand. I have notes on the point, but the matter requires great thought.

Here you have a crude sketch, which I am sure you could fill up. Would an important office or two have been omitted, as General Secretary, Editor of the Quarterly &c.

I am sure there must be some two or three hundred people interested in this subject, & with as many guineas a year for printing & gratuitous literary work, much might be done.

My alphabet is especially arranged to be easy to print. It is founded on English analogies & is easy to read & to write.

It is delicate & is able to give shades of difference not yet contemplated. But it can be used roughly too, and even a rough use is better than none.

I send you two lectures I have recently delivered, dealing principally on the educational & social use of English as a subsidiary alphabet. My paper at the Phil. Soc. takes up the philological side. I have hopes of an ethnological use, a friend of mine, fresh from Queensland, taking it up for Australian native dialects. I hope from him to get some information also.

When you have time let me know what you think about all this. I'd like to read my letter also if you can manage it.

Very truly yours
Alex. J. Ellis.

(Continued)

explained, in all likelihood to Wright's annoyance, a plan for making him (i.e., Wright) the general referee in conjunction with Morris and Skeat, the grammatical referees. Then, since he had no intention of assuming a minor role in the operation of the planned dialect society, Ellis also proposed himself as the phonetic referee, i.e., consultant. His scheme also included a series of local referees responsible for each district. He had worked out the entire arrangement for collecting, verifying, revising, and rewriting the materials which would be sent in by the contributors. He also proposed to Wright special assignments for particular scholars. In Ellis' plan, for example, the poet William Barnes was put in charge of Dorset. Another important aspect of the situation was that provision had to be made for rescuing some obscure collections of dialect words which could possibly be lost if their authors did not succeed in getting them published.⁹

Then when Ellis also proposed a quarterly journal which would give progress reports and indices, including a pamphlet to give information on problems of phonetisation, it seemed that the entire matter had been swept inexorably out of Wright's hands. Ellis was always ready to "concoct" notes on short notice.¹⁰

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

Also in the same letter to Furnivall he enclosed a brief organizational chart with provision for the name of the quarterly journal's editor along with that for the "Grand Secretary."¹¹ In the light of Ellis' sincerity and willingness to work as exhibited by the enormous amount of published work to his credit already, one may logically assume that the letter does not indicate that Ellis necessarily wished to thrust Wright aside. On the contrary, Ellis' passion for organization had to be satisfied. He, therefore, was exercising what he believed to be his prerogative in describing this new organization according to his conception of its operation.

Possibly feeling that Wright might react with pique, Ellis wrote to him another letter on May 14, in which there is a reference to a new suggestion for creating a dialect society which just had appeared in the Athenaeum.¹² Ellis was worried because no answer had yet come to him from Cambridge commenting on the elaborate organizational plans set forth in the May 5 letter. Ellis was only too sensitive to the possibility that Wright was not pleased with his ebullience. One can easily sense Ellis' awareness that Wright would be irritated. Ellis was, nevertheless, disturbed lest the latest Athenaeum reference to a dialect

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"Announcement," Athenaeum, May 14, 1870, p. 643.

society be attributed in Wright's mind to Ellis. With dismay he wrote that in his opinion Furnivall, in his wonted fashion, had been the one responsible for the present unsigned "Announcement." Tactfully, Ellis informed Wright that he was still "maturing plans" for such a society.¹³

The problems involved with gathering dialect material were very well understood by Skeat, who had frequently discussed the subject with Ellis. The lamentable failure of previous efforts to get glossaries published would discourage possibly interested parties to submit work to anyone who might be willing to serve as an editor because much time would usually elapse and a glossarist would die, leaving behind no one who could interpret accurately the manuscript, or else there would be so much confusion that the "chaos would surpass the power of an editor." Owing to these problems, Skeat enthusiastically welcomed Ellis' proposal for the formation of an English Dialect Society.¹⁴

During the period which was to pass before commencing his labors for Part IV, Ellis hoped that there was sufficient time for his friends to provide him with the required dialectal information. In order to widen the circle of possibilities, he therefore proposed reprinting

¹³Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69, Ellis to Wright, May 14, 1870.

¹⁴Walter W. Skeat, Five Original Provincial Glossaries (London: Trübner, 1876), p. 1.

the February 13, 1871 preliminary "Notice" of Part III separately. This time, however, he planned to print it with a number of changes. He informed Wright that the reprint would provide an additional opportunity for mentioning the formation of an English Dialect Society. He wrote with conviction and said, "I have the formation of such a society much at heart."¹⁵

He wrote to Wright again on March 2, 1871, reminding him that though he had earlier "mooted the question," of a dialect society, he had been unable to go ahead with any action. By this time Wright became mollified towards Ellis and assented to become the leader of such a group himself. He became reconciled to the Ellis' "Notice" in Part III with its request for aid in dialect research and the possible formation of a dialect society.¹⁶

He invited Wright to check the printer's proof of this reprint. Ellis was again becoming enervated from all his activity. After writing the first two chapters of Part IV, he could do no more in connection with a dialect society project than to send out such a tentative suggestion. He arranged to have one hundred copies of the circular put at the disposal of Wright. Ellis knew that he should not become too deeply involved in a dialect

¹⁵Trinity College, Cambridge, Add. MS c69, Ellis to Wright, March 2, 1871.

¹⁶Ibid.

society because he was becoming alarmed at the burden of having to write personally in order to engage people in this new group.¹⁷

W.W. Skeat, meanwhile, sent a copy of the "Prospectus" of the English Dialect Society to Prince Bonaparte. It seems probable that Ellis encouraged Skeat to invite the Prince to consider becoming a founding member.¹⁸ It was Skeat who actually launched the English Dialect Society. In the "Intelligence" column of the Academy in June 1873, the Reverend Skeat formally announced the creation of the English Dialect Society. Forty dialect enthusiasts had agreed to join. Many of them were members of both the Philological Society and the Early English Text Society. For a half guinea per annum each member would receive one copy of each publication planned for the subsequent years.¹⁹

Thomas Hallam expressed his pleasure to Ellis regarding the formation of the new society.²⁰ F.J. Furnivall also was most willing to advance its aims, and when Ellis spoke to him of Hallam's enthusiasm for Midland dialects,

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Cambridge University Library, Add. MS, Bonaparte to Skeat, May 7, 1873.

¹⁹ "Intelligence," Academy, 4 (June 1873), 200.

²⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 23), Hallam to Ellis, June 18, 1873.

Furnivall wrote an encouraging letter to Hallam in which he expressed confidence that the English Dialect Society would stand to gain by his help.²¹ Hallam was so pleased with both Furnivall and Ellis' recognition of his abilities that he promptly wrote to Skeat asking to be enrolled among the list of members. Accordingly, Hallam received the English Dialect Society's Rules for Collecting Words.²²

In Manchester a group of men interested in language and literature, styled the Manchester Literary Club, took steps to establish cordial relations with the newly formed English Dialect Society while bringing out their own county glossary by J.H. Nodal, who shortly would be prominent in all of the affairs of the new national society. The Glossary Committee of the Manchester Literary Club entitled their publication The Dialect and Archaisms of Lancashire. As early as 1874, Mr. Nodal, for no apparent reason, began to develop a decidedly negative attitude towards Ellis. In this new Lancashire glossary he did not make use of Glossic, which, by this time, was clearly proving to be an effective notation.

The English Dialect Society very early adopted Glossic as its official method of indicating pronunciation,

²¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 49), Furnivall to Hallam, July 2, 1873.

²²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 55), Hallam to Skeat, October 14, 1873.

but Ellis urged that inasmuch as every member was supposed to be proficient in its use, the Society was remiss in not providing a page of explanation in its various publications. He became dispirited when glossarists in the new organization would devise their own schemes for indicating pronunciation which had as much validity as the school boy pronunciation of Latin and Greek. He was also critical of those who made references to grammatical construction, but he caustically observed that in most cases the absence of any grammatical references had to be attributed to the paucity of the compiler's knowledge.²³

Nodal, for example, had reported that the Manchester Literary Club had resolved to utilize a simple table of sounds and symbols. Ellis clearly disapproved of Nodal's alternative plan. He predicted that it would prove absolutely useless in serious dialect study because those who could not understand Glossic had "everything to learn in phonology."²⁴ The tone of Ellis' remarks was highly critical, and he further condemned any future attempts which Nodal might try to make for adopting a simple table of sounds. This kind of sharp response revealed Ellis' authority. Many people were inclined to accept Ellis' views on Glossic.

23"Notes and News," Academy, 5 (January 10, 1874)
43.

24"Notes and News," Academy, 5 (January 10, 1874)
43.

In America, Ellis' part in the formation of the English Dialect Society was also brought to the attention of the American Philological Society by its President, Professor Francis A. March. He said that Ellis' "inspiration" lay behind the Society's effort to collect the living varieties of English speech.²⁵ As for the future of English dialect study, W.W. Skeat optimistically observed to the Philological Society in 1875 that the prospects of the English Dialect Society were "very satisfactory."²⁶ In 1890 Skeat's opinion would be truly justified when the Society brought out another version of Part V of Early English Pronunciation in Glossic.

In 1879 Ellis was delighted to learn that the English Dialect Society's small library had been placed on the shelves of the Central Public Library in the old Town Hall of Manchester as a result of the arrangements by the Free Libraries Committee of the Manchester Corporation.²⁷ Concern for the future of the Society was also shown in the Annual Report for 1879. It was the opinion of the

²⁵F.A. March, "Address," Proceedings of the American Philological Society, July 1874, pp. 5-6.

²⁶Walter W. Skeat, "Report on English Dialects" in "Fourth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society, Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday, 21st of May, 1875," by Richard Morris, Transactions of the Philological Society (1875), p. 141.

²⁷"English Dialect Society," Athenaeum, March 1, 1879, p. 184.

officers of the English Dialect Society that the duration of the organization would be only five more years because it was likely that the aims of the membership could be attained if a "concerted effort" would be made.²⁸ This did not prove to be an accurate assessment of the Society's future, for in 1890 Ellis published the Glossic version of Early English Pronunciation, V.

Ellis was an important figure in the general affairs of the English Dialect Society, and though he was unable to devote any considerable part of his energies actively in that organization as the years went on, he frequently was called upon by its members to furnish information and guidance in many projects parallel to his own investigations. Further, as President of the Philological Society for a number of years, he always remained mindful of the vital role that the English Dialect Society was playing in recording the sounds of nineteenth century England. Ellis was in a position to advance its aims and secure the cooperation of some of the leading scholars of the time for the local collectors of dialect.

²⁸Annual Report of the English Dialect Society,
1879, p. 1.

CHAPTER XII

MODIFYING AND EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION AND FIRST ATTEMPTS TO SURVEY THE PROVINCIAL DIALECTS (1871-73)

Ellis steadily advanced in his quest for the elusive English sounds of former centuries by examining contemporary dialectal variants. Work on the conjectured pronunciation of Chaucer's "Prologue" to the Cantérbury Tales occupied most of his time. In spite of the satisfactory progress which he was making, the vital supporting Societies were trying to cope with unexpected financial difficulties, a development which alarmed Ellis very much. With work on Part IV then in progress, he frequently needed to confer with Prince Bonaparte concerning European dialects as well as to rely upon the assistance of Thomas Hallam, his loyal but stubborn associate, to obtain material about the Derbyshire dialects. It became increasingly apparent that a detailed dialectal map would have to be constructed as he assembled large quantities of unrelated materials. Such a dialectal map was to become the focus for all subsequent efforts. The details connected with the abovementioned events provide interesting insights into Ellis' scholarly methods. His plans indicate an unflagging zeal, but the



26. A.J. Ellis, 1872
(Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London)

task which he set for himself was far from completion. We shall examine Ellis' activities at the point following the publication of Part III of Early English Pronunciation.

In Part III, which appeared in 1871, Ellis expounded at great length on his theory about modernizing the text of old prose writers. His views hold much interest because they are different from the objections he had to modernizing the Canterbury Tales. He admired Sir Edward Strachey's Globe edition of Morte D'Arthur because the final e's were in no way crucial, and with satisfaction he observed that no rhyme needed "to be murdered."¹ He was pleased with the idea that certain words could be replaced with current ones so that the modern reader who ordinarily would not have translated the work was able to share the old prose writer's story and spirit.

With respect to Chaucer's work, scholars examined with minute care the statements which Ellis made about certain words as they appeared in manuscript sources of the Canterbury Tales. Many, of course, were familiar with the texts and sharply challenged a number of his points.

One, for example, observed that the word men in Early English is commonly used, like the French word on, with a singular verb, as in The Knight's Tale (Wright, 1526)-- "For al day meteth men at unset stevene." In line 232 of

¹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 985.

the Prologue, Ellis claimed that all the MSS reading "men mote" should be changed to read "Men mot yeue siluer to the poure freeres." Ellis did not accept the line as an ordinary five-accent line if in the word yeue the second e is rapidly uttered. He declared the line was an Alexandrine. There was general disagreement about those lines (148, 232, 260, 764) which Ellis considered to be Alexandrines.²

Promptly Ellis responded to this criticism in the Athenaeum. With indignation he stated that "of course" he knew about the singular form of men, but indicated that he did not agree with that usage, notwithstanding the unanimous testimony of the manuscripts. Though the Harleian MS contained the plural men mooten, the others with men moote could not be dismissed with an excuse that "the manuscripts are all wrong." Because the whole matter of Alexandrines had little bearing on the topic of pronunciation, he touched upon it only briefly in Part III.³

Ellis was particularly adept at writing terse explanations and definitions. In Part III he wrote authoritatively that "Chaucer's language may be described as a degraded Anglo-Saxon, into which French words had been interwoven, without interfering with such grammatical forms

²"Early English Pronunciation," rev. of Early English Pronunciation III, by A.J. Ellis, Athenaeum, September 2, 1871, p. 393.

³A.J. Ellis, "Chaucer's Alexandrines," Athenaeum, September 30, 1871, p. 431.

as had been left, to the extent of about 20 per cent, and containing occasionally complete French phrases, of which, however, none occur in the Prologue."⁴

The distillation of many years' work on Chaucer's pronunciation resulted in Ellis' conjectured pronunciation in Palaeotype of the "Prologue" which he printed in Part III. Determining the pronunciation was an extremely difficult task, and Ellis was fortunate in having secured the assistance of the distinguished French scholar, Henry Nicol, who obligingly worked on the proofs of these pages for Ellis. He also made suggestions concerning evidence of French origin for some of the words.⁵

American scholars were also interested in Ellis' reconstructions. C.A. Bristed at this time published an analysis of the first three volumes of Early English Pronunciation. For example, he presented numerous criticisms of Ellis' statements on diphthongs and consonantal combinations; nevertheless, he took pains to express his admiration for the exhaustive treatment of Chaucerian pronunciation in Part III.⁶

⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 651.

⁵Ibid., p. 724.

⁶C.A. Bristed, "Some Notes on Ellis' Early English Pronunciation," Transactions of the American Philological Society, II (1872), 114-37, passim.

The material in Part III again treated the problems of sixteenth century orthoepists and proved helpful in connection with the researches of other nineteenth century scholars. Francis Fry, a Bible scholar, currently was at work on an edition of a particularly rare version of Tyndale's New Testament (1535). While the sheets were passing through the press, he sent Ellis a copy of his alphabetical list of nearly three hundred words which had an orthography completely different from those found in the Chaucerian manuscripts. Ellis cleverly deduced that the strange spellings could have been those of a Flemish compositor in Antwerp, where Tyndale was at that time being imprisoned.⁷ Ellis realized that the problem of Tyndale's language offered much challenge, but he had to restrain himself from extending his investigation of this point.

Wilhelm Sopp's study of the spelling and conjectured pronunciation of the English in Tyndale's Bible proved difficult owing to the limitations of the Latin alphabet. The letters and combinations could not do justice to the exact sounds of the period. Sopp's work appeared to have corroborated Ellis' study. Though Ellis does not treat Tyndale's work other than in footnotes, Sopp felt that his own study dealt with an important topic which Ellis had

⁷Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, pp. 981-82.

neglected and one which possessed much philological value.⁸

When Part III of Early English Pronunciation appeared, there was a hint of cavilling among its reviewers, some intimating that the author had been too exacting in his general treatment. The Westminster Review sternly dismissed such uncharitable anonymous remarks as the one referring to Ellis as the "Dryasdust spirit, as Carlyle would say."⁹ Approvingly it observed that Ellis' work would never have to be done again.

Another unpleasant report in March 1871 concerning the state of Ellis' health had to be brought again to the attention of the membership of the Early English Text Society. Subscribers were advised that Ellis would have to abstain from all phonetic work for a long time. The report intimated that Part IV of Early English Pronunciation would not appear until at least 1874 or 1875.¹⁰

Two months later, though, Ellis was sufficiently recovered to respond to inquiries from John B. Noyes, who, along with Charles S. Peirce, had written in the April 1864

⁸ Wilhelm Sopp, "Orthographie und Aussprache der Ersten Neuenglischen Bibelübersetzung von William Tyndale," Anglia, 12 (1889), 274-78.

⁹ "Belles Lettres," Westminster and Foreign Quarterly Review, 96 (October 1, 1871), 565-66.

¹⁰ Seventh Report of the Committee of the Early English Text Society, February 1871, pp. 10-12.

North American Review a study on the pronunciation of Shakespeare based on the writings of the early orthoepists. Ellis was very critical of their efforts because they had not considered Salesbury. Noyes had requested proofs of Part III, particularly those sections covering pages 917 and the footnotes dealing with pages 975-980. In his reply, Ellis brought to Noyes' attention an undated book which seemed to be of Shakespeare's time, one which he had come upon in the British Museum: Certain Grammar Questions for the Exercise of Young Schollers in the Learning of the Accidence.¹¹

Ellis carefully considered any book which had bearing on his study. For example, he was familiar with Richard Grant White's early study of Shakespearean pronunciation, "Memorandums on English Pronunciations in the Elizabethan Era."¹² It had appeared as an appendix to the twelfth volume of Shakespeare's works which White had edited. Ellis admired White's investigations and proceeded to make abstracts of the study for future inclusion in his own section on Elizabethan

¹¹New York Public Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Noyes, April 3, 1871.

¹²Richard Grant White, ed. The Works of William Shakespeare: The Plays Edited from the Folio of MDCXXIII with Various Readings from All the Editions and All the Commentators, Notes, Introductory Remarks, a Historical Sketch of the Text, an Account of the Rise and Progress of the English Drama, a Memoir of the Poet, and an Essay upon His Genius (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1857-66).

pronunciation.¹³

Among the other works which Ellis used was Edwin Abbott's A Shakespearean Grammar, a basic account of Elizabethan syntax. Abbott's views on prosody, however, were not acceptable for the most part to Ellis, who personally knew the Reverend Abbott, Head Master of the City of London Schools. Ellis was not able to revise Abbott's manuscript of the work because he [Ellis] was at that time in poor health. At a later time, however, he made suggestions to Abbott about the section on prosody. Though Abbott believed that Ellis' method of scansion differed from his own in some respects, he acknowledged Ellis' modifications in the published version of the work.¹⁴ Ellis was reluctant to pursue the subject of scansion in Early English Pronunciation because his investigation was already broad enough in its scope.

Ellis concentrated on Shakespeare's pronunciation (and the Elizabethans'), but he also considered some peripheral matters. For example, he had given some thought to the matter of Shakespearean authorship although he felt it did not relate to the work on which he was engaged. It was enough for him that the Elizabethans considered the plays to be Shakespeare's. Ellis held the opinion that Henry VI was

¹³ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, pp. 966-73.

¹⁴ Edwin A. Abbott, A Shakespearean Grammar: An Attempt to Illustrate Some of the Differences between Elizabethan and Modern English (London: Macmillan, 1871), p. xxiv.

not Shakespeare's composition. He would have liked to have extended the investigation of "resolutions" (e.g., is't into is it), accents, rhymes, and meaning into the work of all of Shakespeare's contemporaries were it not for the necessity of having to limit his philological research.¹⁵

Melville Bell followed Ellis' reconstruction of Shakespearean pronunciation with interest and noted in one of his University Lectures that it was similar to those which still "linger" in some of the English counties and in the Scottish Lowlands.¹⁶ Bell viewed the Bard's utterances as the language spoken by the best speakers in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

In Early English Pronunciation Ellis uniformly spelled the poet's name "Shakspere", basing the form on his own examination of the acknowledged signatures. He sent a letter to the Athenaeum on the spelling of the name with a full citation of the opinions of the Elizabethan orthoepists to support his own choice of spelling. In his mind there was no reason why the name had to be pronounced in modern times in accordance with the way that the dramatist himself had done. He probably called himself, in

¹⁵Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Weymouth, May 13, 1871.

¹⁶Melville Bell, University Lectures in Phonetics Delivered in Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A., and Oxford University, England, with an Appendix on the Phonetics of Roman Letters (New York: Edgar S. Werner, 1887), p. 6.

Ellis' view, "Shahkspair."¹⁷

Part III of Early English Pronunciation has relevance for other studies of Elizabethan language, as Evelyn Scholl has shown in recent decades. She examined contemporary song books to determine Elizabethan pronunciation because they were a more accurate guide than was available in other sixteenth century documents and books. Scholl examined the thirty-six volumes of The English School of Lutenist Song Writers produced between 1597 and 1632, edited in 1920 by the Reverend Edmund H. Fellowes. Throughout Scholl's work, she drew frequently upon material in Ellis' Early English Pronunciation to confirm or disprove what the rhymes and rhythms in the hundreds of songs in that huge collection would appear to indicate. Certain examples of vowel combinations, however, were not treated in Ellis' work. The analysis of the publications of the lutenists would not have been possible had not Ellis laid the groundwork so carefully long before Scholl.¹⁸

By April 1871, some writing for Part IV had begun. Ellis had already written to John B. Noyes for information

¹⁷A.J. Ellis, "The Pronunciation of Shakespeare's Name," Athenaeum, April 17, 1872, p. 207.

¹⁸Evelyn H. Scholl, "New Light on Seventeenth Century Pronunciation from the English School of Lutenist Song Writers," Publications of the Modern Language Association, 59 (1944), 398-445.

about the American pronunciations in Major Downing's "Letters" which had attained such great popularity in the New York Daily Advertiser in 1833-34. Though the material was not spelled phonetically, Ellis felt that it compared with the Scottish spellings used by Sir Walter Scott. The work, a political sketch about General Jackson's government, raised questions in Ellis' mind concerning the authenticity of some of the Americanisms. Another work which caused Ellis much worry was Artemus Ward His Book by Charles F. Browne, consisting of contributions to the New York Vanity Fair about 1860. Ellis requested Noyes to transcribe the work into Glossic because of its containing possible remnants of seventeenth and eighteenth century pronunciations.¹⁹

During this period when Ellis was trying to move ahead with Part IV, he kept up an interesting correspondence with other scholars. The American biographer of Whittier and Longfellow, Thomas Wentworth Storrow Higginson (1823-1911) at this period wrote to Ellis about a variety of matters. He had served as the Colonel of the first Negro regiment in the Union Army (1862-64). Ellis was pleased to receive from him a copy of his volume of Slave Songs. This work made Ellis "like Oliver Twist, long for more in some directions" although he regretted that the

¹⁹ New York Public Library, Manuscript Collections, Miscellaneous Papers, Ellis to Noyes, April 3, 1871.

phonetic orthography used by Higginson had not been more systematic. For comparative philology the system which Higginson had adopted was inadequate for the old "Slave Speech." Ellis was familiar with the literary Negro English in the colony of Surinam where the language was spelled in the Dutch orthography. Ellis suggested that Higginson compare a Dutch Testament and Psalms with an English version in order to see how a cultivated language such as Dutch could be "broken down." Ellis believed that since the areas in Surinam where the slaves lived had by this time been destroyed, there was still an abundance of "general Niggerish" which sorely needed to be recorded. Ellis did not view the language as inconsequential but rather as a variety that had a "living philological value."²⁰

Ellis was such a forceful personality that his letters, for the most part, reveal the man in all his strengths and weaknesses, particularly in his professional vanities. He can, nevertheless, be seen in even sharper relief in his relations with unusual people whose intense individuality exercised an important influence upon him. At this point it may be helpful to treat in some detail a colorful personage who figured very much in Ellis' affairs from 1870 onwards.

²⁰ Harvard University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Higginson, November 18, 1872.

The scholarly world shared by the nineteenth century philologists was a fascinating place filled with the excitement arising from new linguistic discoveries. The stimulating meetings of the Philological Society attracted a wide diversity of personalities. Because Alexander Ellis' vibrant intellect commanded the attention of the membership, there were many who were willing to occupy a secondary position in the Society's affairs and were content to allow Ellis to be their spokesman on many matters.

There is an unusual quality in the picture we are given of Ellis' intimate contact with a personage of pseudo-royalty. During the exciting years in which he had been devoting his energy to the study of phonetics, he had been also enjoying the association of Napoleon's nephew, Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, born at Thornbury, Worcestershire, whose extensive wealth contributed a kind of elegant Continental glamor to his circle of acquaintances. The prosaic world of scholars who were busily laying the foundations for twentieth century linguistic science contrasts sharply with the dilettantish prince, His Highness of Canino. He emerges from the pages of his correspondence with Ellis as a somewhat amateurish phonetician whose self-effacing manner contrasts with Ellis' rather ponderous formality and sense of impressive dignity.

The dialects of the European languages were of great interest to Prince Bonaparte, for he had devoted years to

analyzing the regional dialects of Italy above all others. He had also worked for years on French, Basque, and Uralian dialects. This interest led him to studies of English dialects, and he arranged for a privately printed series of versions of the Song of Solomon, as well as two extracts from St. Matthew's Gospel in the various English dialects "as written by the most trustworthy hands he could find."²¹ His interests were centered on English, which he wrote and spoke with some difficulty; his shortcomings were noticed at meetings of the Philological Society when he would discuss fine dialectal variations of English with a French accent. Although his royal background made him welcome in the Philological Society, he approached with some hesitation Alexander Ellis, offering him an accurate copy of a large phonetic table of foreign languages upon which he had been laboring for more than a year. Ellis, whose calligraphy often was beautifully and gracefully executed, had considerable difficulty in deciphering the Prince's florid letters with their minuscule violet handwriting upon tissue-thin lavender paper.

The Prince expressed himself in a rambling, broken English and his thoughts often became so diffuse that it was almost impossible for Ellis to follow them without

²¹Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Ellis, August 19, 1870.

becoming impatient. All of the Prince's letters were delivered to Ellis by a liveried footman. Letters from the Prince apparently were not an unalloyed pleasure.

Prince Bonaparte had recently arrived from Paris and settled in a great London town house during the seventies. It was a source of satisfaction for Ellis to receive an invitation to dinner with Bonaparte, along with James Murray, specifically for the purpose of discussing matters concerning the pronunciation of certain English vowels. Ellis could not help being flattered that the Prince expected him to settle "all" the questions once and for all.²² He reciprocated this feeling of regard, saying in a letter to Hallam that anything which bore the name of the "august personality" had his own approval. Ellis would lose no opportunity of waiting on the Prince whenever the subject of dialect classification would require his opinion.²³

In another letter to Hallam, Ellis alluded to Bonaparte's new classification of the English dialects, which he had been privileged to examine in manuscript form. Ellis did not comment on the reliability of the Prince's work in this letter. In all probability he was being circumspect because it would be unfortunate if Hallam inadvertently referred to Ellis' opinions of the

²²Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Ellis, September 13, 1870.

²³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, January 5, 1873.

classification in one of the innumerable letters he was always sending to people acquainted with Ellis.

Ellis regularly whetted the railway inspector's appetite for recognition by forwarding to him accounts of his regal contacts and never let slip the opportunity of informing Hallam that he had recently been with the Prince or had come across something remotely related to his affairs.²⁴ At this time His Highness was immersed in his researches "à l'étude approfondie des dialectes anglaises."²⁵ Throughout his life Bonaparte made himself available to Ellis in connection with the latter's dialectal investigations.

Hallam would scan the announcements in the Athenaeum, taking no chance on the possibility of Ellis' missing the brief notice about Bonaparte's comprehensive classification.²⁶ He read in tiny print that "His Imperial Highness" was going to present on July 6, 1873 before the Philological Society a paper delineating the principal English dialects.²⁷ This was a matter of prime importance to Ellis, who had been slowly garnering dialectal material from many voluntary

²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 8), Ellis to Hallam, May 5, 1873.

²⁵Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Skeat, May 7, 1873.

²⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 23), Hallam to Ellis, June 18, 1873.

²⁷"Announcement," Athenaeum, June 14, 1873, p. 765.

informants in the hope that additional information would shed light on fourteenth century Chaucerian pronunciation.

For many years books had been arriving from all over the world at the residence of Prince Bonaparte, because he had early set about forming a superb library which reflected his dialectal enthusiasms. He also spent lavishly on the hundreds of dialectal items which were offered in the book dealers' catalogues. It is reported that sometimes he would even deny himself important acquisitions for his family or household in order to purchase a rare volume during the days following the fall of the Empire.²⁸

Ellis told the members of the Philological Society that he had completed his examination of the "Catalogue of Rare Publications" along with a number of rare publications which the Prince had presented to the Society, but suggested that on account of their high value, those items belonging to the Society were not to be taken out of the library except by leave of the Council and with written permission of the President.²⁹

²⁸The Prince's library was uncatalogued at the time of his death. (Victor Collins, An Attempt at a Catalogue of the Library of the Late Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, London: Henry Sotheman and Co., 1894, pp. v-vii). The Bonaparte Collections are not dispersed and presently form part of the holdings at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

²⁹Notices of the Meetings of the Philological Society, June 20, 1873.

Later in 1876, Ellis was granted the privilege of making extracts three times a week from the remarkable dialect library of the Prince. He would spend three hours each time examining the rare pamphlets which were of particular interest to him.³⁰ He welcomed the chance to peruse the collection to clarify many points regarding the Prince's dialect classification, and by October, 1876 had systematically gone through the entire collection. Because he prevailed upon the Prince to allow the same privilege to others, the members of the Philological Society were also able to have access to the Library.³¹ For example, the Reverend Walter Skeat had been invited to examine the more than seven hundred books including "feuilletts and fragments" in the Prince's library.³²

In the middle of 1873, Hallam had exhausted his supply of Ellis' reprint of the "Notice" in Part III. A number of the reprints had been sent to the eager Hallam who took care to supply all the dialectal informants with a copy. He wrote to Ellis requesting a replenishment to pass

³⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 207), Ellis to Hallam, July 17, 1876.

³¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 247), Ellis to Hallam, October 24, 1876.

³²Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Skeat, May 7, 1873.

on to those who were "obliging and communicative."³³ Ellis' reprint was called Varieties of English Pronunciation, and it was instrumental in establishing to what extent the provincial dialects were related to Chaucerian language.

Ellis also wrote that Furnivall would send Hallam a copy of Bonaparte's classification. This was very gratifying to Hallam because he longed to be part of the group which was prominent in philological matters. Ellis appreciated the devotion which Hallam was showing him in his search for material.

Another scholarly communication which Ellis arranged for Hallam took place in May 1873, when the latter was informed that the Derbyshire material originally forwarded to Ellis would be sent to James Murray for scrutiny along with an encouraging note. It was particularly gratifying for Hallam also to learn that Murray would be in touch with him in a short while.³⁴

On May 2, 1873 Ellis came again before the Philological Society to deliver his paper "On Robert of Brunne's Chronicle with Reference to Some Points of Pronunciation." Furnivall had prepared recently the edition of this work for the Master of the Rolls Series, and Ellis had fortunately been able to utilize his friend's indices to the

³³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 27-28), Hallam to Murray, June 15, 1873.

³⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 8), Ellis to Hallam, May 7, 1873.

manuscripts. He had examined 1,086 consecutive lines and come to the conclusion that Robert of Brunne had manipulated the final e much as Goethe had done in a large part of Faust, counting it as a syllable or eliding it where necessary for either metre or rhyme.³⁵ Ellis' researches often involved him in some of the most painstaking pursuits, but he appears to have derived great satisfaction from the study.

Hallam, meanwhile, was eager to see more being done about the dialects and inquired, "Have you commenced to revise and classify the communications from your various correspondents?"³⁶ He also felt that Derbyshire would have to be considered as a subdialect area similar to the South Yorkshire subdialect in its own group. Adding to Hallam's irritation was the unwelcome news that Ellis was quite prepared to accept the Prince's "important point," i.e., the use of t' for the. Ellis was not willing to become involved in a lengthy correspondence with Hallam if it could in any way be avoided. It required considerable restraint on Hallam's part to remain quiet on matters which were in opposition to those of "His Imperial Highness."³⁷

³⁵"Philological Society," Athenaeum, May 10, 1873, p. 601.

³⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 23), Hallam to Ellis, June 18, 1873.

³⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34), Murray to Hallam, July 7, 1873.

When Murray's great work on the Southern Scottish dialects appeared in July 1873,³⁸ Hallam wrote him a note of congratulation and concurred with Ellis that it was the "best dialect book we possess."³⁹ With deep interest Ellis studied Murray's work analyzing the Scottish phonology and grammar. He carefully weighed the merits of the theory held by Murray that those dialects were a subdivision of the old Northumbrian. Ellis' stature in phonetic matters was steadily rising, for in this work Murray drew upon the phonetic descriptions in Bell's *Visible Speech* and Ellis' *Palaeotype*. The fine distinctions which Murray made among the degrees of tongue elevation for some of the vowels in Edinburgh dialect or in Teviotdale dialect showed a firm knowledge of phonetics.⁴⁰ As his work on Early English Pronunciation progressed, Ellis was always glad to acknowledge his indebtedness to his colleague, Murray.

³⁸James A.H. Murray, The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland. Its Pronunciation, Grammar, and Historical Relations. With an Appendix on the Present Limits of the Gaelic and Lowland Scotch, and the Dialectal Divisions of the Lowland Tongue and a Linguistic map of Scotland (London: Asher and Co. for the Philological Society, 1873).

³⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34), Hallam to Murray, July 15, 1873.

⁴⁰"Scottish Dialects," rev. of The Dialect of the Southern Counties, by James A.H. Murray, Academy, 4 (August 1, 1873), 207-09.

The remarks on Midland dialect which Prince Bonaparte made before the Philological Society on July 6, 1873 were critical of Hallam's Derbyshire specimens which had already been printed in the first volume of Early English Pronunciation. It was the Prince's opinion that greater attention ought to have been paid to the work written by I. Barlow Robinson called "Owd Sammy Twitcher's Visit tu't Great Exhibition by a Darbyshire Mon."

Hallam immediately recognized a potential tempest brewing as a result of the Prince's observations. Hastening to ingratiate himself with Ellis, he dispatched a postcard conveying his own desire to express himself with "great caution and deference" about the distinguished Prince; yet at the same time condemning Bonaparte's reliance on the Robinson pamphlet as "singularly unfortunate."⁴¹

Because the Prince saw that he had not considered too carefully Ellis' sensibilities, he sent his footman to Ellis with a letter containing an account of all the places he had recently visited on his trip about Britain. The Prince's aim was to share with Ellis his experiences, and he employed a strong fraternal tone throughout his remarks. He hoped that Ellis would not think that all the subdialects which he had come across in his "dernier excursion linguistique" had been delineated. Bonaparte had not visited the

⁴¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 33), Hallam to Ellis, July 23, 1873.

center of the country extensively, but rechecking sections of the North and West had obliged him to adjust his classification. This was, therefore, the third time that he presented Ellis with changes regarding his dialectal analysis. The Prince was always eager to get the nod of approval from Ellis, and to present himself in a strong light he would occasionally remind Ellis that his own linguistic competence extended back at least twenty-five years to the time when the Slavic philologist Linde had commented on the hopelessness of attaining perfection regarding the Slavic dialects. Bonaparte dramatically exhorted Ellis to aim for perfection in spite of the certainty of never attaining it. This was hardly the kind of advice to give to Ellis, who himself too frequently sounded the note of doubt on matters of phonetic perfection.

In this conciliatory letter the Prince revised his earlier attitude about the popular phonetic renderings and sharply berated Mr. Robinson of Sammy Twitcher fame for having used inaccurate dialectal forms, and in order to emphasize the sincerity he felt for having disagreed with Ellis, he spoke of Robinson as deserving "d'être puni du knout." The Prince's reluctant acceptance of such dialectal contributions as Hallam's versions of the Song of Solomon and other similar tours de force led him to believe that it was necessary for him to be right on the spot when taking down the shadings of dialectal speech. Bonaparte had been

using a kind of phonetic symbolization based on Bell's Visible Speech. Though the Prince felt flattered at having Ellis as a friend, he still could not resist from concluding his letter in a regal manner: "Tu Duca, tu Signore et tu Maestro."⁴² Either Ellis was amused or overwhelmed by such formal style.

As work advanced, Hallam still continued to be the most loyal contributor of dialect specimens. Some of the analyses of Chaucerian sounds were not working out to Ellis' satisfaction, and he asked Hallam to take down in Palaeotype for him some specimens of the speech of Lancashire ("in dreadful want") and Derbyshire, which had not been included among the specimens he had already received from Hallam. He assured him that such an accommodation would be "an amazing help."⁴³ Hallam did not realize that Ellis had not resumed his labor on Part IV of Early English Pronunciation, the section which was supposed to contain the vital chapter on dialects.

Strongly urging Ellis to delay for a while in order for him to collect various classes of words, Hallam tried to be helpful with a great number of suggestions, and Ellis found himself paying dearly for having allowed Hallam to become so closely involved in his researches.

⁴²Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Ellis, August 4, 1873.

⁴³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 7), Ellis to Hallam, July 23, 1873.

It was a repetition of the old story of the camel who moved into the tent. From this period their relationship started to become strained with the passing of years.

Ellis realized that a little soothing praise was now imperative because Hallam, ever dependable, was beginning to sulk because so many of his fine phonetic distinctions were not accepted. Hallam's notebooks record every single word of praise which Ellis accorded him. It was carefully treasured by being copied from the original letters onto the pages of his large ledgers. Typical of the encomia that were so dear to him is the following: "Your accurate Peak transcriptions will long be referred to as an authority."⁴⁴

The proprietary attitude which Hallam exhibited towards Early English Pronunciation disturbed Ellis to such an extent that on one occasion he snapped at Hallam that he could not spare him a moment for letters or involved explanations which "wouldn't advance his work."⁴⁵ It was necessary to remind Hallam that there were six or eight times as much material from other correspondents with which he also had to deal. Time was limited for Ellis, and he had to write Hallam that the dialects of locales "other than the Midlands" required him to devote himself to the

⁴⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Notes and Ledger, n.p., n.d.

⁴⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 45), Ellis to Hallam, July 24, 1873.

contributions of others.⁴⁶

Again in August he wrote to Hallam about plans he had for constructing a pronouncing vocabulary of all the dialects when he believed himself sure of all his information, but unfortunately this hope never came to be realized. His mind always contemplated more than ever he could possibly achieve in his lifetime.⁴⁷ There was much activity but little progress actually made in writing Part IV. Ellis could not move swiftly because the demands on his time were unbelievably heavy; his correspondence in 1873 had been using up the greater part of his time. He had no secretarial assistance at all, and his organization of the materials submitted to him was very time-consuming.

Ellis had the highest regard for C. Clough Robinson, a "chief helper." The Leeds and mid-Yorkshire dialects had long been familiar to Robinson as a boy, and he always retained a deep interest in the different varieties of the Yorkshire dialects. In July 1873, Ellis taught him Glossic and was rewarded several years later when Robinson provided him with comparative specimens for the varieties of the district. Ellis was upset by the need for long correspondence between him and Robinson over phonetic transcriptions.

⁴⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 47), Ellis to Hallam, July 29, 1873.

⁴⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fol. 57), Ellis to Hallam, August 2, 1873.

Robinson was not able to write directly from the dictation of the informants, and the results, based on his memory, were not always too reliable. To Ellis' sincere regret illness finally forced Robinson to abandon dialect work.⁴⁸

Ellis was extraordinarily busy at this time with related matters. Vowel quantity interested him very much, and he was urging other scholars to obtain familiarity with long and short vowels by studying languages in which quantity forms the basis of rhythms. Though he listened hundreds of times to dialectal speakers, Ellis found it very difficult to ascertain the various lengths of the vowel sounds. He recognized that the length of the "glides" and the presence of voiced and voiceless consonants after preceding vowels affected the determination of the vowel length. It distressed him that no adequate means existed of measuring the duration of a vowel because the uttered sounds were so extremely brief.

In this connection, he conferred with Murray on Scottish sounds and still arrived at no satisfactory solution. Hallam insisted on a medial length of some vowels. Ellis' correspondence with Hallam often erupted in bitter vituperations about these vowels marked medium long, and Ellis would not accept Hallam's strong opinion on indicating the existence of this length in several Derbyshire vowels

⁴⁸Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xxv.

because it was cumbersome for type setters to handle.

Progress on Part IV continued slowly during 1873, mainly because of his enthusiastic studies in Sanscrit, especially with K.G. Gupta, whom he met on August 12. Ellis was familiar with the Devanagari syllabary to a degree sufficient for him to prepare questions in advance concerning certain combinations of Sanscrit characters. Gupta would repeatedly pronounce them and even palaeotyped them for Ellis. The latter regarded Gupta's notes as "documents."

J.R. Firth saw William Jones and Alexander Ellis as important links with a vital Eastern source of phonetics and valued those references in Part IV of Early English Pronunciation giving the account of Murray and Ellis listening to Gupta and a Mr. Mookerjey as they recited the Indian sounds. Firth said, "There is an atmosphere of discovery in exotic regions in all this part of Ellis' work."⁴⁹ Firth considered the possibility that because Ellis was so interested in the phonetic observations of Sir William Jones and had shared his enthusiasm on the subject with Melville Bell many years before, it is possible that the system of Visible Speech was originally derived from Jones.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ J.R. Firth, "The English School of Phonetics," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1946, p. 118.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 122.

Work on English dialect materials for Part IV presented additional aggravations. In August 1873, Hallam rashly quoted to Ellis verbatim the interpretation which Murray had expressed concerning one of the symbols in Palaeo-type. Hallam promptly received a curt rebuke informing him that Murray and he had already spent an afternoon trying to arrive at an agreement on the debatable distinctions. "He decidedly did say so!" Ellis curtly informed Hallam. Ellis wearily was forced to admit to Hallam that this perplexing state of affairs existed owing to the lack of an absolute standard for a phonetic alphabet.⁵¹

During this same frustrating summer an immense mass of dialectal material was arriving with alarming regularity from Yorkshire, and firmly but pleasantly Ellis reminded Hallam that these reports were entitled to the same attention as those from Derbyshire. He was fond of the phrase "apple pie order" and used it when speaking of his hopes to sort out the vast quantity.⁵²

A feeling of discouragement set in about this time. The kind of dialectal descriptions that the mail brought from those who had accepted the invitation given in the "Notice" to Part III was just not accurate enough for Ellis.

⁵¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (c. 3, fols. 65-66), Ellis to Hallam, August 6, 1873.

⁵²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 75), Ellis to Hallam, August 11, 1873.

Because it was impossible to write phonetically every word in the vocabulary of "native peasants," only certain words were selected for inclusion in the investigation. Formerly Ellis had tried to make use of any collection of words whatsoever obtained from printed or manuscript sources; but his present scheme became intolerable. In order to extricate himself with speed from the growing mass of worthless offerings which bore little relationship to one another, he enlisted the assistance of James Murray in selecting the more desirable items. Murray possessed a fine knowledge of the dialects spoken in Northern England and the Border.

Using one of his favorite words, Ellis "concocted" a comparative specimen consisting of a brief list of sentences, composed with the purpose of getting much phonetic, grammatical, and lexical information from dialect speakers, translating it into their own vernacular. Earlier, C. Clough Robinson had suggested to Ellis the use of a "Test Sentence."⁵³ When Ellis learned from his informants that the people in the provinces were quick to point out that the literary English forms were different from those to which they were accustomed to using ("our folks don't speak so"), he hoped that his dialectal informants would note the dialectal forms immediately.⁵⁴

⁵³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Notes and Ledger, n.d.

⁵⁴Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xix.

Ellis' comparative specimen consisted of a narrative in which there were some rural scenes which would appeal to the country people whose assistance Ellis hoped to enlist. By the end of September 1873, Ellis had carefully prepared this specimen with the assistance of Murray. He sent it to Hallam in Manchester for his opinions. He planned to put many versions in dialect at the end of Chapter XI, and, therefore, hoped that he would have enough specimens for the purpose. He requested from Hallam transcriptions of the comparative specimens in the three Peak dialects as well as those spoken in the Lancashire towns of Oldham, Bolton, and Blackburn.⁵⁵

The content of the fifteen sentences reflects the homely, unsophisticated, rural scene quite vividly. For example, there are the old woman who comes upon her husband, "a drunken beast," the farm yard with its wet clothes on washing day, and the kitchen kettle which is boiling. In the original specimen Ellis had not numbered the sentences, but two years later in 1875 the second edition of the specimen contained this convenience.

The text of the June 1875 comparative specimen is reproduced from Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 7* below:

⁵⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 82), Ellis to Hallam, September 24, 1873.

Why John Has No Doubts

- (1) Well, neighbour, you and he may both laugh at this news of mine. Who cares? That is neither here nor there.
- (2) Few men die because they are laughed at, we know, don't we? What should make them? It is not very likely, is it?
- (3) Howsoever these are the facts of the case, so just hold your noise, friend, and be quiet till I have done. Hearken!
- (4) I am certain I heard them say--some of those folks who went through the whole thing from the first themselves,--that did I, safe enough,--
- (5) that the youngest son himself, a great boy of nine, knew his father's voice at once, though it was so queer and squeeking, and I would trust him to speak the truth any day, aye, I would.
- (6) And the old woman herself will tell any of you that laugh now, and tell you straight off, too, without much bother, if you will only ask her, oh! won't she?--
- (7) leastways she told it me when I asked her, two or three times over, did she, and she ought not to be wrong on such a point as this, what do you think?
- (8) Well as I was saying, she would tell you, how, where and when she found the drunken beast that she calls her husband.
- (9) She swore she saw him with her own eyes, lying stretched at full length, on the ground, in his good Sunday coat, close by the door of the house, down at the corner of yon lane.
- (10) He was whining away, says she, for all the world like a sick child, or a little girl in a fret.
- (11) And that happened, as she and her daughter-in-law came through the back yard from hanging out the wet clothes to dry on a washing day,
- (12) while the kettle was boiling for tea, one fine bright summer afternoon, only a week ago come next Thursday.
- (13) And, do you know? I never learned any more than this of that business up to to-day, as sure as my name is John Shepherd, and I don't want to either, there now!
- (14) And so I am going home to sup. Good night, and don't be so quick to crow over a body again, when he talks of this, that, or t'other.
- (15) It is a weak fool that prates without reason. And that is my last word. Good b'ye.

Ellis was hopeful that the anecdote of the drunken farmer had phrases that would serve him in good stead, but later he regretted that the words were not received in the manner he had hoped; therefore, he reluctantly permitted substitutions to be made for the phrases.⁵⁶ Again we can see that he was never static about any plan that he devised, the results of which can be seen in the cluttered and bewildering aspect of the five volumes of Early English Pronunciation.

When Hallam learned that Ellis was preparing to approach the collection of dialectal material via the use of a comparative specimen collected from a great many informants, he immediately wrote to him importuning him as to whether he was going to enlarge Chapter XI with the section on the "existing English dialects."⁵⁷ Possibly Hallam realized even more than Ellis that such an undertaking with the dialects probably necessitated a change in the plan for Chapter XI and might require a separate volume in Early English Pronunciation. Ellis, however, did not envision at this point the magnitude of the task confronting him.

The comparative specimen constructed by Ellis and Murray the previous month had three printings during the period from September 22, 1873 to June 1875. Prince

⁵⁶Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," p. 26.

⁵⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44), Hallam to Ellis, September 29, 1873.

Bonaparte took one hundred copies for his own use in various counties. Up to April 14, 1879 Ellis had received 153 dialectal versions of the comparative specimen. A number of these versions were sent by the same correspondent. Ellis considered 106 submissions as "really good," 36 as "valuable," and 11 as "doubtful."⁵⁸

During the period in which he relied on the correspondents to furnish him with the versions of the specimen, his disappointment mounted because his informants acting as intermediaries did not possess a phonetic knowledge that approached anything even remotely scientific. The only relief to this inchoate state of affairs occurred when some of the dialectal assistants had occasion to visit London and could provide Ellis with a viva voce reading--admittedly an imitation of the native speaker. Throughout the years which followed, there are references among Ellis' records which indicate that he frequently had to interrupt his day's work devoted, for example, to mathematics or acoustics so that he could receive in his home some obscure informant for such a purpose. Ellis would patiently palaeotype the sounds, but often he met with great difficulty since his visitor needed to quote the original source, who was not on hand.

The collection by use of the specimen was laborious but it was to serve as the nucleus for the work which would

⁵⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Papers: Reports, n.d.

follow in the dialect study of Part V, which Ellis at this time had not even considered as a possibility. He had planned that Chapter XI would satisfactorily treat all the dialectal material. Hallam was eagerly, though tactfully, prodding Ellis to complete the chapter, since in his mind it was the essential part of the whole work.

In the same month when Ellis brought out the comparative specimen, he again was making an analysis of Bell's "Twenty-six Key Words to English Speech Sounds" and was pleased that he was able to get an additional oral explanation of the sounds of [d,zh] from J.J. Thomas, the author of The Theory and Practice of Creole Grammar (Port of Spain, 1869). The vowels which Ellis heard him pronounce on September 25, 1873 were used for comparisons with other sounds in English.⁵⁹

The summer of 1873 passed leaving behind some of its vexations. In September, Ellis was invited to hear Bonaparte speak Norfolk dialect. (Ellis used his favorite word "spout"). Meanwhile, His Royal Highness intimated to Ellis his own frustrations. He was worried that he did not possess an ear which was sufficiently attuned to such fine distinctions as were characteristic of English dialects. Bonaparte was also not "too sure about Italians'" reliability as judges of English phonetics and was highly critical of

⁵⁹ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1155.

his own "oreille continentale."⁶⁰ He invited the Englishman to examine a French translation of all his own phonetic studies which he had prepared for a friend in France. It consisted of all the examples which Bonaparte used to illustrate English sounds, but the chart had to be modified so that the examples of the sounds were presented in French words. James Murray also was invited to share in the reading of Bonaparte's work.⁶¹

The day following his invitation to Ellis, Bonaparte decided that he would authorize Ellis to make alterations in the dialect classification of May 1873 in accordance with Hallam's original suggestions. Ellis promptly forwarded to Hallam the regal authorization for amending the classification.⁶² Because of the comments on the dialect of the Peak of Derbyshire, Ellis had already sent Hallam partially corrected proofs of Bonaparte's work on classification, really an expansion of the paper delivered before the Philological Society early in the summer.⁶³

The dialect specimens collected and printed by Ellis were to have far-reaching influence. Scholars who followed

⁶⁰Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Ellis, September 9, 1873.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 90), Ellis to Hallam, September 10, 1873.

⁶³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 69), Hallam to Murray, September 11, 1873.

Ellis frequently based their own studies on a dialect area solely on one of those comparative specimens which Ellis had provided. For example, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, the town of Stokesley had not been given any further phonetic analysis since Ellis had received his specimen. Willy Klein took this existing comparative specimen from Part V (D 30 Var 7), South Cleveland, and made it basic to a full study of the dialect poetry of Mrs. George Tweddell's Rhymes and Sketches to Illustrate the Cleveland Dialect (1892), which he completed at Berlin in 1914.⁶⁴

By November 1873, it was no longer possible for Hallam to continue the role of a passive observer away from the London scene in a matter which was so vital to him as that of the native dialects. Timidly he requested Ellis to let the Prince know that he [Hallam] would feel "greatly honoured" either to receive a letter from him [Bonaparte] or to answer inquiries on Peak dialects.⁶⁵ Hallam's vanity won over his indignation at the previous royal criticism of the Sammy Twitcher material and unpleasantness which had arisen.

Because he was witty and was known to so many figures of the London scholarly world, Ellis was accustomed

⁶⁴Willy Klein, Der Dialekt von Stokesley in Yorkshire, North Riding nach den Dialektdichtungung von Mrs. E. Tweddell und nach Grammophonischen Aufnahmen der Vortragweise Ihres Sohnes T.C. Tweddell (Berlin: Mayer & Müller, 1914), Palaestra 124.

⁶⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 96), Hallam to Ellis, November 8. 1873.

to receive a great many invitations to attend social evenings or, to employ the contemporary term, "soirées." He had to decline firmly the pressing hostesses owing to the demands of his "incubus," Part IV. He complained frequently about his lack of sleep because of the mass of phonetic material that continued to arrive each day and which troubled his mind at night. He never sent back a simple declination of any hospitality. To Mrs. Moncure Conway, wife of the minister of the South Place Chapel, he wrote, "I have to steer as close to the wind as possible in order to sail at all."⁶⁶

By the close of 1873 Ellis realized that it would be a highly desirable feature to draw up a map which could accompany Chapter XI. Sharing his latest enthusiasm with Hallam, he observed that there would have to be a minimum of latitudes and longitudes and regretted that most of the maps did not contain all the crucial names of towns printed upon them. He pointed out that in the Peak some of the places seemed to "interdigitate."⁶⁷

Very shortly thereafter Hallam eagerly sent a detailed scheme for resolving the entire dialectal question. Ellis at this time was not prepared to undertake another project of enormous proportions and coldly wrote to Hallam

⁶⁶New York Public Library, Anthony Collection, Ellis to Mrs. Conway, November 12, 1873.

⁶⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 124), Ellis to Hallam, December 16, 1873.

that he did not feel "justified" in giving greater space to the dialects.⁶⁸

During the next two months Ellis continued to shift around some of the groupings of dialects and started "remodelling" some of the Prince's work. He was now in fact rejecting many aspects of the dialect chapter which he had thought would present a clear picture of the distribution of the dialects in the British Isles. The idea of including a map became increasingly important to Ellis, who was thinking only of the parliamentary divisions of the country for indicating the dialectal boundaries. Hallam, however, stated promptly that he strongly favored a purely dialectal one.⁶⁹ He was never averse to disagreeing with Ellis, who occasionally would seriously consider the merits of a proposal in spite of the latter's determination to remain firm in his opinions on a great many matters.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 173), Hallam to Ellis, December 22, 1873.

CHAPTER XIII

COMPLETING THE ORIGINAL CONCEPTION OF EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION AND MAKING PLANS FOR A FIFTH PART (1874-75)

There was little headway made by Ellis on Early English Pronunciation. Ellis was permitting himself to become distracted with other studies which did not bear directly on his principal investigation. Phonetic studies once again consumed time which otherwise would have been applied to dialectal work. He continued, however, to confer frequently with Prince Bonaparte regarding interpretations of Continental vowel sounds and also corresponded at length with the eminent philologist, Friedrich Pott, in the hope of acquiring valuable material for Part IV of the huge study. Additional problems in connection with the mapping of the dialects necessitated daily exchange of opinions with Thomas Hallam. Most important of all, Ellis decided upon a drastic modification in his organization of material by planning to include an additional part in Early English Pronunciation. A closer look at the many factors in connection with the decision to expand the work reveals the rationale behind the step. We shall presently look at the elements which brought about this major change in Ellis' thinking.

As 1874 began, Ellis again availed himself of the columns of the Academy in furtherance of his researches. He was still in need of good specimens of Warwickshire vernacular to help him with the presumed sounds of some of the Shakespearean phrases. During these years he had to focus his attention on the map of Britain in his efforts to collate the disparate materials which were arriving sporadically at his home.

In spite of irritations he occasionally felt, Ellis was very appreciative of Hallam's enthusiastic assistance. At this time he gracefully paid him a compliment regarding his proficiency with Palaeotype. He indicated that his friend's work was "a remarkable specimen, on the whole," of writing dialects.¹ He wrote that Hallam aimed for more accuracy than he himself did, except when taking down his own pronunciation of received English. Although Ellis recognized the value of Hallam's work, he resented very much the latter's officiousness. Ellis never welcomed any suggestions concerning the need for accuracy when making a transcription.

Hallam must have been inwardly pleased when Ellis wrote to indicate that delays were occurring with Early English Pronunciation, IV. Rather naively, Hallam thought that this provided a perfect opportunity for him to prepare

¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 135), Ellis to Hallam, January 14, 1874.

some more Derbyshire dialect papers during the interval.² Ellis, now desperate about the slow progress, did not welcome the opportunity which Hallam was only too ready to use for making additional dialectal modifications. Derbyshire's Peak District was more important in Hallam's eyes than all of the British Isles.

Despite a brief interval of studying aspiration for determining the values of the Sanscrit letters, the Greek alphabet, and other derivative changes, Ellis made some progress with Part IV. Another enticing sidepath during January was his study of dialect changes of Low Germany which Winkler had analyzed in his great Dialecticon. Ellis needs to be credited for having brought this distinguished study to the attention of nineteenth century British scholars. Eventually he excerpted parts for inclusion in Chapter XI of Part IV.

A collection of Low German and Friesian dialects, this work fascinated Ellis because it showed the forces which had acted on the dialects of a related language. Ellis learned that the Low German dialects could be related to the orthographies in the old manuscripts of England. Ellis was convinced that Low German is two or three centuries older than the English dialects. Winkler's discoveries, he felt, had provided the missing links in our knowledge of Early

²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 185), Hallam to Ellis, January 21, 1874.

English. Straightway, Ellis urged everyone interested in Early English to read Winkler in the original Dutch or in his own "mutilated" account in Early English Pronunciation to get a better understanding of what the early manuscripts of English represented.

Excluding then the horrors perpetrated by more modern editors, which the most modern are learning to eschew, the consequence is that the best old writings were the most exposed to literary deformation. It is difficult frequently to discover amid the mass of change what was the meaning of the author:- it is almost impossible to determine what were the sounds he actually used or meant to represent. The manuscript record of language reminds us, then, of the geological record of life. It gapes with "missing links," and the very links it furnishes are so broken, unconnected, disguised, charred, silicated, distributed, that it requires ability and insight to piece them into a whole. Such collections as Winkler's furnish the missing links, erect the fossil animals, and make them breathe and live. We have no longer to guess how such a radical change as we forefeel on examining our museums could have occurred,-- we see it occurring! And it is this feeling which has induced me to devote so much space to an account of Winkler's collections.³

Because it was hardly possible for a reader to compare the 186 versions which Winkler had made of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, transcribed in his special phonetic symbols, Ellis reduced all of them into his own Palaeotype by working closely with two Friesian gentlemen born at Grouw, as well as with an East Friesian lady born at Emden, in order to familiarize himself with Friesian pronunciation.⁴

³Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1370.

⁴Ibid., p. 1371.

Meanwhile, the scholarly world patiently followed Ellis' research on the English dialects. Paul Meyer, the French philologist, expressed to Ellis his view that the work on Part IV would at last shed light on the older sounds of a period when English had been a "bundle of sounds."⁵ Another sympathetic colleague was Whitney of Yale, to whom Ellis had sent about 250 pages of the manuscript of Part IV. Ellis was willing to send to America this section of his work in order to avail himself of the best advice.

One of the results of Ellis' receipt of the comparative specimens from the English and Scottish counties was that he was able to proceed with a further refinement of Bonaparte's classification of the English dialects. The Academy of January 3, 1874 made reference in its "Notes and News" to Ellis' progress in this matter and printed an anonymous and unauthorized summary of the classifications, including certain divisions which Ellis later questioned, since he had never employed such designations as Scot-Northumbrian, North Anglian, Central Branch, and several other unusual appellations. The classification appeared to be an incorporation of some of the names used by Murray, Bonaparte, and Ellis.⁶

⁵Bibliothèque Nationale, Departement des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 16, 1874.

⁶"Notes and News," Academy, V (January 3, 1874), 16.

In the Academy of February 28, 1874 appeared a detailed account of Bonaparte's dialect classification. The Prince had finally revised his scheme, at Ellis' request, so that it could be printed in the forthcoming Part IV. Bonaparte, however, would recognize only five dialects "in its wider and more scientific European sense,"⁷ which he named for their central cities: Edinburgh, Leeds, Bolton, Exeter, and London. The news item mentioned Ellis' work only in general terms and was not a presentation of the classification of the English dialects as given by Ellis himself. Those who had further examples of dialect forms or who were willing to give viva voces were again urged to communicate directly with Ellis.

Ellis' respect for Prince Bonaparte as scholar seems to have been quite genuine, in spite of his own awe for royal trappings. It was the opinion of an unidentified person close to Bonaparte affairs that Ellis viewed him "not as a princely dilettante seeking amusement, but as a scholar, a man of letters, and a man of science, working for the end of men of science--the discovery of natural laws."⁸ One is obliged, however, to keep tongue in cheek with regard to Collins' evaluation of Ellis' feelings about the Prince. The editor of the Catalogue of the Prince's library could see his idol only in a glow of approbation and assumed that all who came in contact with him shared his enthusiasm. On

⁷"Notes & News," Academy, V (February 28, 1874), 16.

⁸Collins, op. cit., "Preface."

Salisbury Lodge, High Beach, Essex,
le 4 août 1875.

Mon cher Mr Ellis

Notre lettre ni est parvenue
au moment où je me disposais à vous écrire pour
vous informer des nouvelles résultats que j'ai dû à mes
dernières excursions linguistiques que j'ai bien déterminés,
et qui se en premier lieu les Comtés du Bedford au nord
de l'Essex, le sud de celui du Northampton, le Warwick,
et le Leicester avec les Rutland. Je n'ai mais tenté
convaincre de audition que l'Anglo-moyen s'étend
au sud jusqu'à l'Essex, et que le nord du Bedford,
le nord du Northampton, le Warwick, et le Leicester
avec le Rutland constituent quatre sous-dialectes du
XI, et non pas comme je le pensais, des simples
variétés du XII. Quant au Leicester, il peut bien
avoir été jadis partagé entre les Merciens et
l'Anglo-moyen, mais actuellement, je dois
plus exact de considérer tout ce comté comme
appartenant à un sous-dialecte Anglo-moyen,
dont la variété occidentale est plus rapprochée
du Mercien que la variété orientale, et que
celle du Rutland.

Lorsque j'ai parlé des variétés, c'est plutôt comme
exemples que je les cite, que comme énumération
complète. En effet, vous savez, dans la pronon-
ciation, des lettres telles que b, c, qui avaient
les noms des plusieurs variétés, et qui elles-mêmes
n'ont pas de nom. Je n'ai agi de la sorte
que pour vous faire bien comprendre que
je n'ai nullement la prétention des
donner toutes les variétés des sous-dialectes
anglais. Je ne donne les noms que de
celles que je connais, plus ou moins, d'
une manière de terminées, mais à ceux qui
il doit bien y en avoir d'autres, et c'est ce
que j'ai indiqué par les lettres sans nom de

27. Prince Bonaparte Sets Forth His Views on Dialects to
Ellis, August 4, 1875.
(Courtesy of Cambridge University Library,
Department of Manuscripts)

the contrary, there appears throughout the Ellis correspondence a determination to overlook Bonaparte's amateurish judgments and philological idiosyncrasies.

In a new paper presented at this time, Ellis outlined his view of what he called "prefractures" and "suffractures" in vowels. The paper, entitled "Vowel Changes in the English Dialects," was read before the Philological Society on March 6, 1874, and was actually a condensed abstract from a subsection planned for Early English Pronunciation. Ellis had been studying the problem for a long time and had analyzed carefully the appearance of a second glide vowel before or after an original vowel. He also described "juncture," in which one vowel is substituted for two which merge with each other. Ellis gave the members of the Philological Society many examples taken from his growing dialectal files. The sounds of the suffractures in which the vowel "with a fuller reinforcement of partial tones falls over into one with a less marked reinforcement"⁹ were illustrated with examples taken from Melville Bell. Ellis did not try to account for the variations owing to pitch of voice, foreign effects and loudness, but the entire subject intrigued him and was proposed by him as one that was suitable for future investigation.

⁹"Philological Society," Academy, 5 (March 7, 1874), 265-66.

Palatalisation also took up some of his research time, and he wrote Paul Meyer that he hoped to devote much time to the matter because it was a "great subject philologically considered."¹⁰ Ellis' mind was always leaping forward with impatience. He desired to embrace all philological knowledge for his province.

His seemingly erratic method of working may be likened to the placement of pieces forming an intricate design in a kaleidoscope. Each effort in some way depended upon another; yet if each is viewed separately, it is possible to lose sight of the unbelievably complex mind which was assimilating and organizing material many times over as he examined hundreds of unrelated items. Within a week his attention would move in many directions over various topics. The pressure of having to meet deadlines threatened to overwhelm him completely.

Dialects once more got pushed into the background during March 1874. The opening meeting of a newly formed learned society was an event of great interest to the intellectual circles of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Both the Athenaeum and the Academy reported all the varied activities and programs which formed part of the scholarly ferment. On Friday, March 13, 1874 in rooms at University

¹⁰ Bibliothèque Nationale, Departement des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, May 7, 1874.

College, Furnivall, that inexhaustible doyen of the philological scene, greeted the Fellow-Members of the New Shakespeare Society.

To the enthusiastic founder of the group, the general lack of knowledge of the Bard's works seemed "humiliating and lamentable."¹¹ Inasmuch as philological problems were an integral part of those interests directed towards establishing sound criticism, it was natural to enlist the assistance of Alexander Ellis, who, in spite of Part IV, agreed to serve as the Vice-President of the fledgling society. Ellis appears to have relished the programs, for he maintained an active role at the meetings by participating in the discussions following the delivery of papers on Shakespearean topics.

Though he loudly bemoaned the number of interruptions in his work on Early English Pronunciation, he, nevertheless, gave his attention to those activities which were peripheral to his work, for his conscience could always be appeased by relating such an endeavor as that of the New Shakespeare Society to his own philological work. He would take much valuable time from his work to compose a contribution for its Transactions. The Victorian literary societies earned the approval of scholars in a very short time by issuing

¹¹"Notices of Meetings," Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society, 1874.

reports, transactions, and proceedings as soon as they were able to enlist the requisite number of subscribers to meet the financial demands of such printing houses as Trübner's.

Typical of the kind of comment which Ellis made during a New Shakespeare Society's program were his remarks concerning the authenticity of the famed Porter Scene in Macbeth. He observed that it was indeed unlikely that the scene would ever be played in nineteenth century England, but he noted the effectiveness of its contrast with the proceeding one. He felt that "people can't stand the lechery bit now-a-days"¹² and regretted that the dramatic unity was thereby lost.

About this time the Philological Society was following with considerable interest three papers which Henry Sweet delivered on "The History of English Sounds" because, by 1874, it had become possible to compare his approach with that which Ellis had taken in the first parts of Early English Pronunciation. Sweet offered the members a comparison of certain archaic sounds still preserved in the living Teutonic languages with the written forms of the oldest English and its contemporaries. Ellis, in contrast, principally relied on the external evidence afforded by the

¹²J.W. Hales, "On the Porter in Macbeth," Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society, 1874, pp. 255-68; Discussion, pp. 273-75.

contemporary phonetic treatises along with careful comparison with foreign languages. The Academy considered Ellis' method an "illustrious type."¹³

Sweet agreed with Ellis that the medieval scribes often wrote phonetically rather than traditionally, but he was opposed to Ellis' view of the identity of long vowels spelled with ee (and with oo). Sweet was convinced that distinctions between closed and open ee and oo did exist and corresponded to parallel distinctions in Old English and Middle English. Sweet, basing his argument on the "remarkable qualitative divergence of long and short vowels in the modern Teutonic languages,"¹⁴ applied the distinction to Middle English as well. The Academy observed that Sweet viewed Transition English (1650-1700), which Ellis was documenting from the sixteenth century, similar to what was happening in nineteenth century Dutch.¹⁵

Sweet did not use Palaeotype in his History because it seemed too arbitrary a system and not fitted for popular exposition. But, like Ellis, he stressed the need for a comprehensive study of the speech sounds. Ellis most

¹³"Philological Society," Academy, 5 (March 31, 1874), 322.

¹⁴Henry Sweet, "The History of English Sounds," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-74), p. 516.

¹⁵"Philological Society," Academy, 5 (April 25, 1874), 467-68.

emphatically would have agreed with Sweet's warning:

"There is no royal road to phonetics."¹⁶

Such a point of view is seen in Ellis' practical advice based on his own experiences with children. He often found that children desperately struggled when a spoon or paper knife was used to hold down the tongue for an examination of the throat. He would advise the child to say (AA) as long as possible until the tongue relaxed. An example of the concern he felt for children may be seen in the following advice to parents:

Parents and guardians will please to notice!! and also to notice that they must shade their own mouth and nose when examining, so as to avoid the dangerous miasma almost always exhaled from a diseased throat.¹⁷

By March of 1874, Ellis was sending a proof of the subsection on dialect classification for Part IV to his colleagues, Murray, Robinson, Hallam, and Georgena Jackson of Chester.¹⁸ By April of that year Ellis was able to get up to page 1316 though he was driving himself to exhaustion and could not take time to read the proofs himself because he was drawing complex mathematical figures to accompany the

¹⁶Henry Sweet, "The History of English Sounds," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-4), p. 466.

¹⁷Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1286.

¹⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 154), Ellis to Hallam, March 22, 1874.

pages of several papers which he planned to read before the Royal Society.¹⁹ The work on the Annual Address to the Philological Society, as well as his personal quarterly audit, made him short-tempered with Hallam, who was examining in leisurely fashion the proof on classification. Indignantly he protested that the material should have been returned earlier to him.²⁰ Hallam refused to rush his proof reading and, it seems, ignored Ellis' expostulations.

Letters from Hallam arrived several times a day from Manchester at Ellis' home. They were filled with unsolicited advice urging the expansion of some of the locales of the dialect investigation. On June 3, 1874 Ellis informed Hallam that any notions regarding the expansion of the work would preclude the completion of the book because the Societies "would kick at printing it."²¹

Early English Pronunciation had become a burden to Ellis because he doubtless realized that the demands of the study were impossible of attainment by one person. In addition, he had committed himself to publishers for a variety of mathematical works, and he sorely needed rest.

¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, April 2, 1874.

²⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 147), Ellis to Hallam, April 13, 1874.

²¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 221), Ellis to Hallam, June 3, 1874.

His state of mind at this time may be seen in the weary remark he made to his friend, Clement Ingleby: "I often think, 'Would it were bedtime, Hal, and all were done!'"²²

With the increasing burden of work, his discouragement grew to alarming proportions. From time to time he would wrestle with the drafting of the definitive dialect map of the country. In June 1874, he abandoned all attempts at absolute precision after many weeks of trials. No arrangement would satisfy him because he desired to include all the fine details. He had hoped to show the counties, rivers, hills, ranges, and marshes as limits of the dialects and subdialects, but now despaired because his knowledge at this point was still so incomplete. Ellis had to settle for the use of written numbers alongside the villages.²³ Then, a week later he put aside the task of map construction.

Hallam remained loyal to Ellis' attempts at gathering the very extensive dialect information. When F.J. Nodal of the Manchester Literary Society wanted Hallam to undertake some additional work, he respectfully declined because he awaited the completion of Ellis' labors.²⁴ Mr. Nodal

²²Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Ingleby, June 1, 1874.

²³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 221), Ellis to Hallam, June 3, 1874.

²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Hallam to Nodal, June 8, 1874.

was irritated by the devotion which Hallam felt for Ellis, and at every possible opportunity he would refer to Ellis in critical tones.

Shropshire dialect research had brought much satisfaction to Ellis because he had been fortunate in enlisting the assistance of Georgena Jackson of Chester, "a capital hand at work."²⁵ He succeeded in persuading her to visit him and talk "Salop," on which occasion they discussed a large number of dialectal features. Ellis palaeotyped her renditions of the dialect.

As a boy, one recalls, Ellis had attended Shrewsbury School, where on occasion he had heard Salopian dialect in the neighborhood. He enjoyed his exchange of information with Miss Jackson, who had published A Shropshire Word-Book: A Glossary of Archaic and Provincial Words, Etc. Used in the County on July 11, 1873. He admired her Glossary thoroughly and said that it was "the best that we possess of any dialect."²⁶ Her system of dividing the county of Shropshire into fourteen districts met so highly with Ellis' approval that later in Part V he drew extensively upon the organizational plan of that lady.

²⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, August 27, 1874.

²⁶Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V,

There is a delightful bit of dialect preserved by Ellis from Miss Jackson's dictation concerning the origin of the larynx. "Eve's Scork" is the Shropshire term she discusses: "Old Mother Eve ate the apple herself, but she gave the core to Father Adam and it stuck in his throat. All men have had this lump ever since."²⁷ Though today one can only conjecture about the precise sounds of the Palaeotype, it is still possible to capture to some degree the sounds which Ellis heard spoken as a boy at Shrewsbury. Although Miss Jackson's researches on Salopian were very painstaking, she recognized Ellis' larger investigation would throw light on much that makes that dialect of "peculiar interest."²⁸

As President of the Philological Society that year Ellis was able to report on his dialect researches to the membership. He reminded his colleagues that the nineteenth century dialects were supplying a great deal of evidence for his work on the subject of pronunciation in the pre-Caxtonian period. He also discussed a deplorable aspect of his study, namely the fact that educated men (the vicars, in all probability) did not possess the ability to convey the

²⁷Ibid., p. 184.

²⁸Georgena Jackson, A Shropshire Word-Book: A Glossary of Archaic and Provincial Words, Etc. Used in the County (London: Trübner, 1873), p. xviii.

"ghost of a feeling of the sounds which they heard,"²⁹ and he complained about the exorbitant labor and difficulty which this lack of phonetic knowledge caused him. (Ellis loved a pun and wanted all literary men to be "sound" men).

Like one possessed, Ellis worked at his dialect materials. He wrote, "The work really to be done in England is enormous, and it must be done quickly, too, for the railway whistle, worse than all, the School-boards, are screaming down every chirp, and grubbing up every stump of dialectality,"³⁰ he reported hyperbolically.

In spite of many scholarly pressures, he did not neglect his contacts with Continental scholars. Frequently, he found it vital to call upon these distant associates so that he could request additional scholarly introductions, particularly if the inquiries were beyond the sphere of a local acquaintance's specialty. This was a vital matter for Ellis, who recognized the value of having links with other investigators. Exchanging progress reports and published works with one another served to strengthen such relationships. Professor Friedrich Pott of Halle, for example, had directed questions to Ellis concerning the Basque language in June 1875. Realizing his own deficiencies in that difficult tongue, Ellis promptly applied to Prince Bonaparte,

²⁹Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 449.

³⁰Ibid., p. 447.

an authority on the matter, who offered some answers in a long response which Ellis forwarded to Pott.³¹

Pott felt very kindly towards Ellis, who had praised his Würzelbuch before the Philological Society. He assured Pott that the latter's effort, representing many years of work, was well worth the attempt. He did make it clear to Pott that he himself had certain objections to the Radix-theory in spite of his appreciation of the greatness of the concept. In a magnanimous spirit Ellis acknowledged that Pott was responsible for all that he knew about linguistics. This is the most definite (if perhaps exaggerated) statement in Ellis' writings about his indebtedness to any one scholar.³²

The pleasures of contact with Continental scholars were incidental to the progress of the dialectal work. At the close of the summer of 1874, Ellis had to fend off Hallam who had expressed his desire to spend some time with Ellis in London. Work on Early English Pronunciation, he wrote, had now been put aside for about six months, and Ellis had to forestall the proposed arrival in late August.

³¹University of Halle, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Pott, June 1, 1875.

³²"Alles was ich von der Linguistik weiss, verdanke ich Ihren Werken die seit Jahren mir immer zur Hand waren." (University of Halle, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Pott, May 16, 1874).

Warning Hallam that the after-effects of a long talk were detrimental to his [Ellis'] health, the latter said he would limit Hallam to three hours' conversation only. He indicated to Hallam that he had been working for eighteen months without one holiday.³³

Ellis had hoped to have Part IV completed for the 1874 Anniversary Meeting of the Philological Society. Despite one week's incapacity as a result of his recurring illnesses and six weeks spent in handling the management of his London estate, he began to feel some degree of optimism. He announced to the Society that he would now divide Part IV into two separate sections, the first to appear at the end of the year and the second half three years later. He begged all the members of the Society to "take earnest will for incomplete deed."³⁴

Furnivall, for his part, was anxious for the Early English Text Society to have Part IV, or at least some portion of it, by Christmas. Ellis wryly informed Hallam that Furnivall would get "the some." He had no choice regarding the delay because, he wrote, he was copying out a mathematical paper in final form for the Royal Society and

³³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fols. 240-41), Ellis to Hallam, August 29, 1874.

³⁴Ellis, "Third Annual Address," p. 360.

was at his "wit's end."³⁵

Adding to the difficulties which were besetting him in this year was the publication of the Reverend Dr. Richard Weymouth's vehement attack on Ellis' work, similarly entitled On Early English Pronunciation with Especial Reference to Chaucer in an Opposition to the Views Maintained by Mr. A.J. Ellis.³⁶ Weymouth was the Head Master of the Mill School, an institution of private education near London. It was the most hostile criticism of his theories which had ever appeared in print. There is a large amount of personal animosity in Weymouth's work, and the tone is polemical towards all of Ellis' philological investigations.

Weymouth held the theory that there had been practically no changes in the sounds of English during the lapse of time since Chaucer had written his Canterbury Tales. Throughout his own book Weymouth took care to praise Ellis' industry, but he was scornful of the scholarly approach which had been employed. Weymouth had no confidence in the remarks of the old orthoepists and grammarians. (It is true that Ellis was highly doubtful about some of the obscurities apparent in the writings of these early scholars and probably would have agreed with him that there existed other possibly opposing

³⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 257), Ellis to Hallam, October 2, 1874.

³⁶Richard F. Weymouth, On Early English Pronunciation, with Especial Reference to Chaucer, in Opposition to the Views Maintained by Mr. A.J. Ellis in His Work "On Early English Pronunciation . . ." (London: Asher & Co., 1874), p.1.

interpretations). By the time that Weymouth's book appeared, Ellis had gotten underway with the dialect work, and he was already taking into consideration the part played by the living dialectal forms quite independently of Weymouth's views.

In a review, Henry Sweet suggested that the dialects could easily have developed separately and did not necessarily hold the final solution to the determination of Chaucer's pronunciation. Sweet expressed his dismay at the type of Chaucerian pronunciation drilled into the schoolboys whom Dr. Weymouth directed at the Mill School.

The nineteenth century literary and philological scholars leveled sharp critical barbs at one another when they wrote reviews for the journals of the day. Sweet was notoriously acerbic, and though he did not hesitate to disagree with Ellis, he did not permit others to write unflattering remarks about him and would castigate anyone who dared to be rude towards one whom he acknowledged to be superior to himself in phonetic matters. Sweet responded to the statement regarding the diphthongic pronunciation of Latin i as in regina which Weymouth had found in an old Greek form as corroboration of his theory of Anglo-Saxon sounds. Weymouth had referred to it as a "ray of light from an old inscription in Aeolic Greek," but Sweet, who knew his comparative philology as well as Ellis, dismissed the matter:

"We are unable to see anything but Cimmerian darkness in his arguments!"³⁷

Ellis' idea that the scribes wrote only what they said and heard rather than what they saw was torn apart by Weymouth, who believed the orthography was directly copied.³⁸ In spite of its glaring errors, Sweet recommended Weymouth's book. On the other hand, in an unwonted spirit of friendliness Weymouth indicated that he had placed Ellis among the "first explorers who strayed here and there into bogs and quagmires."³⁹

Weymouth, however, enraged at Sweet's comments in the review argued against the rapidity of change in sounds. Again he charged Ellis with having ascribed to a single generation sound changes which, in Weymouth's opinion, required thousands of years to take place.⁴⁰ Sweet in turn remained angry over Dr. Weymouth's attitude towards the Philological Society and Ellis. He readily confessed that Weymouth's arrogance in philological matters had tempted

³⁷ Henry Sweet, "On Early English Pronunciation," rev. of On Early English Pronunciation, with Especial Reference to Chaucer in Opposition to the Views Maintained by Mr. A.J. Ellis in His "On Early English Pronunciation," by Richard Weymouth, Academy, 5 (October 24, 1874), 460-61.

³⁸ Weymouth, op. cit., p. 2.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 117.

⁴⁰ Richard F. Weymouth, "Dr. Weymouth on Early English Pronunciation," Academy, 5 (October 31, 1874), 485.

him to adopt the "chaffy" style.⁴¹

The most dignified response to the unpleasant direction which both Weymouth and Sweet's harangues were taking came from Ellis himself. He observed that any writer on antiquarian or philological matters should concentrate on making collections as accurate and accessible as possible and "consider his own conclusions as accessory."⁴² Ellis reminded readers that his work for the projected Early English Pronunciation was only half finished. For instance, he hoped at that time to include a later section for reconsidering "the old conclusions under newly-acquired light, especially under the light of criticism."⁴³ (In later years Zachrisson was of the opinion that despite Sweet's attacks on Weymouth, the criticism on Ellis "deserves to be carefully studied.")⁴⁴

Ellis' private sentiments about Weymouth at this time were shared with his French associate, Paul Meyer. He recalled that when he heard Weymouth deliver a paper on

⁴¹Henry Sweet, "Dr. Weymouth on Early English Pronunciation," Academy, 5 (November 7, 1874), 509.

⁴²A.J. Ellis, "On Weymouth," Academy, V (November 7, 1874), 509.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴R.E. Zachrisson, The Pronunciation of English Vowels, 1400-1700 (Göteborg: Wald. Zachrissons Boktrycker A.B., 1913), p. 2.

Chaucer before the Philological Society on June 17, 1870, he caught the mistakes which Weymouth had made on that occasion. At the Mill School, Weymouth also had the daily benefit of consulting with James Murray, one of the assistant masters there. Some of the proofs, Ellis wrote, of the Weymouth book had been corrected by Murray, who succeeded in persuading Weymouth to alter some of the more serious errors. When Murray brought along with him to the Society's meeting a copy of Weymouth's book, Ellis had had the opportunity of hearing Murray read aloud in Dr. Weymouth's pronunciation the first lines of Chaucer's "Prologue" to the Canterbury Tales. Much laughter came from the members. Weymouth had sent Ellis a copy of the work to Ellis, but the latter said that he had no intention of even "untying the book packet until two years had elapsed" at which time he would be able to respond to its theories in the body of his own work.⁴⁵

In spite of the contrary opinions which Weymouth had published, Ellis went ahead with the completion of Part IV. At this time he was busy devising typographical equivalents for some of the symbols which the Prince had made for representing the sounds of certain esoteric languages. Ellis was anxious to include in Early English Pronunciation the Prince's scheme of the vowels and consonants present

⁴⁵Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, June 6, 1874.

in each of the forty-five European languages because such a scheme was useful for testing the accuracy of Palaeotype. Ellis found that many of these sounds were not in the printer's fonts. He spent hours with such languages as Livonian, a dialect of Salis, still spoken at the beginning of the nineteenth century; Tscheremissian, a dialect of the right bank of the Volga; Cornish as spoken in the eighteenth century; Illyrian; Cassubian, a still-existing dialect of Polabic; and Albanian Guègue dialect. In addition, Ellis devised a Palaeotypic table with numerical references to the Prince's classification of these vowels and consonants.⁴⁶

Notwithstanding his concentration on the relationship of Basque to other languages, the Prince continued to assist Ellis because the inclusion of his Classification des Langues Européennes in Part IV would offer him an opportunity of showing the place of Basque among the other languages of Europe.⁴⁷

At last in December 1874 Part IV appeared, the last page of which was numbered 1432 in Early English Pronunciation. The Reverend Richard Morris observed in a report to the members of the Philological Society that it was a mine

⁴⁶Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, pp. 1298-1307.

⁴⁷"Philological Society," Athenaeum, April 3, 1875, p. 459.

which could be worked for years to come "without fear of exhausting it."⁴⁸ He announced on that occasion that Sweet's work The History of English Sounds was the first major investigation to derive much of its direction from Ellis' Early English Pronunciation.

Throughout Part IV is repeated his theory of the organic change of words, that is, changes in the physical articulation of the sounds. He deplored the philologists who "wrapped themselves up in their garment of Roman letters."⁴⁹ He viewed his results achieved by the completion of Part IV as a rough approximation in tracing sounds through several stages in the past down to the present. He admitted, nonetheless, that there were still many problems to be solved. Ellis' spirits were undaunted as he now prepared to undertake the enormous task of recording the phonology of the existing English dialects.

One later student of historical philology gives us an expert overview of Part IV. Jespersen was of the opinion that the later volumes of Early English Pronunciation exhibit a want of system and lead to great difficulty in finding exactly what one wants. He criticized the long footnotes which contain extracts from new sources which

⁴⁸Richard Morris, "Presidential Address," p. 138.

⁴⁹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, IV, p. 1432.

Ellis had been discovering in the course of his work. Jespersen also felt that he could not always depend upon the extracts from the phonetic authors because he found that Ellis sometimes left out words without informing the reader. Because the extracts were so lengthy the reader mistakenly thought everything had been included.⁵⁰ Jespersen also deprecated Ellis' use of Palaeotype. The nuances of sounds indicated were only Ellis' conjectures and had not been indicated in the "grosser" transcriptions of the older authors.

The completion of Part IV brought relief to Ellis. For a brief time he could give some of his attention to areas peripheral to philology. He did not have to feel guilty about delaying his major opus and could comfortably join in a debate such as the one concerning prosody, which engaged his interest towards the beginning of 1875. As a classicist, he contributed a point of view on the subject which had a great deal of authority behind it.

J.B. Mayor had offered the Philological Society his own system of prosody. He did not agree with Ellis' views that the old classical measures borrowed from the Latin prosodists and "never practiced by poets" should be

⁵⁰ Otto Jespersen, *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles*, Pt. 1 (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitäts Buchhandlung, 1909-14), p. 14.

abandoned.⁵¹ Mayor agreed with Ellis in not expecting to force a poet's line into a "Procrustean bed."⁵² Ellis paid attention to the criticisms directed towards the prosodic systems of Guest and Abbott at the meeting of the Philological Society on February 5, 1875. He expressed again his own objections to the use of classical terminology as applied to modern metres, believing it was essential for the stress of an English line to fall on the final syllable of the third foot or on the final syllables of the second and fourth feet.⁵³

He became so interested in the subject that he prepared a paper in response to the ideas which Mayor had given to the Philological Society. Ellis objected to the abstract of his opinions which Mayor had provided concerning the heroic line because it was too brief and insufficiently qualified to be the foundation of criticism. Because the rhythms of ancient languages were affected by pitch, and the modern ones are characterized by the use of force, he proposed a series of labels for force, length, pitch, weight, and silence, to avoid the ambiguities of the words accent and emphasis. He assigned nine numbers to

⁵¹J.B. Mayor, "English Metre," Transactions of the Philological Society (1876), p. 398.

⁵²Ibid., p. 399.

⁵³J.B. Mayor, "Dr. Guest and Dr. Abbott on English Metre," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-74), p. 644.

each of the above five categories. There are such bizarre designations as "superweak", "submedial", "supermoderate" and "supersmall."⁵⁴

Ellis applied his own notions tentatively to modern poets' lines and made comparisons with the deprecated customary scansion. He paid careful attention to the strong and weak syllables. He had read poetry aloud to his own children and had made attempts to write verse according to the conventional notion of incorporating ten syllables into each line and found that "some lines had little life, while others were disjointed dolls."⁵⁵ He indicated that he would have enjoyed studying in detail the rhythm of poets had he more time and would have considered each poet in relation to antecedent poets and contemporaries.

Ellis explained personally to Mayor that it was essential to dissociate the classical terminology from analyses of modern metres because we do not "have the feeling for what the Ancients expressed."⁵⁶ Mayor felt it was

⁵⁴A.J. Ellis, "Remarks on Professor Mayor's Two Papers on Rhythm," Transactions of the Philological Society (1876), p. 442.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 445.

⁵⁶Joseph B. Mayor, Chapters on English Metre, 2nd ed. (New York: AMS Press, 1969, 1901), p. 5. J.P. Dabney was shocked to find that Ellis had proposed forty-five different marks for the possibilities of each syllable (The Musical Basis of Verse, New York, 1901), and George Saintsbury approved highly of the elaborate scheme which Ellis had for the syllabic values for quality and degree of force (Historical Manual of English Prosody, London, 1910).

very unlikely to suppose that the Greek rules of metre would be applied realistically to English. He felt that there would be no gain in speaking of Ellis' "ascending disyllabic."

However attractive were these alternative paths of inquiry like prosody, Ellis was aware that he had an extensive amount of investigation before him still to undertake. The dialect work was beginning to assume proportions far exceeding anything which he had planned in his original outline of Early English Pronunciation.

With renewed resolution Ellis wrote to Hallam at the beginning of 1875. Hallam was still the sounding-board for Ellis' schemes with their many revisions of approach to the project. He never flagged in his supportive role. In his mind Ellis could do no wrong providing that dialect research was the main area of concern. If only Hallam had possessed independent financial means as well as greater determination, he would have been equal in many respects to such a task himself.

In his letter, Ellis recognized that the possibility of capturing on paper the spoken language varieties of all of Britain's folk was a task worthy of his own abilities and was a necessary outgrowth of the kind of work upon which he had been engaged for so long. In spite of the deficiencies of his contributors, and owing to his confidence in the accuracy of Palaeotype, he believed that the

time had come to enlarge his plans even further. Although he had announced to his colleagues of the Philological Society in October his new organization of Part IV, with its two sections, he already had scrapped this approach by the beginning of January 1875. Fortunately, Hallam's discretion made it possible for Ellis to confide in him his latest ambitious proposal. The costs of further enlargements of Part IV would be alarmingly expensive to the three Societies, and it was a matter of the gravest consequence. It would not serve Ellis' ends were the three impatient groups to hear of Ellis' newest scheme. Part IV, therefore, now would be a unit in itself, not containing the dialect classification. A new section called Part V would be devoted entirely to the English dialects. Confidently Ellis stated that he expected to finish the project within a year.

By January 1875, the printer was not permitted to set in type any more than what now appears in Part IV. In effect, Ellis was still postponing that original difficult Chapter XI on the dialects which had been occupying his thoughts since he had first planned the complete work.⁵⁷ In the preliminary sketch, before Part I was printed, he had expected that the dialect section would occupy only

⁵⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fols. 263-64), Ellis to Hallam, January 13, 1875.

thirty pages of manuscript. He had not then realized that he would produce a "substantive and unexpectedly complete treatise."⁵⁸

The viva voce studies of dialect sent in to him continued to take precedence over any other demands on his time, and he grew increasingly fretful as the weeks passed.⁵⁹ His spirits started to rise, though, when it appeared that the general direction emerging from the many dialect contributions pointed to the tentative boundaries and areas of a dialect map after all. In the previous year he had been despondent because no pattern was clearly emerging.⁶⁰

Many times he shifted around his thousands of accumulated notes on the classifications of the dialects and decided that he felt sufficiently clear in his own mind to bring his views on the geographical delimitations of the dialects before the Philological Society. Accordingly, on March 5, 1875 he gave his report, taking great care to acknowledge the research of Prince Bonaparte and James Murray.⁶¹ Ellis divided the dialects into three families,

⁵⁸ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 2*.

⁵⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44), Ellis to Hallam, February 5, 1875.

⁶⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 283), Ellis to Hallam, February 13, 1875.

⁶¹ "Philological Society," Athenaeum, March 13, 1875, p. 364.

seven branches, thirteen dialects, forty-two sub-dialects, and numerous varieties and sub-varieties.⁶² A précis of the arrangement appeared in the Academy, where it was

⁶²The three major dialect groups which Ellis designated were Great Northern Family, Great Eastern Family, and Great Western Family. For example, he divided the first group as follows: (Ellis' own outlining format)

1. Great Northern Family
 - A. Northern Branch
 - I. North Insular Scotch
 1. Shetland
 2. Orkney
 - II. Northern Scotch
 3. Caithness
 4. Moray and Aberdeen
 5. Angus
 - III. Central Scotch
 6. Fife and Lothian
 7. Clydesdale
 8. Highland Border
 9. Galloway
 - IV. Scotch and English Border
 10. Southern Scotch
 11. English West Marches
 12. English East Marches
 - V. Northern English
 13. Cumberland
 14. Westmorland
 15. North and Mid Yorkshire
 16. North Lancashire
 - B. North-Western Branch
 - VI. North-Western English
 17. South Lancashire
 18. Cheshire
 19. North Peak of Derbyshire
 20. Derbyshire
 21. Staffordshire
 22. Shropshire

When Ellis assembled years later Part V of Early English Pronunciation, he modified his 1875 arrangement of the

referred to as the "best attainable with our present knowledge."⁶³ Now the members of the Philological Society could get an overview of what Ellis had hinted at for the proposed fifth volume of Early English Pronunciation.

While Ellis was concerning himself with some major arrangements for his work, Hallam continued to send packages of notes in which he modified the conventions of Palaeotype because he had raised objections to certain symbols for marking accent and emphasis. Ellis in response informed Hallam that readers who had not "deeply" studied the matter of phonetics would naturally be confused by such modifications. He dismissed Hallam's proposal for employing periods and grave accents lest readers be put "quite at sea."⁶⁴

Two days later Ellis received another one of the large packets of papers filled with Hallam's suggestions for the improvement of the phonetic notation that had

dialects into six divisions: Southern, Western, Eastern, Midland, Northern, Lowland. He used Roman numerals to indicate each of these major divisions. These were divided into forty-two districts consecutively numbered in the order in which they were treated in the text. The varieties or parts of districts were numbered with small Roman numerals. Special locations within a variety were noted by a lower case letter. Thus D 30 refers to the dialect group for the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire; V i designates one of the four varieties within that district; e stands for the dialect spoken in Pateley Bridge.

⁶³"Philological Society," Academy, 7 (March 13, 1875), 275-76.

⁶⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 161), Ellis to Hallam, May, 15, 1875.

originally been sent to Ellis by his informants and wrote back that the use of accents in "vast quantities" on a page would soon exhaust an English font as well as add to the heavy expense of correcting the proofs. Ellis wrote, "Not one in a hundred thousand would understand them," and warned Hallam to get busy rewriting some thousand phonetic words which had been incorrectly rendered in Hallam's own brand of Palaeotype.⁶⁵

In June 1875, Ellis experienced considerable eye trouble and felt it necessary to consider taking some kind of a holiday. He did take out a little time to forward to his colleague, Professor Pott at Halle, the volumes of Early English Pronunciation, fully realizing that the busy German philologist, whom he admired tremendously, would not have time to examine its many pages. He indicated to Herr Doktor Pott that there was much gratification in the mere thought of having his work placed on the shelves of Pott's "Bücherregale," a word that in itself evokes a picture of ponderous nineteenth century scholarly furnishings.⁶⁶

By the close of August more information concerning the Midland dialects arrived from Prince Bonaparte, and

⁶⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 162), Ellis to Hallam, May 17, 1875.

⁶⁶University of Halle, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Pott, June 1, 1875.

this enabled Ellis to get a better notion of the Hereford dialect, which now seemed to be a transition between N.W. and S.W. English.⁶⁷

Hallam added to Ellis' problems by again intimating that he wanted very much to come to London to pay a visit. As usual, Ellis made a great effort to discourage him from such a plan by suggesting instead that he make arrangements first to see Walter Skeat in order to come all the better prepared for the desired interview.

During this same month Ellis spent time sorting the materials relating to the northwest of England, particularly those which had arrived from the informants in Westmorland, Cumberland, and north Lancashire. He decided that it would be helpful to send them all to James Murray, then in Cumberland, for examination. Ellis did not like to go about his investigations without the support of his fellow scholars, particularly the most distinguished ones, to corroborate his findings.⁶⁸

Many of the informants who assisted Ellis with the comparative specimens and other dialectal contributions continued to be sources of frustration to him. Occasionally, however, he encountered one whose enthusiasm for recording

⁶⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 308), Ellis to Hallam, August 22, 1875.

⁶⁸Ibid.

provincial speech in all forms was equal to his own. With gratitude Ellis acknowledged in a letter to Hallam his indebtedness to Frederick Thomas Elworthy, a clergyman in Somersetshire. At the end of the summer Ellis journeyed into West Somerset and worked with him for many days. He expressed his feelings about the trip to Hallam: "I felt as if I had been fairly 'pounded' in body as well as in mind!"⁶⁹ The parson's rendition of local dialect forms seemed perfect to Ellis.

The two men worked for five days, during which time Ellis organized extensive lists of vowels in order to display the peculiar phonetic structure of the dialect. In the vowel list which Ellis prepared with his host, all the fractures of the vowel sounds which Elworthy noted were retained. Because Elworthy's commitment to dialect study was impressive, this amateur philologist had the benefit of Ellis' endorsement in his paper which had been accepted for publication in the Transactions of the Philological Society. "The Dialect of West Somerset"⁷⁰ was a careful

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰"One of the peculiarities of dialect speech is its constant replacement of a simple by a 'fractured' vowel, that is, a fixed by a gliding sound produced by changing the position of the tongue or mouth or both while pronouncing. In Derbyshire and South Lancashire it is a habit to begin to practice oo with the mouth wide open, and to go on closing the lip as the sound is continued. The result, oo, is a fracture: beginning by a sound uu',

investigation which aimed at the determination of the eastern and western dialect boundaries of the county. He employed Ellis' Glossic letters throughout the paper as well as their equivalents in Palaeotype. Ellis' analysis of the diphthongal fractures of the county are so detailed that Elworthy's paper is one of the important dialect studies of this period. (The work with Elworthy pleased Ellis sufficiently to urge his American correspondent, J. Hammond Trumbull, to examine it as an example of what needed to be done from "living sources."⁷¹)

Prince Bonaparte also made a foray into Somerset. He succeeded in locating "utch" and "utchy" (forms of I) in the villages of Merriott and Montacute in the south of the county. Bonaparte's On the Dialects of Eleven Southern and South Western Counties, with a New Classification of the English (1878) was of great importance to Ellis because it made reference to these forms. Ellis admitted that when he made his visit with Elworthy, it was impossible to record all the dialectal variations of the area owing to limitations of time and resources. He was grateful if the form was

not unlike the French ue, and ending like a pure oo." (Quoted in A.J. Ellis, "Postscript on the Difficult Vowels," in Frederick T. Elworthy, "The Dialect of West Somerset," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1875-76, p. 271).

⁷¹Trinity College (Hartford, Conn.), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, November 28, 1875.

preserved through the researches of others.⁷²

A more modern study bears on the work which Ellis did in 1875 when he visited Somersetshire to confer with Elworthy and met with Prince Bonaparte to discuss the lost dialectal form of "utch." This was the study made by Peter Wright, whom Professors Harold Orton and Eugen Deith of the University of Leeds sent as a field worker to the Merriott area west of Montacute in Somerset. Wright decided to examine in detail the place that Ellis called the "Land of Utch."⁷³ It comprised such villages as Norton, Chisselborough, and East Coker (of Eliot fame). There was much skepticism about the continued existence into the twentieth century of this word derived from ME ych, but Wright heard it several times from a farmer. Wright, disagreeing with the tendency to decry Ellis' work today says, "There is no doubt that Ellis was a most accurate phonetician."⁷⁴

⁷²In 1969 Rupert E. Palmer was critical of several of Ellis' classifications of Somerset and Gloucester dialects, saying that he depended on the reports of others, "including Kruisinga's source, F.T. Elworthy, a man not trained in methods of dialect study." Apparently, Palmer was unaware of the collaborative study of Ellis and Elworthy in Somerset in 1875. See Rupert E. Palmer, Thomas Whythorne's Speech: The Phonology of a Sixteenth Century Native of Somerset in London (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1969), Anglistica, XVI, p. 29.

⁷³Ibid., Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 31.

⁷⁴Peter Wright and Fritz Rohrer, "Early Work for the Survey of English Dialects: The Academic and Human Sides," in Studies in Honour of Harold Orton on the Occasion

Returning to 1875 we find that Hallam continued to press Ellis to adopt more detailed phonetic notations. He readily spoke of his frustrations to anyone who could possibly put in a constructive word on his behalf to Ellis. He wrote to the Reverend Walter W. Skeat, whose reputation as an editor and an etymologist was very high. Not wishing to become involved in a personal altercation with Ellis, who could be difficult at times, Skeat suggested that Hallam communicate with Ellis again on the matter if he felt so strongly about it. He wrote, "I only know just the more easy bits of phonetics and soon lose myself."⁷⁵ Skeat always took care to be circumspect in his dealings with his professional colleagues and was cautious not to interfere in Ellis' affairs. In fact, it was not a propitious time for Hallam to broach changes in phonetic symbolisation which were contrary to those of Ellis in spite of the fact that Ellis had suggested that Hallam make contact with Skeat.

As 1875 drew to a close, Ellis increasingly devoted afternoons to sessions with some of the principal contributors. Hallam journeyed to London in spite of the less

of His Seventieth Birthday, ed. by Stanley Ellis (Leeds Studies in English, New Series, Vol. II, 1968), University of Leeds, School of English, 1969.

⁷⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37), Skeat to Hallam, August 25, 1875.

than enthusiastic desire of Ellis for him to do so, and on this occasion they participated in a "severe but satisfactory" meeting. It afforded Hallam much pleasure that Dr. Murray also spent hours with him as well as the generous Prince Bonaparte, who permitted him to use his dialect library, a privilege which Ellis had always valued.⁷⁶

⁷⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43-44, fol. 313), Ellis to Hallam, October 10, 1875.

CHAPTER XIV

SURVEYING SYSTEMATICALLY THE BRITISH DIALECTS TO DEDUCE SOUNDS OF FORMER CENTURIES

(1876-78)

Any extra time which Ellis might have gained earlier in some portions of his study was soon lost owing to the problems which arose in connection with the Midland dialects during 1876-78. It was particularly difficult to draw the boundaries of that large division. Thomas Hallam, though ostensibly helpful, was becoming increasingly uncooperative about interpretations of the Midland dialects and was delaying Ellis' progress because he was determined to have his own way on certain matters. Ellis, however, was becoming short-tempered. In spite of these unpleasant developments he derived satisfaction from his scholarly contacts, which were both stimulating and productive. Henry Sweet's word lists were to be an important component in Ellis' recording of the provincial sounds. A careful examination of the Hallam-Ellis Correspondence reveals the daily frustrations and obstructions to scholarly progress with which Ellis had to deal. We shall follow his researches at this time in order to trace his experiences and observe his techniques.

During 1876, Ellis was not able to become actively involved in the affairs of the English Dialect Society in Manchester, but Hallam faithfully apprised him of the developments of that body's deliberations. In February 1876, Walter Skeat resigned his directorship of the organization because the duties in the literary department were combined with those of the business department.¹ Ellis was interested in all that was occurring within the English Dialect Society but could ill afford to take time to assume a position of leadership himself.

He had to devote increasing time to the demands of his informants for viva voces, and he now found himself diverted from some of his map work in order to resolve some unusual dialectal problems. For example, he received interesting information about the unique Northumbrian "burr" or "crhoup," consisting of the trill of the uvula rather than the tip of the tongue. Ellis was familiar with its use within extremely narrow limits, especially in Newcastle and Morpeth. He referred to it as the r grasséyé. Deciding to procure additional information about this sound, Ellis inserted a letter into the Academy in which he called for assistance from the public for some examples of the "uncorrupted burr." His plan was to get a list of villages which were adjacent to each other in one of which the burr

¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 348), Hallam to Ellis, February 3, 1876.

existed and in the other in which the variety did not exist. He suggested this time that any interested parties should also repeat his inquiry in their own local papers so that greater coverage could be given to his investigation of the sound.² This kind of effort was extremely time-consuming for Ellis, and he had to remind himself frequently that there were far more important matters that required his attention even though the special studies were fascinating to him.³

Many interviews to collect dialect were taking place at this time with people whose social status reflected the diverse activity of the Victorian period. He met some unusual people in connection with the attempt to find examples of the Northumbrian "burr." Ellis met in London with two Newcastle-on-Tyne pitmen, John Bryson of Bebside Colliery, and Ralph Young, a native of Bebside, in order to listen to their reading of the comparative specimen.

After collecting as many examples as possible, Ellis drew up a detailed chart indicating the presence, partial

²A.J. Ellis, "The Northumbrian 'Burr' or 'Crhoup'," Academy, 9 (January 15, 1876), 55.

³As early as 1844 Ellis had analyzed the vibrating sound of the "Newcastle burr" and showed that the sound was close to one in Arabic speech. (A.J. Ellis, "On the Letter R," Phonotypic Journal, 3 (January 1844), p. 5). Later scholars also looked at the Northumbrian "burr" and found Ellis' work of interest. For example, Pahlsson investigated some of the same locales: Thropton, Rothbury, and Snitter. (Christer Pahlsson, The Northumbrian Burr: A Sociolinguistic Study, Lund: Gleerup, 1972).

presence, or absence of the "burr" in the whole inland border of Northumberland. He had received information from little villages like Minster Acres, Ladykirk and Prudhoe and noted also that beyond the towns of North Shields (Northumberland and South Shields (Durham)) the entire "burr" vanished although "the pitmen beyond the town burr vigorously."⁴

Always at the back of Ellis' mind was the over-riding need for having a dialect map. He catalogued the many versions of the comparative specimen and miscellaneous notes for various locales which had been sent to him from the obliging informants. In order to display those areas which he had still not investigated to his satisfaction, he dotted the collected information on fresh maps of England and Scotland. Ellis saw that the results were not encouraging for the area from South Lincolnshire to the southern coast now appeared empty. Further material, however, came in at this time. Prince Bonaparte's contributions on Midland dialects led Ellis to complain in querulous tones that the information was very "defective."⁵ Hallam periodically heard all of Ellis' irritations with other people.

⁴ A.J. Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 641-44. In 1930 Harold Orton, associated at that time with Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, addressed the Yorkshire Dialect Society on the subject of the Northumbrian dialects and spoke of the "colossal" work which Ellis had done. (Harold Orton, "The Dialects of Northumberland," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 5 (1930, Pt. XXXI), 15-16.

⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), Ellis to Hallam, February 21, 1876.

With determination Ellis pushed forward. He wrote Hallam that the "dissection" of the Derbyshire area was taking place in spite of the probable dismay which the Prince would express. By March 1876 the map was becoming fairly intelligible, and only a few major lines needed rectification.⁶

In addition to the construction of his map, Ellis had agreed to deliver a public lecture before the London Institution. This took place on Thursday, March 9, 1876. He had prepared in advance a syllabus of the lecture which was printed and distributed to those who were planning to attend the lecture to hear Ellis' classification of the dialects. Ellis took pains to ensure that his presentation would be both instructive and entertaining. He attempted to read samples of twenty-four dialects from his palaeotyped notes, allowing a minute for each one. It was a courageous undertaking, and prior to the lecture he experienced misgivings about the probability of success. On that occasion all that he could do was to comfort himself with the sentiment that "few will detect the slips."⁷

His efforts must have been received with mirth, wonder, and certainly a bit of criticism. To a Cornishman,

⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 179), Ellis to Hallam, March 1, 1876.

⁷A.J. Ellis, London Institution: Syllabus of a Lecture on English Dialects, Their Classes and Sounds on Thursday, March 9, 1876 (London: London Institution, 1876).

LONDON INSTITUTION
FINSBURY CIRCUS.

Syllabus of a Lecture

ON

ENGLISH DIALECTS,
THEIR CLASSES AND SOUNDS.

BY

ALEXANDER J. ELLIS, B.A., F.R.S., F.S.A., &c.

On THURSDAY, MARCH 9th, 1876.

Book-language and Speech-language—Constituents of Language, Vocabulary (sound, meaning, origin), and Grammar (inflection, idiom, intonation)—alteration of language in time and place—origin of the present researches from observing alteration of English in time—former Lecture here on Early English Pronunciation, 18th December, 1867—example of Chaucer's pronunciation:—

Whan that April with his schooures swote
The drought of March hath perced to the rote
And bathed ev'ry veyne in swich lycour,
Of which vertu engend'red is the flour;
Whan Zephyrus, eek, with his swete brethe
Inspired hath in ev'ry holte and hethe

28. A.J. Ellis, Syllabus of a Lecture on English Dialects,
1876: Title Page

for example, Ellis' rendition of the dialect was fraught with possibly serious errors. His presentation of that dialect was based on a Glossotype transcription of a speaker. He also utilized a comparative specimen of that dialect which had been sent to him. Hallam, who could not be present on the occasion, had earlier been asked to provide him with a transcription of the Repton variety of Peak as well as one of the Chapel-en-le-Frith. The program at the London Institution was certainly a tour de force.⁸ For the history of dialect studies, though, it is important because on that occasion he displayed his first large dialectal map, in spite of the fact that it showed a blank from the Wash to Sussex. He repeated the same lecture at Norwood on December 4, 1876.⁹

After much consultation and many disagreements with Ellis, Prince Bonaparte presented before the Philological Society his own paper on April 7, 1876 dealing with his dialectal researches in England.¹⁰ His Royal Highness was not able to arrive at an exact delimitation of the dialects in the same way as he had done for the Basque ones. It was significant in this paper that he had made use of the

⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fols. 370-71), Ellis to Hallam, March 3, 1876.

⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Papers, "Summary of A.J. Ellis Reports."

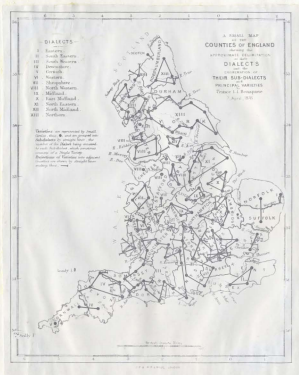
¹⁰"Philological Society," Academy, 9 (April 15, 1876), 363.

comparative specimen which Ellis had devised for his own work. This lecture, like Ellis' in March, was enhanced by a large map which had been drawn for the Prince and which he then presented to the library of the Philological Society. With good grace Ellis had assisted him in adapting the map for inclusion in the copies of the paper which were distributed to the members and had made efforts to bring it up-to-date, even going so far as to include the Prince's discoveries in Somersetshire. This is a milestone in English dialectology¹¹ because Bonaparte's is the first published map indicating dialect areas in England. On the original map all the divisions, varieties, sub-dialects, and dialects had been marked by the Prince in red, but Ellis' reduction could only show the details in black.

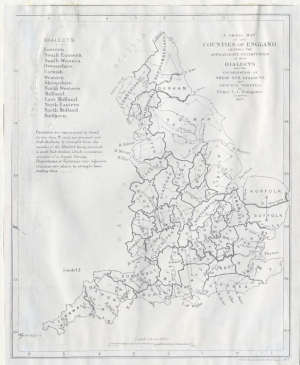
An examination of the little map presented to the readers of Prince Bonaparte's paper in the Transactions of the Philological Society¹² reveals several shortcomings which

¹¹A.J. Ellis, "Note" in On the Dialects of Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, South Warwickshire, South Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, and Surrey, with a New Classification of the English Dialects, by Prince Louis Lucien (London: English Dialect Society, 1876), EDS Miscellanies 2, pp. 21-24.

¹²Bonaparte, Prince Louis Lucien, "On the Dialects of Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, South Warwickshire, South Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, and Surrey, with a New Classification of the English Dialects," Transactions of the Philological Society, 1875-76, pp. 570-81.



29. Prince Bonaparte, "A Small Map of the Counties of England Shewing the Approximate Delimitation of Their Dialects and the Enumeration of Their Sub-Dialects and Principal Varieties," 1876 and 1877, *Transactions of the Philological Society*, April 1876, pp.570-71.



(Continued)

were not substantially improved by the time when Ellis would offer his own dialect map at the conclusion of Early English Pronunciation, Part V. The dialect boundaries on Bonaparte's map were outlined in zig-zag lines which joined little black circles representing the varieties. Adding to the confusion, straight lines indicated the sub-dialects. The entire effect is bewildering and most unsatisfactory, and it is unfortunate the careful analyses of the dialect areas which the Prince had made are blurred by the execrable map. It would have been far more desirable to have reproduced Bonaparte's large map in several sections to facilitate comprehension, for he had provided a key to the thirteen dialect areas which he postulated on the map.

There is a curious mixture in the labels: "Western," "North Midland," become confused with specific county markings such as "Cornish" and "Shropshire." Ellis later had to devise a scheme which was more logical and capable of showing the relationships to the reader with a minimum of difficulty.

Ellis had encountered much difficulty in modifying the Prince's map for inclusion in the Transactions of the Philological Society because he had to prepare the map for an engraver, a task which required at least a day's work in a schedule that was filled with a great many of his own

activities.¹³ The Prince further refined his own classification, and a few months later the members of the Philological Society heard him deliver a postscript to the April 7th paper on the results of his summer foray into Somersetshire. On this occasion, also, Ellis made an attempt to explain Bonaparte's map to the members. No doubt they were hard-pressed to follow the discussion over the "utch vs utchy" line.¹⁴ The complicated Bonaparte map does not appear to have clarified the dialect classification for the members.

Letters of inquiry with respect to his progress on Early English Pronunciation required extensive correspondence, and the dialect work itself had to give way frequently to the demands of interested colleagues who pressed for progress reports. From Leiden University, O.H. De Beer sent scores of letters to Ellis, who courteously invited him to come to London in order to converse on dialects and to discuss Part IV.¹⁵

True to form, Ellis was busily planning in 1876 a section even beyond the fifth part of the work, which he expected to complete within a year from that April. He informed Professor De Beer that Part VI would take several

¹³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 10), Ellis to Hallam, July 24, 1876.

¹⁴"Philological Society," Academy, 10 (November 25, 1876), 527.

¹⁵University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, April 17, 1876.

years to write, involving an extensive reappraisal of the whole subject and of the previous Parts. He wished to supplement and correct all the rest of his work in the light of all the recent criticisms and pamphlets to which his huge effort had given rise.¹⁶

Sometimes Ellis had to waste his time with unsatisfactory informants. For example, there are several specimens, word lists, and dialect tests for the little town of Blackburn in Lancashire. Only in his correspondence with Hallam did Ellis make any mention of the work he unsuccessfully conducted with Mrs. Coulter, a native, in 1876. The woman could not satisfactorily differentiate between dr and tr. She was the daughter of a Blackburn solicitor who learned dialect as a child chiefly from an old gardener. After spending fruitless hours with Mrs. Coulter on the sounds, Ellis regretfully had to abandon the task. Her value as an informant was negligible, and Ellis ruefully remarked to Hallam, "One can't trust ladies!"¹⁷

Ellis had been particularly anxious to have accurate information from the towns and villages of Lancashire because of the minute variations in the area. So many of Ellis'

¹⁶University of Leiden, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to De Beer, April 20, 1876.

¹⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 186), Ellis to Hallam, April 26, 1876.

successors were challenged to fill in the many places on the dialectal map which Ellis had been forced to ignore owing to the exigencies of time and the maddeningly slow returns from his chief helper, Thomas Hallam.¹⁸

When Karl Brunner visited the same area of Lancashire to take down dialectal speech in some of the isolated places which Ellis had omitted fifty years earlier, he made extensive use of Ellis' findings in order to corroborate those fine distinctions in the specimens in Early English Pronunciation.¹⁹ Of course, Brunner had to rely on his own interpretation of Ellis' values of the Palaeotype.

Another dialectologist to examine an area omitted by Ellis was Alexander Hargreaves, who studied the Adlington dialect spoken in the hundred of Leyland. This was one of the first investigations done for Anglistische Forschungen and based on Ellis' work.²⁰ The German publishers showed an early interest in research dealing with areas of England

¹⁸See, for example, Peter Wright, "Parasitic Syllabic Nasals at Marshside, Lancashire" in Leeds Studies in English and Kindred Languages, Nos. 7-8 (Leeds: University, 1952), p. 92.

¹⁹Karl Brunner, "Einige Dialektaufnahmen aus Lancashire," in Neusprachliche Studien. Festgabe Karl Luick zu seinem Sechzigsten Geburtstag Dargebracht von Freunden und Schülern (Die Neueren Sprachen 6 Beiheft, Marburg a.d. Lahn: Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, G. Braun, 1925), 27-59 passim.

²⁰Alexander Hargreaves, A Grammar of the Dialect of Adlington: Lancashire (Heidelberg: Carl Winters Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1904).

which had been suggested by the limitations of Early English Pronunciation.

For some inexplicable reason, in 1876 the Secretary of the English Dialect Society, John Nodal, again adopted an aggrieved tone concerning Ellis in his letters to Hallam. It is difficult to account for this attitude. In the Glossary of the Lancashire Dialect Nodal utilized the Glossic system; however, he arranged the Lancashire vocabulary in one list and disregarded Ellis' division of the county into two parts. Nodal believed that it was impossible to determine the precise line of demarcation as Ellis had drawn it. Aiming his verbal barbs at Ellis, Nodal observed that since the county plan, as a rule, had been adopted throughout England, "there seems to be no sufficient reason why Lancashire should be the only exception!"²¹ This remark carried with it an implied criticism which could not have been pleasing to Ellis.

Though possibly annoyed at Hallam's ways, Ellis was not disposed to relieve himself of his assistance. In May 1876, the latter called upon him to forward additional renderings of Cheshire dialect received from the indefatigable Georgena Jackson.²² She had been corresponding with Hallam

²¹John H. Nodal and George Milner, A Glossary of the Lancashire Dialect (English Dialect Society XIV, Series C, Manchester: Alexander Ireland, 1875), pp. v-vii.

²²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fols. 189-90), Ellis to Hallam, May 27, 1876.

on the subject also.

Lancashire was only one of the many counties which caused him anxiety. He worked painstakingly in order to avoid repetitions at a later date, but the gaps on the map continued to cause him anxiety, and he planned to use the books and pamphlets in Prince Bonaparte's library to clear up some matters.²³ The existing publications about dialects in England had been organized into bibliographical form by the Reverend Walter Skeat in a 132 page publication issued by the English Dialect Society in 1876. It was arranged by counties, and it was apparent that many regions had received scant attention. Much of the list prepared by Skeat contained entries which were unscientific and misleading. The reviewer of Skeat's work recognized that Ellis' work, then in progress, would ultimately bring about a complete rearrangement of the bibliographical list, and the divisions could be based upon scientific principles. Ellis, thus, received encouragement and acknowledgment of his great labors.²⁴

In addition to Thomas Hallam, the contributions of J.G. Goodchild, an employee of the Government Geological Survey, figured often in Ellis' efforts to advance knowledge of the dialects of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Northwest Yorkshire. Ellis admired him greatly for his attainment of

²³Ibid.

²⁴"Dialect Literature," rev. of Bibliography of the Literature of Dialects, by Walter W. Skeat, Athenaeum, No. 2538, June 17, 1876, pp. 822-23.

facility with Palaeotype. He expressed this confidence by holding many personal interviews with Goodchild in his home on Argyll Street. Ellis looked back with satisfaction on the progress during 1876 because Goodchild had brought together much valuable information about the little known area called West-Northern in Ellis' scheme. When the latter had been in the neighborhood of Burton-in-Lonsdale, Yorkshire, on his professional business with the Geological Society, he had met the postmaster, John Powley, who had read aloud for him William Seward's Dialogue, a work printed in 1801. Ellis had been familiar with this work from having examined it at Prince Bonaparte's library. Goodchild palaeotyped from Powley's dictation the old dialect written by Seward, and later both Ellis and Goodchild reviewed the viva voce together. This kind of painstaking work adds substantially to the value of Ellis' efforts and shows the thoroughness which he brought to his study.²⁵

Goodchild palaeotyped for Ellis the dialect of anyone who could be of possible assistance. For example, he spent six weeks at Cautley in Yorkshire where he became acquainted with Mr. Gibson, a farmer, who knew just enough to qualify for a teaching position and who provided him with several useful specimens which were sent back to Ellis.²⁶

²⁵ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 608.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 559.

Like Hallam, however, Goodchild liked to make occasional adaptations of Ellis' symbols to indicate other shades of sound. Ellis, nevertheless, insisted that the results were not representative of general speech but rather of individual habits. Plaintively he asked, "If I am puzzled, what will my readers be?"²⁷

At this same time Ellis convinced another of his helpers, C. Clough Robinson, who was preparing to publish a work of his own on Yorkshire dialects, that he should use Glossic notation in the new work on the Mid-Yorkshire dialect which the English Dialect Society was about to issue. Robinson agreed that it was indeed satisfactory to use Glossic because it had a "theoretical value."²⁸

His own Yorkshire investigations of 1876 were very demanding and caused him a great deal of trouble. The materials which he collected during this period also were to provide reference sources for scholars who were able to confirm their theories years later by drawing upon some of the documentation which Ellis had put together with so much labor. Sometimes his work served as the only reliable source of information on the pronunciation of a particular Yorkshire locale. For example, at Heidelberg University in 1902, Ida

²⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 207), Ellis to Hallam, July 17, 1876.

²⁸C. Clough Robinson, A Glossary of Words Pertaining to the Dialect of Mid-Yorkshire with Others Peculiar to Lower Nidderdale to Which Is Prefixed an Outline Grammar of the Mid-Yorkshire Dialect (London: Trübner, 1876), pp. v-vii.

Baumann also acknowledged Ellis' preeminence in the treatment of the modern dialects in her account of the early documents containing fifteenth century Yorkshire.²⁹ The work carried on by Ellis for that area in 1876 was a major source for that study.

Reverend Thomas Clarke of the Yorkshire Dialect Society in 1903 was of the opinion that Ellis' treatment of Yorkshire dialects was very defective and that the representation of the various sounds was "far from perfect." Clarke felt that the analysis of the dialects should have been undertaken by a division of labor and that one man should have been appointed for each district.³⁰ Comparison of the sounds with an "ancient standard" did not meet with the Reverend Clarke's approval. Ellis' work frequently served as a sounding board for theories of others which, for the most part, were not developed to any final conclusions.

When Richard Stead addressed the Yorkshire Dialect Society on May 19, 1906 at Ilkley, he made an earnest effort to inform his audience of the high merits of Ellis' work and offered to provide them with items from its pages. Stead

²⁹Ida Baumann, Die Sprache der Urkunden aus Yorkshire (Anglistische Forschungen # 11, Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1902), p. 3.

³⁰Thomas Clarke, "The Importance of Phonology in the Study of the Popular Speech," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 1 (1903), Part V, pp. 38-43.

had known both Ellis and Hallam, and he recalled spending pleasant but difficult hours in Ellis' study. He remembered Ellis as a "terrible worker."³¹ He observed that Ellis' use of "some house" as test words for the large dialect divisions in England should have been replaced by "run down" because the native of any one of those areas would always give the following values to those words: "run dōōn" (Lowland Scotch); "rōōn dōōn" (Northern); "rōōn down" (Midland); "run down" (Southern). Ellis implied that it was possible to fix the dividing line exactly. Stead believed there was a belt or uncertain area where the people used some of Ellis' forms of "some house" indiscriminately. For example, Stead dismissed Ellis' assertion that the "hoose" district extended as far south as Burley and Otley.³² He indicated that Ellis had probably been misled by his informants. Stead disagreed considerably with Ellis' analysis of the varieties of the Yorkshire dialects, but he generously acknowledged the firm foundation which Ellis laid for future studies of that region's dialects.³³

In another derivative study George Cowling considered Ellis' dialect specimen, "Why John has no doubts" as a classic

³¹Richard Stead, "The Two Yorkshire Dialects," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 1 (1906), Part VIII, p. 7.

³²Ibid., p. 10.

³³Ibid., p. 12.

of its kind. He made use of it in presenting an example of Hackness dialect in his work in 1915. This little village on the upper reaches of the Derwent six miles from Scarborough, Yorkshire, had not been sampled by Ellis, and Cowling attempted to fill in the omission by making a detailed analysis of the dialect.³⁴

One of the most critical observations concerning Ellis' organization of materials appeared in 1936 in Alfred Müller's study of South-Eastern Yorkshire dialect. "Wir haben bei Ellis mit gemischtem Material und unkontrollierbarer Umschrift zu tun!" He harshly accused Ellis and his helpers of having modified some of the specimens by noting down only a part of the interview.³⁵ It is very unlikely that this could have been the case. Throughout the pages of Ellis' Early English Pronunciation, he is completely honest about any possible omissions of data resulting from inadequate returns.

Ellis' Yorkshire material was later important to Axel Wijk, who in 1937 re-edited the sixteenth century Diary of Henry Machyn, a merchant tailor of Trinity the Little,

³⁴George H. Cowling, The Dialect of Hackness (North-East Yorkshire), with Original Specimens and a Word List (Cambridge: University Press, 1915), p. 162.

³⁵Alfred Müller, Der Heutige Sprachgebrauch im Südöstlichen Yorkshire (Palaestra 204, Leipzig: Mayer & Mayer, 1936), p. 4.

Queenhithe, during the period 1550-63, a fragment of which exists in one of the Cottonian Library manuscripts. Wijk was convinced that the Diary represents an important addition to the "scanty" dialect sources for the period. He was sure that it belonged to the Yorkshire area between Holderness and Ouse.³⁶ Ellis, who had relied primarily on the Holderness Glossary, was an important source for Wijk's study.³⁷

Adolf Lamprecht in 1937 also acknowledged the significance of Ellis' work and set about filling in the many gaps which occurred in the nineteenth century study. His study of Southwest Yorkshire dialect tries to record additional material rather than to provide a systematic refutation of Ellis' work.³⁸

³⁶ Axel Wijk, The Orthography and Pronunciation of Henry Machyn the London Diarist: A Study of the South-East Yorkshire Dialect in the Early 16th Century (Uppsala: Appelbergs Boktryckeriaktiebolag, 1937), pp. 17-20. In a more recent study R.M. Wilson observes that because Ellis described only the spoken dialect there is no guarantee that the written account of Machyn is that of the dialect; it is not possible to know the precise sounds Machyn assigned to his symbols. See R.M. Wilson, "The Orthography and Provenance of Henry Machyn" in Early English and Norse Studies Presented to Hugh Smith in Honour of His Sixtieth Birthday, ed. by Arthur Brown and Peter Foote (London: Methuen, 1963), pp. 202-216.

³⁷ Frederick Ross, Richard Stead, and Thomas Holderness, A Glossary of Words Used in Holderness in the East Riding of Yorkshire (London: Trübner, 1877).

³⁸ Adolf Lamprecht, Der Sprachgebrauch in Südwestlichen Yorkshire Dargestellt auf Grund von Sprechplatten und Dialektgedrucken (Palaestra CCX, Leipzig: Mayer & Mayer, 1937).

Though many obscure nineteenth century publishers were interested in presenting to the public materials written in the Yorkshire dialect, Ellis had little use for such publications. For example, he did not think much of the "Bairnsla Foake Annual" because in his view it was neither accurate nor sufficiently distinctive to have any linguistic value. Because the same words were sometimes spelled differently, he could not determine the actual pronunciation. Dr. J.A. Sheard has pointed out that there appears to have been little difference among the varieties of speech in Dewsbury, Wakefield, Batley, Morley, Mirfield, and Heckmondwike in the 1870's. He believes that in spite of Ellis' opinion concerning the unreliability of such Yorkshire dialect publications, certain specific information may be obtained from spellings with "ah", "aa", "aah" derived from Middle English words having "u".³⁹ Dr. Sheard further agrees partly with Ellis' later division of the West Riding into nine types. Time has changed some of these sub-areas because of population shifts and the departure of many industrial workers who have influenced the speech of the area in the years since Ellis' informants heard the varieties.⁴⁰ Sheard notes that Ellis recognized that the spread of received

³⁹J.A. Sheard, "Some Recent Research in West Riding Dialects," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 7 (1945), Part XLV, 21-22.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 23.

pronunciation through the schools would produce "even greater changes within a century." Sheard believes that this instruction in standardized English has actually created a bilingual population. Improved travel facilities have resulted in a common dialect throughout the West Riding; consequently, the people can also approximate standard English.⁴¹

Ellis was anxious that his informants should take pains to record the usage of the definite article in the transcriptions. In 1952, W.E. Jones extracted much valuable information concerning its use in Yorkshire from Ellis' comparative specimen, and he then plotted the variations on a map. Jones believed that some of the speech reported in the vicinity of the Washburn River by Ellis had changed during the course of sixty years. Nevertheless, he did conclude that the three types of article usage (followed by a consonant, a vowel, and the Holderness variety with its lack of article) were still heard as they were in Ellis' time.⁴²

Setting aside for the present the consideration of the studies arising from the 1876 Yorkshire dialect research done by Ellis, we return to the summer of that year, a period which brought no diminution of Hallam's conscientiousness in

⁴¹Ibid., p. 29.

⁴²W.E. Jones, "The Definite Article in Living Yorkshire Dialect" in *Leeds Studies in English and Kindred Languages*, Nos. 7-8 (Leeds: University Press, 1952), p. 84.

rendering all dialectal shades of sound. Ellis was scientific in his outlook, and he tried earnestly to convince Hallam that approximations had to serve as the only thing "approximatively intelligible."⁴³

It always heartened Ellis to hear news concerning any of the successes which he had inspired others to attain, for he was unselfish in every respect. Eleven years had passed since he had first criticized young Graham Bell's theories. Now Ellis proudly read Sir William Thompson's remarks to the British Association for the Advancement of Science about the telephone. He wrote to Melville Bell that the invention was a "beautiful confirmation of Helmholtz's theory."⁴⁴ Ellis' subsidiary role in the early development of the telephone deserves recognition.

By November of that year Ellis found himself regretting that he had previously written words of an irritating nature to Hallam, and in his latest letter he attributed it to his increasing insomnia. Work was exhausting him, and he acknowledged that it sounded like a strange complaint from a "man without a profession."⁴⁵ The following day he again

⁴³ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 230), Ellis to Hallam, September 5, 1876.

⁴⁴ Robert V. Bruce, Alexander Graham Bell and the Conquest of Solitude (New York: Little, Brown, 1973), p. 209. (Letter of Ellis to M. Bell, October 16, 1876).

⁴⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 255), Ellis to Hallam, November 19, 1876.

apologized to Hallam: "I am sorry I am such a cranky machine."⁴⁶

All kinds of impossible situations were leading Ellis into a state of near distraction. Water pipes required installation under the floor of his library at 25 Argyll Road, and working at home was no longer possible. Soothingly, Hallam tried to calm his distraught friend, assuring him that the "machine" was too valuable to be prematurely worn out by overwork.⁴⁷

His extensive correspondence did not always prove as satisfying to his state of mind as he would have wished. It was not always easy to rejoice in the successes of others while his own plans were proceeding at a disappointingly slow pace. For example, Pott's edition of von Humboldt's Einleitung came directly to Ellis with the compliments of that editor. The fine quality of Pott's labors in a way discouraged Ellis, who had become so weary that he did not know where to turn because of the many programs which he had undertaken.⁴⁸

In addition, there were often special activities which Ellis had to arrange in order to accommodate his associates.

⁴⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 258), Ellis to Hallam, November 20, 1876.

⁴⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 43, fol. 318), Hallam to Ellis, November 24, 1876.

⁴⁸University of Halle, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Pott, December 3, 1876,

For example, he was asked to do a Shakespearean reading for the New Shakespeare Society, and he grudgingly gave up an entire afternoon's work in order to comply with the request.⁴⁹

At the close of 1876 Ellis was once more devoting his attention to Salesbury's Welsh treatise. He engaged in a lengthy correspondence with an enthusiastic clergyman-scholar, the Reverend Robert Jones, who shared his appreciation of the significance of the historical work. In spite of the pressing demands of his own dialectal work, Ellis willingly cooperated with Jones in efforts to bring out a new edition of the old Welsh study. The Reverend Jones came from Rotherhithe, where he had little chance to participate in the scholarly activities of the day, and he was grateful for the help which Ellis extended to him.⁵⁰

Like Ellis, he was fond of employing figurative language. When he indicated to Ellis his plans for writing an article on Salesbury for the next issue of the Cymmrodor, he humbly assured him that "chips of value fall from an author's lathe occasionally."⁵¹ Reverend Jones had summoned up enough courage to ask Ellis to present him with a copy of

⁴⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 204), Ellis to Hallam, December 8, 1876.

⁵⁰University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, R. Jones to Ellis, December 22, 1876.

⁵¹University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, R. Jones to Ellis, February 21, 1877.

Early English Pronunciation, III containing the Salesbury treatises, and he hinted that he would like to purchase the entire work if he could manage. He felt a scholarly kinship with Ellis because his own Welsh edition of Salesbury, under the aegis of the Cymmarodur "belonged also to a literary society."⁵² Ellis kindly obliged him and sent the four complimentary volumes of Early English Pronunciation to Rotherhithe. He had previously sent to the Reverend Jones a copy of his work on Greek pronunciation because he knew that the income of the local clergy was limited. Ellis even went so far as to invite the Reverend Jones to come to London to hear him deliver a paper before the Philological Society. Jones arranged for a friend to "cover" [sic] his church services and the evening was climaxed with a short private interview with Ellis in his library.⁵³ Reverend Jones also knew a friend of Ellis, John Rhŷs, and expressed to Ellis his pleasure at learning of the appointment of the Celtic scholar to a position at Oxford.⁵⁴

F.J. Furnivall had suggested that Ellis' translation could be included "for interleaves" in the new edition which

⁵²University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Jones, February 23, 1877.

⁵³University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Jones to Ellis, February 28, 1877.

⁵⁴University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Jones to Ellis, February 24, 1877.

Jones was preparing,⁵⁵ and accordingly Jones asked Ellis for permission to do this. He looked forward to sending Ellis an unbound copy of the new edition as soon as the work was completed. Three years later Robert Jones died, and his brother, Charles N. Jones, the editor of the Cymmrodor, notified Ellis that he would shortly receive the promised edition "in boards."⁵⁶ The friendship with Robert Jones resulted in Ellis' admission to the Society of the Cymmrodorion in 1881, with the ceremony taking place at the Irons-dale Chambers, Chancery Lane.

Although there were many demands for his participation in a large number of activities, Ellis still gave his attention to the dialect specimens which arrived from his informants daily. He valued the reports which were furnished to him by some of the older informants, who usually provided dialectal forms which were rapidly becoming obsolete. Early in 1877 Hallam made plans for securing additional Lancashire dialect material and informed Ellis that he expected to encounter some difficulty with a resident of Leyland, five miles south of Preston. Miss Susan Maria Ffarington, who owned a great deal of land in the area, was interested in discussing the language heard in her youth. She had been

⁵⁵University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Jones to Ellis, May 25, 1877.

⁵⁶University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Charles Jones to Ellis, May 9, 1881.

born in 1807 and was a figure of consequence in the region, but Hallam soon learned that she had to be approached with deference. The only advice which Ellis could give Hallam with respect to dealing with difficult personalities like Miss Ffarington was not too practical. He wrote to Hallam as follows: "She is an old lady who stands a good deal on her dignity and will have to be treated accordingly."⁵⁷

Specimens transcribed in Palaeotype continued to arrive from Hallam and Goodchild. Those from the former contained strangely contrived signs for u consisting of three consecutive forms of the letter with the central one lowered minus the accent marks. A compromise on this phonetic point was making Ellis desperate, and he reminded Hallam that such troublesome symbols were impossible because the "generality would throw the book away!"⁵⁸

On March 2, 1877 Ellis, then Vice President of the Philological Society, delivered a paper before that group: "On the Comparative Phonology of the English Dialects," giving an account of his method of collecting comparative specimens during the previous four years in order to map certain phonetic districts. The lecture lasted for more than two hours, and when Hallam learned about it, he enthusiastically approved of Ellis' latest plan for drawing up a list

⁵⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 296), Ellis to Hallam, February 19, 1877.

⁵⁸Ibid.

of words and "billing the unknown districts in order to connect those areas with the other districts."⁵⁹ Ellis was referring to areas whose dialect affiliation was not yet determined. He intended to enlist the assistance of additional informants and put such a plan promptly into operation.

Ellis believed it was imperative to keep abreast of similar dialectal efforts in progress elsewhere in Europe. Letters were exchanged with Adolf Noreen at the University of Uppsala because the Fryksdalsmålets Sjudlåra interested him very much. The references which Noreen made to Sievers and Brücke helped Ellis to clarify some of Noreen's vowel lists for him. Ellis indicated that he appreciated the problems which Noreen was experiencing in determining the value of a certain sound which was "between" two known sounds.⁶⁰ Because so much attention was paid in Sweden to the subject of dialects, Ellis felt a particular affinity towards Noreen and said that because of the magnitude of his [Ellis] task he was obliged to compromise by relying on a combination of a dialectal specimen and miscellaneous notes in addition to viva voces with some of the informants.

In the 1870's the state of dialectal research in Sweden was chaotic and perhaps comparable to efforts in

⁵⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fols. 303-4), Hallam to Ellis, March 9, 1877.

⁶⁰ University of Uppsala, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Noreen, March 27, 1877.

England. A number of "national" associations had been formed among the students at Uppsala in order to study native dialects. No uniform system of recording the many dialects of that country existed. J.A. Lundell, a student at that time, was commissioned to work out a suitable alphabet, which he later called the "Swedish Dialect Alphabet" ("landsmålsalfabet"). Like Ellis, Lundell had contacts at a printing office, and he obtained a thorough knowledge of the complexities of the publishing business. These two phoneticians, each with the goal of constructing a suitable phonetic alphabet, could build on an indispensable background, a complete familiarity with type founts. Most other scholars who attempted the construction of alphabets had a deficient knowledge of the subject.⁶¹

Henry Sweet at this time called to the attention of the Philological Society the experiment then in progress in Sweden conducted by Lundell who had based his alphabet on Sundevall's Om Fonetiska Bokstäfver (Vetenskaps-Akademiens Handlingar, 1855), which, in turn, had been borrowed from Ellis and Pitman. Lundell's system was devised to use a uniform notation without employing turned letters and other digraphs.

Ellis' 1877 contacts with Scandinavian scholars proved most satisfying to him. His friend, Professor Johann Storm

⁶¹J.A. Lundell, "The Swedish Dialect Alphabet," Studia Neophilologica, 1 (1928), 3.

of Christiania, was then engaged in writing a history of the Norwegian language on the principles which Ellis had developed in the first part of Early English Pronunciation. It was encouraging during this difficult period to learn that others approved of his efforts by organizing their work along similar lines.⁶²

There were others besides European scholars of high reputation who followed Ellis' progress with interest. From his vicarage in Brecon, Wales, the Reverend R. Stead wrote Hallam that he did not feel justified in spending the large sum required to purchase Ellis' "great work" though it was "one of the minor ambitions of his life to study that magnificent work."⁶³

Another name which deserves special recognition among Ellis' general assistants in the dialect research is Reverend J.P. Faunthorpe, the principal of Whitelands Training College in Chelsea. Through his cooperation Ellis was able to take down viva voces from many of the students and teachers at the institution. Some of them had been originally assistant teachers in those numerous villages which Ellis had selected to sample the native dialects. He had long "despaired" of

⁶²Henry Sweet, "Sixth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting, Friday the 18th of May, 1877," Transactions of the Philological Society (1877-78-79), p. 9.

⁶³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, no fol.), Stead to Hallam, March 28, 1877.

getting dependable dialectal information from many of those places.⁶⁴ In 1877, for example, the Reverend Faunthorpe's housemaid, Mary Anstey, from Idlesleigh in North Devon, assisted Ellis. She was an "uneducated native almost fresh from the place."⁶⁵

In addition to the effort which Ellis expended in connection with the gathering of dialectal information, he exchanged opinions with Hallam on the problems confronting the English Dialect Society. That organization had unexpected difficulties with Prince Bonaparte, who refused to allow his own revised dialectal map to be distributed to the members of the Society.⁶⁶ Fortunately, he changed his mind, and Mr. Nodal, the Secretary, was able to provide the membership with copies.⁶⁷

Hallam, for no reason other than curiosity, was determined to see for himself the Prince's actual letter of refusal to accommodate the English Dialect Society. He learned from Mr. Nodal that the latter had attempted to resolve the situation by asking Furnivall and Ellis to

⁶⁴ Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xxviii.

⁶⁵ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 157.

⁶⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Nodal to Hallam, April 18, 1877.

⁶⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 62, fol. 21), Nodal to Hallam, May 24, 1877.

intercede on behalf of the English Dialect Society with Bonaparte to allow the revised map to be distributed. Nodal's letter reveals a minimum of self-control with regard to his opinions of the Prince.⁶⁸

Besides these difficulties, Ellis was now concerned about a nephew whose guardianship had devolved upon him. The young man showed little inclination to be industrious, and Ellis felt the obligation to look out for the relative's interests. These concerns, of course, took up his time, but he had no choice except to cope with the problem.⁶⁹

His work with dialects continued to present him with a variety of unexpected problems. He felt that he could no longer put any trust in the "promiscuous orthography"⁷⁰ for determining dialectal sounds. When early in February of that year he had planned another method for collecting dialectal words, he immediately informed Hallam of his plans. He decided to utilize Henry Sweet's list of modern words with their Anglo-Saxon equivalents as set forth in that author's History of English Sounds. Ellis was of the opinion that his own comparative specimen did not contain sufficient examples of the vowel sounds used throughout the country. He decided

⁶⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Nodal to Hallam, August 13, 1877.

⁶⁹Columbia University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Clement Ingleby, June 5, 1877.

⁷⁰Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xix.

that an adaptation of Sweet's arrangement would suffice so that a word could be assigned to an equivalent sound in the list. The lists are divided into three sections: Wessex and North, English, and Romance. The words in each list are grouped in classes dependent on the vowel of the original language in what corresponds to the accented syllable in received English. The words in each class are arranged in the order of the letters which follow that vowel.

Seven months later his plans had been carried out. By September 27 he had sent out to correspondents 1,651 of the special word lists based on Sweet's Anglo-Saxon forms, and by October 31, he noted that 314 had been returned to him filled out. One hundred and eighty-six were sent back blank, and 1,151 were not returned.⁷¹ It took from two to four hours to fill up all the blanks on one of those lists. Hallam was irritated very much at the inclusion of the remark that a certain form would be allowed "to please Mr. Hallam (who is very precise) which immensely increased the list of sounds."⁷²

A long list of disconnected words brought unforeseen problems to Ellis' assistants in the scattered villages, and many of the informants had to place the words in phrases to

⁷¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Papers, "Calendar of Mr. Ellis' Activities."

⁷²Ibid.

expedite the investigation.⁷³ The process was a slow and discouraging one in many cases.

Thus, by the last quarter of 1877 Ellis had sharply modified his entire approach to interpreting material so as to determine the English dialect areas. Although the word list was philologically sensible, this technique did not yield the desired results because the informants became confused, and they differed in their interpretations of the vowel sounds in the word lists. The use of Norse or French forms was very difficult for most of the informants.⁷⁴

Hallam cooperated with Ellis in this latest modification in the gathering of provincial dialect materials. Copies of the word list were distributed around Manchester in the hope of hearing from informants in places which had been either insufficiently represented or not heard from at all. The list of about eight hundred words was disseminated widely, and when Hallam wrote to Nodal, he expressed optimism about the success of this venture. Among the groups which received copies of the word lists for distribution to their membership were the Philological Society, the Society of Antiquaries, the Early English Text Society, and the English Dialect Society.⁷⁵

⁷³Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xx.

⁷⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, "Introduction," p. 2.

⁷⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Hallam to Nodal, October 29, 1877.

Ellis' attempts to use the word list to collect evidence involved him in a prodigious amount of effort. A great deal of time was consumed in mailing forms and tallying up the results, and nowhere do the records mention that he had any help from others.

Owing to Ellis' sharp rebukes for having taken liberties with the Palaeographic notations, Hallam hesitated to incur his further displeasure and did not mention to Ellis that the word list included an error in Part 8 of the directions to the informants. This caused difficulty and Hallam had said nothing until later lest he seem "officious."⁷⁶

By November, Ellis had sent out 1,651 of the word lists but had received only 314 replies. In this poor showing there was one return which contained only one word!⁷⁷ He did not hesitate to read to the Philological Society on November 2, 1877 his "Statement concerning the Returns Received to My Word List for Provincial Pronunciation."⁷⁸ One does not know what kind of reaction the members had for the dreary recital of frustrated hopes.

Occasionally even a poor return provided something that was valuable. Mr. G.H. Adshead of Strawberry Terrace

⁷⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 349), Hallam to Ellis, October 11, 1877.

⁷⁷"Philological Society," Academy, 12 (November 10, 1877), 456.

⁷⁸Minutes of the Philological Society, November 2, 1877.

sent a word list from the village of Saddleworth, in south-western Yorkshire. He had been acquainted with the dialect speech of the area for forty years. He also enclosed a specimen of Marden dialect, which had been printed in a local newspaper. The report interested Ellis because the dialect was so peculiar. Ellis urged Hallam to "take a listening trip that way."⁷⁹ As a result, the establishment of the Yorkshire boundaries was further advanced by means of these word lists based on Sweet. By the end of the year though, there were still large numbers of unsolved problems with little cause for Ellis to feel optimistic.

Ellis knew only too well Hallam's insatiable thirst for recognition. He urged him to get a copy of Henry Sweet's Handbook of Phonetics which had just been published because in the "Preface" he would find his "name mentioned."⁸⁰ It is apparent that no matter how busy he was, Ellis wished to inform his friends of any little professional notice which would be gratifying to them.

Georgena Jackson, a good friend of Walter Skeat, had consulted him [Skeat] concerning the best method of preparing her collections of Shropshire dialect words. Skeat wrote to Miss Jackson, advising her to employ an

⁷⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 350), Ellis to Hallam, November 26, 1877.

⁸⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, October 12, 1877.

established mode of representing sounds by symbols and urged her to select Ellis' Glossic. At first she was disappointed because the system was somewhat confusing to her with respect to the interpretation of the different vowel sounds.⁸¹ By the beginning of 1878, however, she had mastered the Glossic system and felt so pleased with its merits that she wrote to Ellis in order to share her views with him about the symbols. She was convinced that since no two people hear alike, it was impossible for them to write Glossic in a thoroughly consistent way.⁸² Miss Jackson wanted to meet Ellis in person, and Skeat was helpful in arranging the interview. Ellis indicated to Skeat later that her work was "the most searching that has been made."⁸³

In March Hallam was bold enough to write his opinions once more to Ellis. He urged Ellis to make additional efforts to attain comprehensive coverage for some of the remote rural areas: "As so much has now been done, it would be a great pity to leave vacant nooks and corners." He advised Ellis to extend the period for the informants to collect the information and entreated him to reconsider

⁸¹Walter W. Skeat, *A Student's Pastime, Being a Select Series of Articles Reprinted from "Notes and Queries."* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1896), p. lxix.

⁸²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 59, fol. 183), Jackson to Hallam, January 19, 1878.

⁸³Skeat, *A Student's Pastime*, p. lxix.

his plans.⁸⁴ Ellis, however, was not disposed to follow Hallam's suggestions. The pressures were mounting, and in a letter to Mayer, the American scientist, Ellis wrote, "I find the business of living greatly interferes with the business of life."⁸⁵

It may be noted at this point that Ellis would have been very much gratified during these troublesome times of 1877-78 if he knew that sixty years later the techniques which he struggled to perfect for collecting dialectal information would again be utilized in connection with Hans Kurath's survey of the dialectal forms of New England. Kurath desired to facilitate the comparison of his material with British dialects and included as many features as possible from Ellis' comparative specimen and classified word lists.⁸⁶

With so many new discoveries and inventions appearing in Victorian times, Ellis hoped that the techniques of phonetics could be similarly advanced. He yearned for a reliable way of mechanically describing sounds.

⁸⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 377), Hallam to Ellis, March 7, 1878.

⁸⁵Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, April 9, 1878.

⁸⁶Hans Kurath, Handbook of the Linguistic Geography of New England with Collaboration of Marcus L. Hansen, Julia Bloch, Bernard Bloch (Providence: Brown University, 1939), p. 148.

Ellis became very interested at this time in Edison's phonograph, a device by which the vowels were impressed upon a piece of tin foil. This device was then induced to reproduce the sounds. Professor Mayer at the Steeven's Institute in New Jersey had forwarded to Ellis a piece of such foil with impressions of sound upon it. Ellis showed it to many people who were interested in Edison's work. On April 3, 1878 Ellis spent with Alexander Graham Bell an hour at the Hampstead establishment of Mr. Strohan, the maker of another phonographic device.

Strohan was a telegraphic engineer and had a copy of Edison's phonograph which he was trying to "doctor" so that it would operate. This machine was driven by a descending weight and turned at fifty-four revolutions a second; the speed could be increased or diminished. There was a vertical disc of .01 thickness made of "telephone iron." Ellis reported that he spoke against a caoutchouc film (to guard against moisture) placed against the disc. He spoke into a box which carried the vibrations of air to the disc. Ellis did not approve of the solder or rivet arrangement for the pin or needle which was fastened on the reverse side of the disc. There was an arm connected with a spring at the top of the disc to guide the pin or needle in order to register the vibrations.⁸⁷

⁸⁷Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Mayer, April 9, 1878.

The needle pressed against a thick piece of tin foil which was wrapped around a roller. The roller moved along a heavy cable when the crank was turned. The sound waves did the work of cutting the trace. When Ellis moved the roller back along the central cable and started it again, a "playback" needle followed the indentations on the foil's traces. Ellis wrote his friend that loud cries into the box made the needle pierce the foil. Ellis at one time had bought prints and the phonograph reminded him of a print from which all the delicacy of the proof had long disappeared. Ellis in his account was critical of the mechanical connections which interfered with the delicacy of action. The sounds produced were muffled. He could not always tell which sound came out of the instrument. He wrote, "In taking arms against a sea of troubles, the sea took the liberty to disappear."⁸⁸ Ellis had experimented by speaking into the phonograph when it revolved at different speeds with varying results. Too many repetitions wore out the foil although there were times when he could record several times in one spot.

In Ellis' view the phonograph which he was able to examine was an "interesting and ingenious toy."⁸⁹ It was of no use to him in his dialectal research; he asserted that

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid.

the device could not even approach catching the delicate shades of provincial speech sounds. He readily admitted his own mechanical ignorance and could offer no suggestions for making the phonograph a more sensitive and effective instrument. He did recognize its potential but could not afford to spend any more time on the device because he had too much work to do.

Except for a brief adverse report of his experience with Bell on the phonograph in April, 1878,⁹⁰ very little mention is ever made of the device in the Philological Society's Transactions. In addition to his account of the experiment with Bell, Ellis took time to inform the general public about his own views regarding the value of the phonograph in Nature. This was prepared immediately after his detailed explanations of the device to Mayer. In the journal he did remark that cries, coughs, laughter, and music produced some startling effects from the tin foil.⁹¹

A few weeks after this Ellis had a chance to examine an improvement which Fleeming Jenkin had made on the phonograph. This time Ellis reported that the machine was more than a "philosophical toy."⁹² In this same article Ellis

⁹⁰"Philological Society," Academy, 13 (April 13, 1878), 329.

⁹¹A.J. Ellis, "Edison's Phonograph," Nature, 17 (April 18, 1878), 485-86.

⁹²A.J. Ellis, "The Phonograph," Nature, 18 (May 9, 1878), 38-39.

writes about the vertical sections of the impressions made on the tin foil which Jenkins had been able to magnify four hundred times. Ellis assigned to them the name "speech curves." He noted that the curve showed a gradual arc followed by a "bold serrated precipice and sudden valleys." Ellis, always cautious in his enthusiasm, pointed out that clarity was still lacking.

His investigations of the phonograph provided him with a welcome diversion from the relentless monotony of the comparative specimens and word lists arriving daily from all over the country.

Occasionally, Ellis would set aside his analysis of those lists in order to extend hospitality to some of the interesting people with whom he maintained a correspondence. In May 1878, he entertained Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, asking him to dine with his family and meet Dr. Willis of Barnes (near Richmond), the author of the lives of Spinoza, Servetus, and Giordano Bruno. Ellis' circle of friends was extensive, and he derived much pleasure from his associations.⁹³

At this time Ellis found himself paying much attention to the phonetic work which Henry Sweet was bringing before the scholarly world. Sweet's Handbook of Phonetics⁹⁴

⁹³Harvard University Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Higginson, May 15, 1878.

⁹⁴Henry Sweet, A Handbook of Phonetics Including a Popular Exposition of the Principles of the Spelling Reform (London: Macmillan, 1877).

appeared in 1878, and since Ellis' Pronunciation for Singers⁹⁵ appeared shortly afterwards, Sweet could not have consulted Ellis' work. However, according to one reviewer, the two phoneticians covered approximately the same ground. There are considerable differences, nonetheless, on some points. For example, Ellis believed it necessary to include anatomical and acoustical details, but Sweet did not include them in order to move swiftly through his main topic of speech sounds.⁹⁶

Towards the close of the summer of that year Ellis forwarded to Hallam a sketchy map showing new dialectal areas. On a county map of Derbyshire he traced the lines between dialects. He then utilized an even larger map with three miles to an inch upon which he gave the distance from a chief railway station as well as its direction. For example, he referred to his map by noting a town as being situation 3 E Derby, i.e., the town was three miles east of Derby railway station.

Ellis thanked Hallam, who had made arrangements to have the Manchester City News print a request for dialectal information. Ever scrupulous in his dealings, Ellis took

⁹⁵ A.J. Ellis, Pronunciation for Singers, with Especial Reference to the English, German, Italian, and French Languages: with Numerous Examples and Exercises for the Use of Teachers and Advanced Students (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1877).

⁹⁶ Henry Nicol, rev. of A Handbook of Phonetics, by Henry Sweet, in Academy, 19 (July 6, 1878), 16.

care to enclose 9½d in stamps to pay for the clippings he desired and the postage. Though busy with his work, he was always careful about financial details.

At this time Ellis wrote a number of critical remarks on certain Dialect Society publications. He indicated that the grammatical forms of a dialect could be noted by a native or by a person who was especially sharp in catching dialectal phraseology or turns of thought. He did praise the Grammar of the Dorsetshire Dialect by the Reverend William Barnes⁹⁷ as well as The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland by Dr. James A.H. Murray.⁹⁸ Equally generous was his praise of Elworthy's Grammar of the Dialect of West Somerset.⁹⁹ Ellis noted with approval that Murray (like himself) had gone to Somerset to be with Elworthy for a fortnight in order to "bathe his ears in the sounds."¹⁰⁰ Ellis believed that the latter was the finest of its kind because it was exhaustive in its treatment of the vowel sounds and used Glossic in place of the usual "hybrid

⁹⁷William Barnes, Grammar of the Dorsetshire Dialect (London: J. Russell Smith, 1867).

⁹⁸James A.H. Murray, The Dialects of the Southern Counties of Scotland. Its Pronunciation, Grammar, and Historical Relations. With an Appendix on the Present Limits of the Gaelic and Lowland Tongue and a Linguistic Map of Scotland (London: Asher and Co., 1873).

⁹⁹Frederic Thomas Elworthy, An Outline of the Grammar of the Dialect of West Somerset (London: Trübner, 1877).

¹⁰⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 403), Ellis to Hallam, August 26, 1878.

orthography" found in all such studies.¹⁰¹

He recognized the significance of the step taken by the English Dialect Society when that group reprinted Sweet's History of English Sounds. Nonetheless, one cannot help but gain the impression that Ellis did not tout Sweet's work too fulsomely.

Other publications dealing with local dialects were of considerable interest to Ellis. The investigations were undertaken by the many workers involved in the English Dialect Society's collections of glossaries. These enterprises, too, were good examples of activity utilizing great numbers of little known people who shared in common a commitment to the collection and recording of England's oral heritage. Ellis insisted that the public should not "snub" those who had compiled the glossaries and had endured the drudgery of preparing press proofs.¹⁰²

He was critical of some of the studies written for the English Dialect Society. For example, he complained about the work prepared by "Miss Baker" on Northamptonshire dialect in which several districts, according to his own scheme, were "ruthlessly mixed up in one mass."¹⁰³ As might

¹⁰¹A.J. Ellis, "Publications of the English Dialect Society (Second Notice)," Academy, 14 (September 28, 1878), 319.

¹⁰²A.J. Ellis, "Publications of the English Dialect Society (First Notice)," Academy, 14 (September 14, 1878), 272.

¹⁰³Ibid.

be expected, he disapproved of the various systems of orthography employed by some of the amateurs, and commented disparagingly on the weakness of the glossarists' phonetic training.

Since January of 1878 he had been out of contact with Georgena Jackson, but she continued to work on her Shropshire word lists. She had kept up a steady correspondence with Hallam, and with great spirit wrote about the differences of opinion which she and Ellis entertained concerning the interpretation of the letter R. Earlier, she had argued on the matter when she visited Ellis in his home to engage in a viva voce. With humor Miss Jackson called to Hallam's attention her problems arising from this "R-ticle of phonological faith."¹⁰⁴

Ellis himself had little success during September in getting in touch with Miss Jackson, and when he did not receive any answers to his letters, he wrote to Hallam for assistance in locating her because he had learned from her earlier work that a nearly straight line North and South from Whitechurch to Ludlow and hence to Moreford, Monmouth, and Chepstow formed the boundary between English and Welsh. Since the speech patterns of East Shropshire were becoming

¹⁰⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Jackson to Hallam, September 18, 1878.

again giving
 Mr. Ellis?

Mr. Ellis, I am gratified & anxious to know, whether the two coincide or differ? Should I be so bold as to say that Mr. Ellis is anxious to know, whether the two coincide or differ? O! were I in the position of Mr. Ellis, I should be so bold as to say that Mr. Ellis is anxious to know, whether the two coincide or differ? "Why John has no doubts?"

I am, My dear Madam,
 Faithfully yours

Thos. Hallam

P.S. I am, My dear Madam, north & mid Shropshire & South Salop?

Mr. Ellis's 16th & 17th herewith

30. First Draft of a Letter by Thomas Hallam to Georgina Jackson, September 20, 1878
 (Courtesy of the Bodleian Library)

clear, the dialectal map would be more intelligible.¹⁰⁵

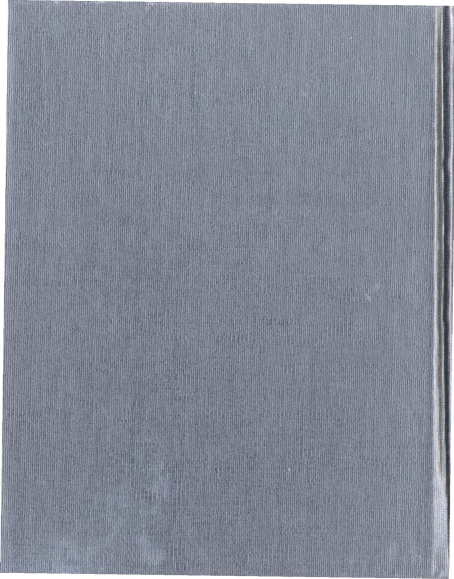
The delimitation of Staffordshire dialect caused Ellis many anxious hours towards the close of the year. Hallam furnished his friend with an excellent specimen from Burslem, one of the towns in the Potteries. It was an important contribution because a similar comparative specimen of Dudley, in the center of the Black Country of iron-coal district, had earlier been sent to Prince Bonaparte by Richard Woof of Worcester in 1875. Since Ellis had judged the Woof specimen as being "very bad," the Burslem potter's contribution from Hallam had saved the day.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 404), Ellis to Hallam, September 24, 1878.

¹⁰⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 412), Ellis to Hallam, December 7, 1878.







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CHAPTER XV

TRACING ADDITIONAL DIALECTAL BOUNDARIES AND STRUGGLING WITH PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION

(1879-83)

The task of surveying the dialects of Britain and coping with the enormous quantity of material was becoming an unmanageable one for Ellis. Hoping to expedite the method of recording dialects with the help of his informants, he introduced a new "dialect test." Boundary lines regularly needed adjustment on his map because fresh returns necessitated changes in areas which already had seemed satisfactorily determined. Birmingham and Liverpool were especially difficult to identify with sufficient clarity for his investigation. He had also agreed to prepare several papers for the Philological Society, an obligation which weighed heavily upon his mind. Contributing to the pressures he felt were the studies he had undertaken for the purpose of establishing the Welsh and English linguistic borders. Ellis was also directing his attention to the dialectal varieties of the North. Mounting tension now led Ellis to inform all his friends that he had to forego any kind of social life whatsoever in order to devote himself

to the completion of his dialectal survey. We shall now follow Ellis from his introduction of the "dialect test" to his decision to withdraw from social life. The details of his daily living will enable us to perceive a resolute scholar, whose conception of his work was continually changing.

In his private notes at the beginning of 1879, Ellis gloomily wrote that he would soon be sixty-five years old and it was likely he would not be able to finish his task that year because he brooded frequently about the flight of time.¹ As long as his health was reasonably good, he travelled about addressing various groups. In January he gave two lectures on the progress of dialectal research while he was at Newcastle-on-Tyne. In the spring he would deliver his two major reports on dialectal investigations before the Philological Society, where, by this time, the importance of his project would be universally recognized. In the first part of the year he had already reconstituted the large map and filled in many of the lacunae.²

Ellis took another major step at this time. A dependable method of determining the boundaries of dialectal English continued to elude him. Comparative specimens and

¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Papers, Calendar of Ellis Reports.

²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 9), Ellis to Hallam, February 14, 1879.

contributions from many sources still had not yielded the desired material. He now devised a dialect test which consisted of seventy separately numbered words. At the end of this list were long notes pointing out how the important sound of the word might be indicated.³ About six to seven hundred of these dialect tests were sent out and stamped for return. Ellis did not hear anything further of four hundred and twenty-nine of them, and sixty-one were sent back blank. "I must have been found a great bore," he said briefly.⁴ However, he still could rely on the quality of the information which Hallam continued to send him in the form of "words noted" from a variety of sources.

Ellis was concerned in 1879 about the growing quantity of material which he had to handle. He was adamant, moreover, as he proceeded about not leaving the work of comparison to "some German professor or student in the twentieth century."⁵

Towards the close of February he was completing work on his scheduled report on dialectal progress for delivery before the Philological Society on April 18 and May 2. Hallam was infuriatingly slow in preparing his specimens for Ellis, who warned him to have the material sent to

³Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xx.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

London by March 31. He intimated to Hallam that some of the specimens that had been prepared several years earlier would also need further modifications. Hallam never welcomed such suggestions about the quality of his work.⁶

Realizing that it was imperative to get any possible details that would enhance the scheduled "Reports," Ellis consulted a number of sources he knew. The Reverend M.H. Lee of Hanmer Whitechurch, Shropshire, wrote that he doubted his own abilities to furnish something of value, but he did succeed in securing some notes from the schoolmaster, Mr. Johnson, who, although a native of London, had probably become familiar with the "strange sounds that have been poured into his ears."⁷ The only other assistance which Mr. Lee could provide was a reference to a "remarkable" dialect found in Welshampton near Ellesmere very close to the Welsh boundary.

Some of Ellis' informants were not too helpful just when he was getting ready to deliver the two-part paper before the Philological Society. For example, Edward French, a native of Farndon in Cheshire, indicated that because he had never met with any scheme of spelling which could adequately represent the West Cheshire pronunciation, he had

⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 15), Ellis to Hallam, February 25, 1879.

⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 51, fol. 34), Lee to Ellis, March 26, 1879.

doubts as to whether Ellis would be able "to catch" the sounds unless he had a previous knowledge of the pronunciation.⁸ Ellis, nevertheless, palaeotyped the specimen, and the material is carefully reproduced in Part V, along with French's sour observation that the Welsh influence destroyed all provincial pronunciation in the area anyway.⁹

It distressed Ellis very much that his "Reports" would not include adequate information about Worcester. There had been eighteen separate requests for assistance from village people, and not a single reply had been received. Worcestershire was "a very dark country."¹⁰

People who had assisted Ellis either in slight ways or with material that could not be used were insistent about seeing that proper acknowledgments were made in any official reports. Just prior to the delivery of the second section of the "First Dialectal Report" Ellis thought it prudent to send Hallam the list of all his sources of information, particularly the names of those who had written out the comparative specimens. He requested Hallam to check over the entire list, a laborious task, knowing full well that this was the kind of work which Hallam would do with

⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 51, fol. 51), French to Ellis, April, 1879.

⁹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 453.

¹⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 19), Ellis to Hallam, April 2, 1879.

precision.¹¹ Hallam had been maintaining just such a file, but it was unknown to Ellis.

The scholars who attended the two sessions given over to Ellis' progress reports now could view the large map which he proposed as the principal central achievement of his work. They learned in detail about the characteristics of the thirty-four groups representing areas and sub-areas, which were based at that stage in his researches on more than six hundred submittals from his informants.¹²

Replies to the dialect test continued to arrive sporadically at Ellis' home. The replies were not always helpful, but invariably people would be very polite. Occasionally someone took a great deal of trouble to write about dialect in depth. The Vicar of Montgomery, F.W. Parker, wrote out a detailed analysis of eight pages, and this provided Ellis with valuable information for the Welsh section of the work.¹³ Often Ellis had to spend from eight to ten hours a day at correspondence concerning the material which he received. Thankfully he realized that his reluctance to write his book five years earlier had certainly been a wise decision.

¹¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 28), Ellis to Hallam, April 11, 1879.

¹²"Philological Society," Academy, 15 (April 26, 1879), 376.

¹³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Calendar of Ellis Reports (d. 11, fol. 9).

Once the burden of addressing the Philological Society had been lifted, Ellis continued the map project. Hallam, also, was constructing a similar kind of map, which he, in turn, forwarded to Ellis. Consequently, it was possible for adjustments to be made between NWM and NM (North West Midland and North Midland). Hallam never refused this kind of assistance, and, on the whole, was consistently generous with his own findings in writing to Ellis.¹⁴ From the following totals we are able to get a clear picture of the rate at which material arrived at Ellis' home during April 1879: comparative specimens (153), word lists (315), dialect tests (164), and miscellaneous post cards.¹⁵

It should be noted here that when Ellis delivered the second part of his progress report on May 2, he calculated that Part V of Early English Pronunciation would require an additional eighteen to twenty-four months to write. However, he felt it was not practical to estimate "precisely" the vast amount of labor which it would entail.¹⁶

By the beginning of May, Ellis was feeling thoroughly exhausted. True to form, Hallam sent him a comforting letter which expressed sympathy for the "great labor connected with

¹⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 42), Ellis to Hallam, April 30, 1879.

¹⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, Miscellaneous Papers.

¹⁶ "Philological Society," Academy, 15 (May 10, 1879), 417.

tests."¹⁷ The manuscripts of the two sections of the "Report" had been forwarded to Hallam. Organizing the "Reports" was a real burden. He wrote, "The very thought of them irritates my brain!!!"¹⁸ Hallam followed very closely the "Reports" which Ellis made before the Philological Society. For the most part he was content to remain in the background, but occasionally his correspondence reveals an unwillingness to be treated casually.

Because progress was not too encouraging, Ellis once more worked his way systematically through Prince Bonaparte's dialect library, which had increased in size since his previous examination of its contents. Ellis regretted the length of time this activity consumed, especially when he found much of the material he received "worthless" for pronunciation.¹⁹ The use of standard spelling for the dialect transliterations in Bonaparte's books disturbed him very much.

Hallam's correspondence with James Murray had led to a pleasant friendship, and in February 1880 he could not resist informing Murray about the great deal of material

¹⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 56), Ellis to Hallam, May 5, 1879.

¹⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 66), Ellis to Hallam, May 6, 1879.

¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 36), Ellis to Hallam, July 30, 1879.

which he had furnished Ellis since 1873. The area of his collecting included Derbyshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and Nottinghamshire and "points of Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Yorkshire, etc."²⁰ It is doubtful whether Ellis would have appreciated Murray's receiving Hallam's self-laudatory letter. In a complaining tone Hallam also noted that Ellis' "Report" at the April and May meetings contained only a few references to his [Hallam's] own contributions. Murray emerges from the many pages of his correspondence as a gentle, gracious, and authoritative personality. He noted that Ellis had been speaking regularly to him of Hallam. Murray afforded Hallam deep satisfaction by acknowledging his "important service to English dialectology."²¹

Ellis did not allow his correspondence to keep him from working directly with informants who could be valuable in the London area. At 166 Brompton Road resided George Mitchell, a marble and stone mason with "manufactories in Belgium, France, Italy, and Walton Street, Brompton, established 1851."²² He and his secretary, Stephen Price, visited Ellis on August 17, 1880, in order to provide him with

²⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34, no fol.), Hallam to Murray, February 5, 1880.

²¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34, no fol.), Murray to Hallam, February 9, 1880.

²² Ellis, Early English Pronunciation V, pp. 84-86.

information about what Ellis called the "Land of Utch," the Somerset area which used this form for the personal pronoun I. "Utch" was used in Mr. Mitchell's native village of Montacute.

During this period Prince Bonaparte had returned to France, and the letters which he sent to Ellis became increasingly disorganized with respect to giving an account of his work on the Continent. Bonaparte was at work on Italian dialects as well as the archaic verb forms of the Basque language; his interest in English dialects had by this time diminished. In August he expressed to Ellis his pleasure to know that Ellis had not set aside the dialects. The Prince continued to send him various materials, among which was a reprint of the Welsh "Athsanwaeth" of Griffith Roberts which he thought would be of interest to him.²³

Ellis' work was once more progressing well. He was struggling with Staffordshire dialect, but Hallam came to his rescue with a great deal of useful material which he had gathered together during a recent trip into the county. Ellis rewarded him by saying, "It's quite a mine of wealth, for you have literally dug out the information."²⁴ Hallam promptly copied out the precious words of approval into

²³University of Paris (Sorbonne), Manuscript Collections, Bonaparte to Ellis, August 19, 1880.

²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 98), Ellis to Hallam, September 10, 1880.

his journal.

Ellis was always devising a new form to be used for the gathering of dialect material. In September he proposed a new and shorter "example," or reading passage for Hallam to use while on his travels. Dealing with rural people was a difficult matter, and Ellis hoped that he had solved some of the problems. He sent the tentative form to Hallam, at the same time saying that it would need much revision.²⁵ Some of the sentences in this new "example" border on the comical. This time he chose a rural father and mother, both lame with rheumatism, confined to their home for the winter, but with plans to go to "old Farmer Richard's down South."²⁶

He still relied on word lists to be used for some of the collecting, but this was not a particularly reliable means. In the area surrounding Birmingham, the word lists proved to be almost worthless since all that Ellis could elicit for the city was received pronunciation which, he remarked, "destroys the dialects frightfully."²⁷ The same problem plagued him in the Liverpool area. Though some of the contributions indicated possible dialectal pronunciation, Ellis just could not put them down as "belonging to the

²⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 120), Ellis to Hallam, September 9, 1880.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

soil." [sic]²⁸

He would not abandon any attempt at determining the pronunciation of a district. He was working at the project alone, and the task started to get out of hand for him. Staffordshire dialect continued to pose problems for him. The sounds did not seem sufficiently localized for him to specify definitive boundaries; therefore, he sent twenty-five cards throughout the county in an attempt to find out where the pronunciations in the Potteries shifted into those of Mid-Staffordshire and then to South Staffordshire. This time he provided his informants with another sample containing sentences about "laying down the fowls," "seeing our three trees," and words like "can't" and "shan't."²⁹

With optimism Ellis referred Hallam to this latest "example," containing only a few sentences. He was confident that he would get answers from the correspondents because the brevity of the sentences would make his helpers willing to cooperate in sending back the new "boundary cards." By the end of September Ellis had settled upon the final modifications of the second "example," and a copy had been forwarded to Hallam for his approval.³⁰

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 132), Ellis to Hallam, September 22, 1880.

³⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 138), Ellis to Hallam, September 25, 1880.

Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire were also important areas at this period, and when he received the work submitted by Mr. Dykes of Benefield (three miles west of Oundle), he suggested that Hallam pay a visit to this rural school-master whose elaborate descriptions of speech had puzzled him "awfully."³¹ However, neither Ellis nor Hallam apparently ever travelled to Oundle, and there is no record of the solution to the problem in the correspondence of Ellis.

In connection with collecting Herefordshire dialect, Ellis had been in touch in previous years with Joseph Jones, a Hereford bookseller, who had sent Prince Bonaparte a dialect specimen in 1875. Ellis was worried because all the specimens he had from Herefordshire by 1880 were written specimens rather than *viva voces*. He asked a second favor of Hallam, this time to call upon Mr. Jones for verification of the dialect.³²

Problems continued, in addition, to annoy Ellis. Special notebooks bound in metal covers served Hallam's needs when he interviewed local people for dialects. The metallic notebooks travelled everywhere with Hallam on his railway trips throughout Warwickshire, particularly about the area near Stratford-upon-Avon. In the village of Bulkington "the

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

most interesting I've ever experienced,"³³ he met Mr. Poole of Weston Hall, who had ready answers to Ellis' inquiries. The viva voces transcribed on this trip filled two hundred pages of writing in the notebooks for the area from Leamington, Bedworth, and Nuneaton.

The Ellis correspondence for 1880 indicates that establishing the upper line of the Southern Border caused very annoying difficulties to Ellis. He attempted to determine its course with great precision. According to the information he had garnered and analyzed, it went along the southern boundary of Hereford and then cut off a "shaving" to the north of Worcestershire, which then brought it south to Stourbridge and Selby Oak, whereupon it entered Warwick north of Knowle. The line of the boundary which he thought he had established became very sinuous, and his description is filled with such phraseology as "bent suddenly," and "fringing." Little villages and hamlets are specified frequently, thus revealing his great effort to be minutely accurate.³⁴

It must be noted, however, that some scholars have considered Ellis' rendering of a dialect sound occasionally incorrect because the informants had registered it incorrectly.

³³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 151-52), Hallam to Ellis, October 14, 1880.

³⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 154-7), Ellis to Hallam, October 15, 1880.

Karl Luick believed that to be the case even in a phonetician of the calibre of Alexander Ellis, who might have included much inaccurate material.³⁵ He was critical of Ellis' mistakes in the word lists, which did not always contain a voiced sound. In his opinion, many of the words had been transcribed defectively. Because the selection of examples was incomplete, Ellis had to make inferences from what Luick believed were basically unsatisfactory lists.³⁶

Luick severely took Ellis to task for having combined examples from informants who came from a single village. He disapproved of Ellis' having possibly falsified the single example and thus making boundaries based on generalizations or inferences. Therefore, such locales, which often were scattered, had led Ellis to draw his debatable dialectal boundaries. Luick stresses that one cannot exclude the possibility that a single point could consist of an exception. He does not, however, grant Ellis sufficient commendation for having been able to synthesize the overwhelming bulk of disparate information without assistance. Some of Luick's remarks are carping with reference to Ellis' pioneering effort.

³⁵Karl Luick, Untersuchungen zur englischen Lautgeschichte (Strassburg: Verlag Karl J. Trübner, 1896), p. 4.

³⁶Ibid.

It may be noted here that Josef Vachek viewed Luick's own treatment of dialects as set forth in the Untersuchungen as an historical development running parallel to that of the literary language.³⁷ In many ways, therefore, Luick's approach was similar to that which Ellis had taken throughout Early English Pronunciation.

The close of 1880 found Ellis coping with bundles of pages containing Devonshire dialect. He had just completed work on Cornwall, and all of the material on Forth and Bargy (Wexford, Ireland) were still in large linen envelopes awaiting his analysis. These latter accounts were curious because they represented a form of the oldest Southern English, which had become extinct by 1825. Reluctantly he put aside the work, owing to the death of his stepmother. He had to spend a very large amount of time with lawyers, deeds, and the division of property. Though he was irritated because of the delay of many weeks, he did express optimism and confidence over the state of his progress.³⁸

In addition to his family obligations, Ellis could not neglect his commitments to the Philological Society. Each of the papers which Ellis read before the Philological Society required days of advance preparation. He relished

³⁷ Josef Vachek, "Professor Karl Luick and Problems of Historical Phonology," Casopis pro Moderni Filologii, 19 (1933), 273-92.

³⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 173-4), Ellis to Hallam, December 16, 1880.

the opportunity of discussing his work and discoveries with as many people as possible, and on Friday, December 17, 1880 gave an up-to-date account of his researches, which he called "Dialects of the Southern Counties," treating the region from Wales to Kent.³⁹

Ellis described carefully one of the prevailing characteristics for those regions, the "reverted r," in which the tongue "points down the throat." In the eastern parts, East Sussex and Kent, the distinguishing feature was the de, dis, dat for "the", "this", and "that." In the western parts, West Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall, the distinguishing feature was the substitution of the French u for oo.⁴⁰ The complete picture in the south was beginning to emerge, but there were still sections, he reported, which were by no means clear.

He faithfully informed Hallam of all that happened that evening and sent along with the letter the actual notes from which he had delivered his speech. Ellis would not read the paper *litteratim* to the Society but discoursed informally from his notes. He had to condense the material of six hours, he wrote, into the allotted one and three quarters hours. Each person in the audience had first been

³⁹"Philological Society," Academy, 18 (December 24, 1880), 464.

⁴⁰"Philological Society," Athenaeum, December 25, 1880, p. 870.

furnished with a map in order to follow his dialectal explanations. We are afforded a glimpse into the actual details of the evening on which the paper was delivered. Regrettably very few people showed up to listen to Ellis' carefully prepared report. The Christmas holidays of 1880 were getting under way, but those who did come were "very attentive and interested."⁴¹ Dr. Murray, who had recently been appointed Editor of the dictionary sponsored by the Philological Society, was in the Chair presiding over a gathering of only fifteen members. Among those present were Furnivall, Prince Bonaparte, Sweet, Cayley, and Rieu.

With a new year facing him, Ellis realized that a great deal still remained to be completed. The complicated Eastern and Midland areas in his scheme which he had planned for completion in the following June had to be advanced to November. Everything connected with the dialect survey seemed "slow and tedious." Ellis now returned the Midland specimens which Hallam had sent him, as well as the treasured encomium from Murray, which Hallam had been anxious to share with Ellis. Along with the papers he returned, Ellis included a note saying, "That's real capital work!"⁴²

At this time Ellis developed still another scheme for organizing his dialectal materials by devising a

⁴¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 175-6), Ellis to Hallam, December 18, 1880.

⁴²Ibid.

"classified word list," consisting of 971 words chosen from those found in the first list he had prepared, the comparative specimen, and the dialect test. It was arranged in three parts: words having prototypes in Wessex or Norse, words having other than known Romance origin, and Romance words. The first part was arranged by vowel length as well as by criteria of their being open or close. Ellis numbered every word and made provision for the symbols a (after) and b (before) to be used with these numbers for insertion of words which were not in the list. Along with this he provided an alphabetical index of the numbered words in order to refer to the numbered classified word list, and this he found to be most useful. It was impossible for Ellis to delegate the laborious task of inserting all the words from an old "words noted" list from Hallam or from a dialect text. He did not begrudge the many hours of slow work because such a mechanical process helped him arrive at a conception of the system or pronunciation necessary for dialect analysis.⁴³

By the close of 1880 the physical task of sorting the enormous amount of material which had been accumulating in his home would easily have caused the stoutest heart to quail. Ellis would patiently search all the documents found in the linen envelopes listed by county and would then painstakingly extract the vital information according to the order

⁴³Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xxi.

of the Anglo-Saxon vowels. Each submittal was transcribed on a separate half sheet of notepaper in Palaeotypic symbols. On each sheet was placed one of the eighty-seven counties with its special number according to his scheme for the forty-two dialectal divisions upon which he had decided. Each separate place had its own number within the county listings. Thus, 31, 12 represented county 31 (Somerset), document 12 (Wells).

On a series of master work sheets Ellis would mark the distance from the station, and the direction in which the station lay "as the crow flies."⁴⁴ Also at this time he was planning the formidable list of assistants as well as the directory of locales in which they worked.

By February 12, 1881 Early English Pronunciation, V was beginning to take shape. "I shall begin my real writing and not take up Midland and Eastern till this is finished," he wrote.⁴⁵ He determined to keep the Midland and Eastern divisions clearly separated from one another in his mind. Up to this point Ellis had been simultaneously working on all of the divisions and had encountered difficulties and confusions. He now proposed to finish each section (insofar as it was possible) before he went on to the next. Then

⁴⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 105-8), Ellis to Hallam, December 28, 1880.

⁴⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 188-9), Ellis to Hallam, February 12, 1881.

within each county division he planned to work each sub-section separately.

At the beginning of the following month Ellis started to compile an index to all the Southern counties submittals in order to refer to the papers numerically.⁴⁶ There were always details, however, which necessitated interrupting his researches. For example, he agreed to assist his colleague Furnivall with the editing of An Early English Hymn to the Virgin (15th century).⁴⁷ This work was particularly interesting to Ellis because they planned to include a Welsh phonetic copy for which Ellis provided notes. This was an early attempt by a fifteenth century scribe to provide an indication of the contemporary sounds.

The Athenaeum observed critically that in this new edition many of Ellis' remarks which were based on Salesbury were disputed by Welsh and English phonologists and that Ellis had still not yet established the fifteenth century pronunciation definitely.⁴⁸ Ellis believed that the apparent

⁴⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 102), Ellis to Hallam, March 8, 1881.

⁴⁷ A.J. Ellis, ed., An Early English Hymn to the Virgin (15th Century) and a Welshman's Phonetic Copy of It Soon After: Printed from Two MSS of the Hengwrt Collection by F.J. Furnivall Together with Notes on the Welsh Phonetic Copy by Alexander J. Ellis (English Dialect Society, Miscellanies 3, London: Trübner, 1880).

⁴⁸ "Philological Society," Athenaeum, April 23, 1881, p. 555.

errors in the phonetic document were no greater in number than one would expect from persons who were not used to that kind of writing.

During this period when Ellis was working with Furnivall, he was also corresponding with Georg Wenker. There are, however, no Wenker letters presently discovered. Wenker's Sprachatlas des deutschen Reichs had appeared in 1876 and was the first great study in German linguistics. The thirty-six large sheets were based on translations of the forty sentences transcribed in dialect by the schoolmasters. In his letters to Wenker, Ellis made inquiries concerning the method of handling the materials which these schoolmasters used in connection with the Lauter-Methode in teaching their pupils. Dr. Wenker was marvelously organized, and Ellis gladly bought the first of each of the thirteen divisions of North and Central Germany. He admired the material presented on the atlas showing a host of small villages marked with letters and keyed to names in the margin. Wenker's conclusions were sometimes confusing; however, the forms submitted from the neighboring communities gave a clue to the correct sound in spite of the many variations with the notation submitted by the schoolmasters. Unfortunately, Ellis' work also is inconsistent in some sections of Early English Pronunciation, V. It must be emphasized, in spite of Wenker's giant work, that Ellis was very much in the forefront of European dialectal research in the 1880's.

Ellis criticized severely Wenker's minute shadings of color for marking off certain areas on the maps because he had difficulty in matching the color from map to map. Ellis pointed out to Wenker that it was imperative for the author himself to visit many of the places in order to be able to clarify with greater authority a particular locale. Wenker assented to Ellis' suggestions. Ellis, of course, enjoyed utilizing his own mathematical training and calculated that if Wenker took three seconds for every entry from his documents for nine hours a day, it would require thirty-two years to complete the whole atlas.⁴⁹

By 1882 Ellis had sufficiently developed his own method of collecting English data by making continuous refinements. He was very confident of his own abilities and derived much self-satisfaction from the investigation which he was conducting in the dialects. He was particularly interested in the Wenker Graphic Method with its use of shades of color to indicate dialectal changes in an area, and it is conceivable that had Ellis more time at his disposal, he would have profited from some of the techniques which his German colleague had employed.

In France philologists were following with interest Ellis' dialectal investigations across the Channel. Only five years later on May 26, 1888, Gaston Paris delivered

⁴⁹ Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," pp. 27-31.

before the Réunion des Sociétés Savantes his lecture on "Les Parlers de France," which called for a detailed study of French dialects.⁵⁰ The attention given to dialects was growing within the Philological Society, whose membership included many scholars from the Continent. Though the Wenker-Ellis correspondence provided an interesting interlude amid the tedious compilation of inexhaustible amounts of data extracted from the classified word lists during 1880-81, Early English Pronunciation, V made slow but steady progress.

One of the most interesting items among the Hallam-Ellis Papers is one dealing with Ellis' attempts to procure dialectal material from Lincolnshire. Alfred Tennyson's Lincolnshire poems were of the greatest interest to Ellis because they were a contemporary representation of the dialect by one of England's most distinguished poets. After February 1, 1881 Ellis managed at odd times to transcribe them into rough Palaeotype, that is, without indicating the very fine distinctions among a, a, a, etc.

He had made arrangements to hold a viva voce with Tennyson, then seventy-two years old, who had agreed to read to him extracts from those poems some time in March. By palaeotyping the verses in advance of the meeting, Ellis

⁵⁰William G. Moulton, "Geographical Linguistics" in Current Trends in Linguistics, ed. by Thomas Sebeok, Vol. 9, Pt. 1, "Linguistics in Western Europe" (Mouton: The Hague, 1971), p. 197.

hoped to prepare himself properly for the honor.⁵¹

On the 23rd of March Tennyson received Ellis at Spilsby, twenty-seven miles east of Lincoln, where he granted him an interview lasting one hour and forty minutes, during which he recited "Northern Farmer (Old Style)," "Northern Farmer (New Style)," "Northern Cobbler," "The Village Wife or the Entail," and "The Spinster's Sweet-arts." There was a great deal of difficult phonetic analysis for Ellis following the interview.⁵² When Ellis published Part V, he could only give short transcriptions of the poems owing to the existence of a copyright on them.

Ellis had previously worked independently on the dialect in Tennyson's poem. Back in 1871 T.W. Bogg, a surgeon of Louth, assisted by his brother who had studied the pronunciation of a laborer from Donnington-upon-Bain (5 miles west south west of Louth), wrote out the pronunciation of "Northern Farmer (New Style)" for Ellis in Glossic, in addition to answering a "long string of questions" upon it.⁵³ The special interview with Tennyson thus helped corroborate many points. The poet was obligingly helpful to Ellis and arranged for him also to hold a meeting with a Lincolnshire

⁵¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 188-9), Ellis to Hallam, February 12, 1881.

⁵²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 203), Ellis to Hallam, March 29, 1881.

⁵³Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 305.

native, Mrs. Douglas Arden, daughter of the rector, who lived at Halton Holgate (one mile east of Spilsbury). She enthusiastically took Ellis' dialect test.⁵⁴

It should be noted that Ellis' interview with the Poet Laureate had been arranged through the kindness of F.J. Furnivall, who was only too ready to be of service to Ellis. The meeting was to discuss Tennyson's "Northern Farmer (Old Style)," a dramatic monologue about an old Lincolnshire farmer who is dying and rebukes the Lord for daring to take him away from his work at a time which is particularly inconvenient for the Squire. In the poem, Tennyson tried to represent the provincial sounds made by the Squire's bailiff by using a system of spelling employing, among other devices, a diaeresis over some of the vowels to suggest modified sounds. Ellis had always been deeply interested in this dialectal poem and welcomed the chance to inquire about the significance of the spellings. Holding an interview with Tennyson was also very much in keeping with the pattern Ellis followed in selecting appropriate informants for collecting dialect. He had been receiving help from country women, ploughmen, and washerwomen. Tennyson's dialectal poems were similar in spirit to the kinds of transcriptions recorded in rural districts by the dialectal

⁵⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 208), Ellis to Hallam, April 12, 1881.

assistants. Ellis, always meticulous about the symbols necessary for reporting the dialect accurately, probably could not approve of Tennyson's inadequate system because in all his experience with untrained transcribers, he [Ellis] was critical of anyone who used an inadequate spelling system. The Lincolnshire poems provide the reader with very little guidance with respect to the provincial pronunciations which the poet was trying to suggest by his spellings.

Until he was twenty-eight years old, Tennyson had lived in the south Lincolnshire Wolds in the area around Somerby. Having written the first of the poems in 1864, Tennyson had been away from the daily contacts with dialect sounds of his native Lincolnshire by 1881. Dialect recalled from memory is not to be trusted because of the intervening modifications of language heard in a sophisticated city. It was with reference to the little village's dialect that Ellis interviewed Tennyson for verification of the boyhood dialect. All Lincolnshire was included by Ellis in the "Border Midland" district, and Tennyson's dialect type was designated as the "Mid Lincolnshire Form."⁵⁵

In a recent discussion of Tennyson's poems, Philip M. Tilling of the New University of Ulster, indicates that three of the localities investigated for the recent Survey of English Dialects under the direction of Harold Orton are

⁵⁵ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 302.

situated in the area where the poems are set. He points out that several of the changes made by Tennyson in later editions of the "Northern Farmer (Old Style)" are owing to the suggestions made by Ellis in the interview of March 23, 1881.⁵⁶ Ellis had pointed out to Tennyson that the attempt to give an "antique and northern flavour" by giving oo instead of ow was not consistently followed, an observation to which Tennyson assented.⁵⁷ In the later editions the oo was abandoned in the words.⁵⁸

Since the field work for the Survey of English Dialects for Lincolnshire was carried out between 1951 and 1953, about 114 years after Tennyson left Somerby, the gap between Ellis' survey and the Survey of English Dialects is not so large as would be expected. According to the Survey of English Dialects, many of the informants had learned their English during the late nineteenth century. The Survey utilized a single field worker for that area, Stanley Ellis, who investigated Swaby, a town which is four miles east of Somerby. Tilling checked Stanley Ellis' records done in connection with the Survey of English Dialects against A.J.

⁵⁶P.M. Tilling, "Local Dialect and the Poet. A Comparison of the Findings in the Survey of English Dialects with Dialect in Tennyson's Lincolnshire Poems" in Patterns in the Folk Speech of the British Isles, by Martyn Wakelin (London: Athlone Press, 1972), p. 90.

⁵⁷Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 304.

⁵⁸Tilling, op. cit., p. 91.

Ellis and Wright's English Dialect Dictionary. He is of the opinion that A.J. Ellis derived his interpretations of Lincolnshire dialect because of the interview which he held with the poet. Tilling feels that the work of A.J. Ellis is "particularly important to any study of Tennyson's Lincolnshire poems."⁵⁹

Stanley Ellis, however, was critical of A.J. Ellis' method of utilizing lists through the post "without a widely understood method of transcribing sound." In order to illustrate his point, Stanley Ellis reports his own experience with informants who, when they were asked to read, would modify their natural voices because of the spelling in front of them. He would often point out that the clergymen would sometimes provide him information on two widely separated areas which they had not visited for years.⁶⁰ He believed that he had encountered the same kinds of undependable reports in connection with the work he was doing for the Survey of English Dialects as had the nineteenth century dialectal assistants and even A.J. Ellis himself.

Stanley Ellis also observed that when he revisited the villages in Lincolnshire where he had formerly taken down dialect information, he often found that some of those

⁵⁹ Tilling, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

⁶⁰ Stanley Ellis, "Fieldwork for a Dialect Atlas of England," Transactions of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, 9 (1953), 10-11.

old men whose assistance was invaluable had by then passed away, and he was very grateful that the words had been "snatched from oblivion."⁶¹ Alexander Ellis most certainly would have agreed with this view, for he, too, had been alarmed that so much was quickly disappearing.

As Ellis' great work now seemed to bear promise of results in the foreseeable future, Hallam received more often expressions of gratitude from Ellis. Hallam could not resist sharing such praise with others who were also active in the collection of provincial glossaries. For example, he assured Edith L. Chamberlain, the author of the West Worcestershire Glossary, that it was not in a boastful spirit but rather "with a feeling of thankfulness" that he referred to Ellis' statements about his [Hallam's] successful labors in dialectology.⁶² Hallam kept every single morsel of praise which came his way.

It is surprising to find Ellis accepting for another term the Presidency of the Philological Society, this time for 1880-82. He had a compulsion to be in the limelight of scholarly activity, although he was having troubles with his own property because of the bankruptcy of a tenant and the effects of the agricultural depression.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 21.

⁶² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 61, fol. 274), Hallam to Chamberlain, May, 1881.

⁶³ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 212), Ellis to Hallam, May 10, 1881.

When Hallam pressed Ellis in August 1881 for guidance concerning the locales which still needed dialectal investigation, he was instructed to journey into an unfamiliar region. Hallam used his railway pass without cost throughout the areas of central England, which possessed reasonably good means of communications. Ellis proposed that the fens of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire would be an excellent place to select. He warned Hallam that the area would be "difficult to get at . . . and decidedly different."⁶⁴

Amiably, Hallam arranged to visit what was at that time a comparatively remote district. He went to Sawtry, a village north west of Huntingdon and patiently worked with eighty-one year old John Harlock, who had left Sawtry in 1816, about the time when Ellis himself was a child. As a result of this trip Ellis was able to adjust some of his isoglosses south of Sawtry.⁶⁵

The excursion into Huntingdonshire was very pleasant for Hallam, who was indefatigable in sending every evening a report to Ellis with a full account of the unusual experiences he had encountered in the villages. Hallam was an optimist upon arriving in a new area. For his part Ellis kept up-to-date a detailed file of possible places for Hallam to visit.

⁶⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 248), August 25, 1881.

⁶⁵Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 212-13.

In October Hallam received three further suggested locales from Ellis. Once more he travelled to Cambridgeshire where he met Miss M.E. Ebdon, the daughter of the recent vicar at Great Stukeley, who introduced him to William Johnson, age 77, and James Valentine, age 75, both native laborers. Hallam and Miss Ebdon also walked to the "spitals" or almshouses to meet an old man who had earlier provided information which had been sent to Ellis.⁶⁶ Rural people were very kind to both Hallam and Ellis, often taking much time and trouble. Ellis was delighted to receive from the Reverend W.A. Campbell a word list representing the speech of the folk living in the drained fen about the Whittlesea Mere.

Ten months later, however, Ellis examined the phonetic line emerging about Cambridge and expressed concern at the generally unsatisfactory development of the line. Without the slightest hesitation he instructed the obliging Hallam to revisit the towns of March, Chatteris, and Wisbech. Hallam promptly went to work on the problem and sent detailed notes to Ellis.⁶⁷

Everything was moving along well with Ellis' dialect survey, but early in November 1881 an unforeseen problem arose with regard to the dialectal map. Ellis had referred all his places in the Southern Counties to Bradshaw's map,

⁶⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34, no fol.), Hallam to Murray, October 15 and 17, 1881.

⁶⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 384), Ellis to Hallam, August 3, 1882.

which he had always found satisfactory. Unexpectedly, he could no longer use the Bradshaw map because it had been modified a great deal, and the old edition had been discontinued. Ellis decided that he would have to use a small inexpensive "penny map," necessitating limiting his geographical references to the very few places which were printed on the "penny map." He felt that the approximation would have to serve most of his purposes. The scale on this map enabled him to do his measuring with some degree of assurance, but the new framework unfortunately would require much revision of his notes for the Southern Counties. The "penny map" therefore now became the basis for future indications in the remaining divisions.⁶⁸

Along with aggravations resulting from changes in the outline map, Ellis, true to form, was again changing his mind about his method of coping with the enormous amount of information which had to be sorted and analyzed. He planned to set up new files according to different criteria; however, he still intended to arrange his working index by political divisions.⁶⁹

In February of that year Hallam sent back to Ellis the little Philips' "penny map" of England with his own

⁶⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 272), Ellis to Hallam, November 9, 1881.

⁶⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 287), Ellis to Hallam, January 14, 1882.

corrections of Ellis' lines of Shropshire, Huntingdonshire, and Cambridgeshire. This was supplemented with yet another map, issued by Johnston's, showing additional places which he had not been able to insert on the other little Philips map. He realized that Ellis might prove unreceptive to the proffered adjustments, even though this publication had more places printed on it.⁷⁰ Ellis did not hesitate to set aside this unsolicited advice. He preferred the clarity of his original choice.⁷¹ He made it clear to Hallam that he was satisfied with the maps printed by Philips, now that he had to abandon those of Bradshaw. The educational purpose of the Philips "penny map" appealed strongly to Ellis, who was pleased because the little map might be folded into his book as two pages. He appears to have had plans for the inclusion of county maps in addition to the one showing the principal dialect divisions.⁷²

After so many modifications in his method of collating his material, Ellis had arrived at a satisfactory decision by the close of February 1882. There had been many revisions because his mind was constantly casting about for a better method. His correspondence reveals that he found it profitable

⁷⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 291-2), Hallam to Ellis, February 13, 1882.

⁷¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 299-301), Ellis to Hallam, February 24, 1882.

⁷²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 304-06), Ellis to Hallam, March 4, 1882.

to write in detail about his intricate procedures because this served as a means of testing for himself the efficacy of his modus operandi.

For example, he described his geographical subdivisions of England. He would take a county such as Yorkshire and place its political divisions in alphabetical order: EY-NY-WY for the three ridings of the county. Then he indicated a division of one of them as follows: e WY, i.e., eastern West Yorkshire.

The hundreds of half sheet notepapers contained the names of all the places in those counties which appeared in Philips' small map of England. Ellis then marked the number of miles to an inch on the sides of the slip so that he could measure the distances easily. He recognized that there would also have to be an additional division of Yorkshire because in his possession there were papers which did not refer to any place in particular. If any printed matter on a locale existed, he would place it at the end of each sub-division and mark it "printed." He would follow this arrangement for each of the sub-divisions, and more printed matter would be noted after each sub-division. Ellis used red ink in the top right hand corner of the notepaper. For example, one finds "e WY Roundhay 3 ne Leeds." This refers to the village of Roundhay, which is located in eastern West Yorkshire and is three miles measured in a northeasterly direction from Leeds.

We are able to study this painstaking scholar at work by examining his attention to minute details. If a dialectal document sent to him consisted of several pages, Ellis pinned the pages together or made a hole with a "piercer" and tied them together loosely with a string. With satisfaction he noted that he then could read through both the string and the thin paper. Some of the minutiae with which Ellis concerned himself might be considered amusing. Yet this was the same man who had struggled with the obscurities of Comte's Religion of Humanity.⁷³

On each county map Ellis drew a red circle around a place as he came upon it in his notes, thus seeing at a glance where he had collected information as well as the persistent lacunae which still awaited his attention. For those obscure little villages which did not appear on a county map he entered a red number on it and then entered this on the margin of the sheet while following the spelling in Sharpe's Gazetteer. At the same time, Ellis was at work constructing his index for every little hamlet, taking care to indicate what dialect was obtained there. He utilized his comparative specimen, dialect test, classified word list, words noted, etc. If a specimen was collected in several places, he catalogued it according to the first place. He then tied all the sheets for one county together and assigned

⁷³ Ibid.

the collection a number. He still continued to store all the papers in large labelled envelopes which he placed upright on their edges for easy access. (We even learn that he bought these linen envelopes at Partridge and Cooper's on the corner of Chancery Lane). These "deed envelopes" were 8 3/4" wide and cost Ellis 7/6 a hundred. He selected them because they were the maximum size which could be sent by post.⁷⁴

In February 1882, Hallam astonished Ellis with an enclosure in one of his letters. Hallam sent for Ellis' inspection a printer's proof of a report which he had prepared for the English Dialect Society. It contained a list of the places he had visited in 1881 for dialectal purposes. With mounting dismay Ellis read the addition of a description of his own dialectal line across England between the Midland and Southern forms of the short u as illustrated in the word up. In this letter to Ellis, Hallam said that John Nodal, Secretary of the English Dialect Society, was of the opinion that the introductory paragraph which he [Hallam] wrote to preface the list of places he had visited ought to be inserted in the English Dialect Society's Report for 1881.

Since Nodal recognized the importance of the account of the boundary, he encouraged Hallam to enlarge what was

⁷⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 299-301), Ellis to Hallam, February 24, 1882.

essentially Ellis' material. Hallam proceeded, therefore, to expand the section concerning the dialectal line. The forms of up, with both long and short vowels, ran in a mixture in a broad band through Worcestershire and Northamptonshire. Hallam boldly described the Northern and Southern edges of this wide transitional border and also observed that the Southern edge possibly lay further south than the boundary which he had described. Nodal suggested to Hallam that Ellis be invited to make any suggestions, assuring him that the English Dialect Society would be most interested in seeing this concise description of the important line.⁷⁵

Shortly afterwards, the Athenaeum appeared with an account of the February 20 meeting of the Dialect Society. It provided its readers with a description of this division line across England and noted, to Ellis' annoyance, that the line had been "laid down by Mr. Hallam."⁷⁶ All England thus had the opportunity to see that Hallam himself had overstated his own contribution. The Academy also carried an account of Hallam's determination of the dialectal line.⁷⁷ Upon reading the Athenaeum, Ellis swiftly took matters into

⁷⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 291-92), Hallam to Ellis, February 13, 1882.

⁷⁶"English Dialect Society," Athenaeum, March 4, 1882, p. 283.

⁷⁷"English Dialect Society," Academy, 21 (March 3, 1882), 161.

his own hands to set the record straight with Hallam, who had presumed to take the credit for plotting the dialectal picture. He stiffly told Hallam that inasmuch as it was an extremely important line that would still require much further refinement, he himself [Ellis] would announce that he had drawn only the northern boundary of this border area, carrying it north of Stratford-on-Avon on account of the decided Southern characteristics of the Warwickshire region. Ellis knew perfectly well that Hallam had worked out the details, but he got directly to the heart of the matter by sternly telling Hallam that it was his desire to present the information entirely in his own words when he had completed the analysis of the material on the Eastern counties.

Ellis informed Hallam with asperity that the announcement ought to have been reserved for himself, since it was supposed to have been one of the features of his paper in the following month when he would address the Philological Society. Ellis had every intention, he wrote, of doing full justice to Hallam's work. Not content with having given this unpleasant but well-deserved rebuke, Ellis once again alluded to the premature publication, at the same time explaining his own actions by letting Hallam know that there were problems owing to his own poor state of health. Ellis accused Hallam of "falsifying the principle" because several

words were incorrectly cited to prove his point.⁷⁸ Altogether the entire incident represented the kind of tension which was becoming a regular part of the relationship between the two men. Hallam often permitted his judgment to be affected by his own vanity.

Ellis reported that he had agreed to deliver a paper before the Philological Society in April 1882, but he felt alarmed because of deficient preparation arising from another of his lapses of health. His dialect labors were more enervating than ever. There were times, he wrote, when his nerves were at the breaking point. April 21 was drawing closer, and he attempted to control the irritation he felt towards Hallam. He asked him to send without delay any information about the sounds of a in the Midlands. Hallam's boundary lines for the æ , u were not too satisfactory for Ellis, and to make matters worse, he was experiencing difficulty in drawing dialectal boundary lines on the county maps.⁷⁹

By March Ellis was back on course in his efforts to write Part V of Early English Pronunciation. He hoped that the Manx peasantry would be able to supply some interesting dialect information to some of his informants. In early March he inquired if Hallam had been able to record the

⁷⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 304-6), Ellis to Hallam, March 4, 1882.

⁷⁹Ibid.

sounds of the Isle of Man schoolmistresses. Fortunately, two natives, both settled in Manchester, Miss Cannell, head schoolmistress of St. Margaret's Day School for Girls, Whalley Range, Manchester, and Miss Cubbin, also a schoolmistress, obliged by furnishing Hallam with information about the Rushen form of the dialect.⁸⁰ About this time Ellis was getting only inadequate responses from his informants. Ellis felt hesitant about having to speak before the Philological Society because it seemed almost hopeless to discuss phonetic matters, necessarily based on the reports of the clergy, school personnel, and educated men whom he judged "supremely ignorant" in phonetic knowledge. He felt incapable, he wrote, of "beating any notion of it into their brains."⁸¹ He impatiently complained with regularity to Hallam: "Oh, these county clergy!!!"⁸²

On April 21, 1882 Ellis, making a great effort because of recent illness, read a detailed paper before the Philological Society: "On the Dialects of the Midland and Eastern Counties."⁸³ He carefully explained that he had divided all English folk speech into four types, depending

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ellis, "Eleventh Annual Address," p. 17.

⁸² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 304-6), Ellis to Hallam, March 4, 1882.

⁸³ "Philological Society," Athenaeum, April 29, 1882, p. 543.

on the treatment of the varieties of Anglo-Saxon vowel sounds. The Midland speech held particularly great interest because it showed transitions between the old and new pronunciations. He emphasized that phonetic classification was the only valid one in determining dialectal areas.⁸⁴

He must have felt uneasy lest Hallam should repeat his former precipitant behavior and issue something else prematurely. To avoid a contretemps, on May 18 Ellis requested Hallam to return all his papers and maps; he offered by way of explanation the observation that he needed the material since he did not know what he possibly might want in the near future.⁸⁵

As part of his 1882 Presidential Address to the Philological Society, Skeat gave a detailed account of Ellis' work with the dialect zones and an assessment of the value of the lines.⁸⁶ Ellis' investigation had long been familiar to the membership, who followed with considerable interest the new directions which his labors were taking.

Ellis had been invited to deliver an address to the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion on May 24, 1882. For a long time he had maintained his interest in matters relating to the language spoken in the Western part of the

⁸⁴"Philological Society," Academy, 21 (April 29, 1882), 308.

⁸⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 348), Ellis to Hallam, May 18, 1882.

⁸⁶"Philological Society," Athenaeum, April 4, 1882, p. 283.

island because of the early work he had done on Salesbury's dictionary. Ellis' paper was titled "On the Delimitation of the English and Welsh Languages."⁸⁷ In this study he acknowledged the importance of noting the Welsh influence upon the English language.

He searched diligently for any materials which would substantiate his observations and spent much time examining manuscripts in the British Museum, assisted by Henry Jenner of its staff. Ellis consulted a number of the works written by the early Welsh chroniclers in preparing his paper and wished to point out two places in Wales in which what he called "pure English dialect" had been spoken since Saxon times: the peninsula of Gowerland and in the southwest corner of Pembrokeshire near Tenby and Haverfordwest.⁸⁸ He also read through Giraldus Cambrensis to examine the belief of the Pembroke people regarding the Flemish settlement in Gowerland. In Ellis' view the account was linguistically incorrect because William of Malmesbury and Ranulph Higden, who mention the Flemish, could have been continuing an old tradition, whereas the English settlements were probably what he [Ellis] called "pure West Saxon."⁸⁹

⁸⁷A.J. Ellis, "On the Delimitation of the English and Welsh Languages," Transactions of the Philological Society (1882-4), Appendix II.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 5.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 7.

The relationship between Ellis' Welsh studies and his investigations into the dialect of Lancashire at this time is interesting. He always read voluminously before making any study and did not hesitate to disagree with so eminent an historian as J.R. Green, whose work The Making of England (Macmillan, 1881) was highly respected. Contrary to Green's opinion, Ellis was convinced as a result of his own dialect studies that South Lancashire had not been under Northumbrian supremacy and that the area was indeed Midland English.⁹⁰ Ellis could trace a few Welsh words in South Lancashire. He refuted Green's theory that the area was not Midland politically.

In the course of his lecture on Welsh and English, Ellis explained at great length his interpretation of a new term he now employed for the first time: received speech. It is a succinct descriptive statement which serves as a reference point in his discussion of dialectal matters.

The received speech is that ordinarily spoken in familiar conversation by the governing, the wealthy the highly educated classes of society . . . slight variations are "received", that is, their use is not considered to be a mark of lower rank, deficient education, vulgarity or provincialism.⁹¹

Since Ellis' time, "received" has become a common label for a kind of widely accepted educated English, for example,

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 8.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 15.

the variety taught to students from foreign countries.⁹²

The purpose of Ellis' paper was to make a delimitation of the two languages within the Welsh boundaries. He indicated that he himself had not "perambulated the boundary."⁹³ The greater part of the lecture, however, consisted of an account of his dialect work in England and its application to Wales. He expressed his hope that the Cymmrodorion might assist him in securing more accurate accounts of the English preaching taking place in Welsh Nonconformist chapels where the bulk of the artisan and laboring classes worshipped. Ellis previously had had to rely for his information principally on beneficed clergymen in South Wales.⁹⁴

Ellis carefully described the amount of English spoken within each of the counties of Wales and noted its resemblance in pronunciation to the English of a neighboring English county. It is likely that the members of the Cymmrodorion heard with dismay his projection that Welsh was "destined to become a dead language and the boundary between the English and Welsh languages would reach St. George's Channel at some future day."⁹⁵ He challenged the

⁹²A.C. Gimson, An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1962).

⁹³Ellis, "On the Delimitation," p. 10.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 23.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 39.

Cymmrodorion to make a detailed investigation of the extent to which Welsh was fast disappearing in the British Isles. This paper afforded Ellis particular satisfaction, for he sent the American scholar F.J. Child a copy of his speech on the Welsh-English boundary during the following summer.⁹⁶

Modern scholars have also availed themselves of the same study of the Welsh sounds. For example, in their study of the pronunciation of consonants, Martyn Wakelin and Michael Barry found Ellis' account of the initials [f], [s], and [ʃ] in Early English Pronunciation regarding the Welsh sounds in general accurate. They repeated his description of usage in Wales because so little modern interviewing was done in Wales for the Survey of English Dialects.⁹⁷

The last part of the summer of 1882 was given over to his work on Welsh, and once again he had committed himself to the delivery of a paper on the Northern dialects. He promised Hallam that after this obligation was filled he would get down to writing his book in May 1883. Realizing that he would have to work up some of his points afresh

⁹⁶ Harvard University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Child, July 23, 1883.

⁹⁷ Martyn Wakelin and Michael Barry, "The Voicing of Initial Fricative Consonants in Present-Day Dialectal English," in Studies in Honour of Harold Orton on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday, ed. by Stanley Ellis (University of Leeds School of English, 1968), pp. 47-64.

for the book, he was still determined to see it in print by 1884 while he was still, as he wrote Hallam, "in working order."⁹⁸

At Ellis' behest, Hallam travelled through Norfolk at various periods during 1882-3 setting out from three different centers--King's Lynn, Swaffham, and Hunstanton--into a very large number of surrounding villages to gather more classified word lists. The coverage for that county, therefore, is particularly complete, and the speech differences are preserved for nineteenth century hamlets possessing such delightful names as Snettisham, Terrington St. Clements, Wiggshall, North Tuddenham, and Kirby Bedon. In Holme, Ellis palaeotyped the use of w for y in the recollections of a very old navy man of Holme: "Nelson was a werry walian man, I wow, he sailed in a wessel called the Wictory."⁹⁹

Leopold Ehrmann's study of Norfolk dialect in 1933 was undertaken to reappraise Ellis' account of that area which had been made during 1882-83. Dissatisfied with the earlier survey with its complicated mechanism of word lists, dialect tests, etc., Ehrmann did not concur with Ellis' divisions in D 19 of Part V, and his investigation is an

⁹⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 383), Ellis to Hallam, August 3, 1882.

⁹⁹ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 263.

attempt to provide new insights utilizing Ellis' work. Notwithstanding his critical attitude, his study of Norfolk is a detailed phonological analysis which appeared to be entirely based on Ellis' early transcriptions.¹⁰⁰

As the months passed by in 1882 Ellis continued to struggle valiantly with the confusing Lancashire contributions. He knew that the little "penny map" which indicated the principal hills and rivers was suitable, but he needed to request the publisher to print his own lines over the map in a special edition for him.¹⁰¹

His work for the last part of the year was directed towards recording the dialects of Westmorland, Cumberland, Durham, and Northumberland as well as all of Scotland. Knowing that he would have to deal gently with Dr. Murray's Scottish materials, Ellis nevertheless felt that he did have some valuable additional information about that area to present.¹⁰²

In a similar study, Mutschmann made observations concerning the south of Aberdeenshire on the banks of the Dee, an area which Ellis referred to as the North-Eastern

¹⁰⁰ Leopold Ehrmann and Helen Scherer, Die Dialekte von Norfolk und von Lanarkshire (Leipzig: Mayer and Müller, 1933 (Palaestra 185)).

¹⁰¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 282-83), Ellis to Hallam, June 8, 1882.

¹⁰² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fol. 397), Ellis to Hallam, September 9, 1882.

Lowland Division (D 39). In describing the phonology of this area Mutschmann disregarded any of Ellis' or Murray's findings unless they had been corroborated by his own material. His study took place seventeen years after Ellis' death in 1890, and it is one of the earlier treatments which covers the same locale in an expanded form.¹⁰³

Cumberland turned out to be a source of endless anxiety for Ellis because his method of determining many of the exact pronunciations, frequently by correspondence with local collaborators, was unreliable. Reverend T. Ellwood, the Rector of Torver, sought affinities between the Cumberland and Furness dialects and Icelandic forms. Like Ellis, he, too, had an opportunity to examine the proofs of Vigfússon's Icelandic Dictionary which had been passing through the press in 1869. Ellis expended much effort in getting information on the Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire North of the Sands dialects. Inasmuch as the Reverend Mr. Ellwood had been collecting the vocables of that area for a period of over twenty-seven years, he was particularly well qualified to confer with Ellis about the language of the Dalesmen. He maintained an extensive correspondence with him from 1872 until 1890. The dialect portions of the letters were palaeotyped and Ellis greatly

¹⁰³J. Mutschmann, A Phonology of the North-Eastern Scotch Dialect (Bonn: Hanstein, 1909), pp. 1-3.

appreciated Ellwood's assistance.¹⁰⁴ Ellis told the Reverend Mr. Ellwood that he had been obliged to omit notations of the actual intonation of dialect pronunciation because there was no technique for transcribing it.¹⁰⁵

His confidence in J.G. Goodchild, who worked for the Geological Office, continued in spite of the irritations caused by this assistant's desire to modify the shapes of the notation. Having lived among the natives of County Durham, Cumberland, and Westmorland for so many years, he had a fine ability to write the dialects with "photographic minuteness," which was a mainstay for Ellis.¹⁰⁶ He spent at least twenty evenings with Ellis going over the comparative specimens and word lists.

Several of the more interesting studies arising from Ellis' work on the dialects of northwestern England deserve attention at this point, because in every possible sense, his work has been seminal in bringing about further investigations. Each departed from Ellis' original approach. Underlying these new approaches is the basic work done in

¹⁰⁴T. Ellwood, Lakeland and Iceland Being a Glossary of Words in the Dialect of Cumberland, Westmorland, and North Lancashire Which Seem Allied to or Identical with the Icelandic or Norse Together with Cognate Place Names and a Supplement of Words Used in Shepherding, Folk-Lore and Antiquities (London: Henry Frowde, 1895), pp. iv-v.

¹⁰⁵R.D. Ellwood, "The Philology of the Lakeland Dialect," Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society, December 1946, No. 8, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶Ellis, "First Dialectal Report," p. xxx.

Early English Pronunciation.

Ellis' analysis of a very small area was the basis of a detailed treatment of a sector within one of the varieties of a district. For example, in 1927 Percy H. Reaney limited his investigations to an area around Penrith, a little Cumberland town, eighteen miles south of Carlisle. This sub-dialect formed part of Variety IV of the West Northern Division (D 31). Though Ellis' study of the area was the first analysis of the speech, Reaney was able to proceed directly to a full phonological treatment using the earlier work.¹⁰⁷

A Swedish study written at Uppsala also treats a Cumberland variety in depth. Börje Brilioth investigated Lorton, a small village in the Northwest of England. Its speech did not match with any of the varieties in Ellis' West-Northern Division (D 31). Brilioth appears to have accounted adequately for the admixture of non-Cumbrian forms near Cockermouth. Thus, again has Ellis' study served as a point of departure for later scholars who utilized the work of 1882.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷Percy H. Reaney, A Grammar of the Dialect of Penrith (Cumberland), Descriptive and Historical with Specimens and a Glossary (Manchester: University Press, 1927), p. 1.

¹⁰⁸Börje Brilioth, A Grammar of the Dialect of Lorton (Cumberland), Historical and Descriptive with an Appendix on the Scandinavian Element, Dialect Specimens and a Glossary (Uppsala: Inaugural Dissertation, 1913).

Bertil Hedevid analyzed Ellis' previous work on Westmorland when he made his 1967 study of the dialect of Dentdale.¹⁰⁹ Goodchild had palaeotyped D 31 from a Mr. Parrington, an innkeeper at Keld in Upper Swaledale and also interviewed a young man from Dent, a Mr. Metcalf. Hedevid substantiated Ellis' conclusions and converted the Palaeotype into equivalent IPA. Question arise, however, concerning the reliability of this transfer since Palaeotype has not been convincingly interpreted at the present time in spite of Mr. Eustace's confident rendering of the symbols.¹¹⁰ Hedevid observed that notwithstanding the impressive work contained in the Survey of English Dialects it will still be necessary to rely on Early English Pronunciation as an "indispensable" source of information for the speech varieties of the 1870's and 1880's.¹¹¹ It is impossible to accept Hedevid's view that Ellis' work had hardly been used for English linguistic geographical studies. On the contrary, almost all dialect studies since Ellis' time have acknowledged the importance of this first dialect survey. Hedevid, nonetheless, regrets that in such studies as the ones by Dobson and Jacobsson, there has been greater

¹⁰⁹ Bertil Hedevid, The Dialect of Dentdale (Uppsala: Appelberge Boktryckeri A-B, 1967).

¹¹⁰ Eustace, op. cit., passim.

¹¹¹ Hedevid, op. cit., p. 29.

attention paid to Joseph Wright's "inferior transcriptions and imprecision of locations" rather than those which Ellis and his collaborators had made.¹¹²

Harold Orton's work on the dialectal varieties of County Durham drew upon the studies which Ellis made for that region during September 1882. Orton used Ellis' well-tried specimen "Why John has no doubts" in his investigation for The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect. This area belongs to Ellis' West Northern Division (D 31, var. 6). In 1933 Orton was still finding the Ellis specimen sufficiently valuable for eliciting useful information.¹¹³ By the end of October 1882 Ellis was satisfied with his classification which traced every word to its Wessex or Anglo-Saxon sound. He also encouraged Hallam to rely on Skeat's Concise Etymological Dictionary as the "most convenient one going" should such knowledge be needed.¹¹⁴

Because of Hallam's especially close contact with Ellis over the years, he was naturally somewhat jealous of those other principal informants who worked along with Ellis and enjoyed the favor of his confidence. He was

¹¹²Ibid., p. 30. See studies by Dobson and Jacobson listed my Bibliography.

¹¹³Harold Orton, The Phonology of a South Durham Dialect (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1933), pp. 178-80.

¹¹⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 400-1), Ellis to Hallam, October 30, 1882.

probably not sorry to read Ellis' letters unburdening himself of all the vexations which arose from the stubbornness of Goodchild who persisted in marking certain vowels of the dialectal transcriptions in a manner which was not acceptable to Ellis. To Ellis' dismay he rearranged the symbols of the Palaeotype so drastically that the conference sessions with Goodchild became bouts of phonetic disagreement. In addition to his personal problems with Hallam and Goodchild, the demands of the three supporting societies became almost too much for Ellis to endure.¹¹⁵

It is imperative in analyzing and evaluating Ellis' contributions for us to consider whether or not certain words he records were actually used in areas between the points where his informants collected speech samples. It is possible that Ellis did not receive all the material which had been prepared for him. A.H. Smith mentions that Goodchild once made a collection for Swaledale, but it is still in the hands of the family and apparently never reached Ellis.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, Hallam lingered over the collecting to help verify the Cambridgeshire dialectal area as November was approaching. Ellis ominously warned him to speed up

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ A.H. Smith, "English Dialects," Transactions of the Philological Society (1936), p. 82.

his efforts: "The floods will be out now in all those fenny regions!:"¹¹⁷ Ellis wrote. Hallam was not at all perturbed by Ellis' anxiety, for he was trying to arrange for the Delegates of the Clarendon Press to publish a work of his own. In order to reinforce his claim to publish in his own right, he reminded that organization that he had furnished an immense amount of dialectal information to Alexander J. Ellis, pointing out that he now felt obliged "to look out for his own interests."¹¹⁸

It was encouraging for Ellis to realize that he had completed the map of England, subject only to corrections that might emerge for each district. G.L. Brook observed that the true position of Ellis' dialectal boundaries is probably oversimplified because a particular feature may not coincide with that found in a similar area. He believed that each dialectal area is rather a belt of varying width in which one can find many linguistic items.¹¹⁹ Ellis would have been only too willing to agree with that view because he often referred realistically to the difficulty in pin-pointing certain features in a specific place. Dialect

¹¹⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 11, fols. 400-1), Ellis to Hallam, October 30, 1882.

¹¹⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 34, no fol.), Hallam to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, November 1, 1882.

¹¹⁹G.L. Brook, "English Dialects," Journal of the Lancashire Dialect Society, December 1951, No. 1, p. 7.

boundaries could only be approximate.

On March 2, 1883 Ellis delivered another paper before the Philological Society: "The Dialects of the North of England." He generously praised C. Clough Robinson and J.C. Goodchild for their assistance in studying the language varieties in that very large region and provided an account of the t' and the use of the in the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire. Much hard work had gone into the preparation of this paper.¹²⁰

In spite of addressing the Philological Society and giving evidence of his progress, he must have expressed grave doubts to Hallam about his ability to carry to conclusion the ambitious project. Hallam sent him a feeble verbal palliative: "Take suitable tonics!!!"¹²¹ In spite of such advice, the writing and delivery of the lecture on Northern dialects had been a "great trial." Ellis also repeated the same lecture before the College for Men and Women in May of that year.¹²² It is strange that the pressures under which he labored did not deter him from accepting invitations to address various groups.

¹²⁰"Philological Society," Athenaeum, March 10, 1883, p. 316.

¹²¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 11), Hallam to Ellis, March 6, 1883.

¹²²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 15), Ellis to Hallam, March 23, 1883.

The demands of scholarly correspondence weighed heavily on him at this time. He never adopted the short cut of writing brief notes to friends who were far away, but it affected his schedule. For example, Ellis had profound respect for Professor F.J. Child and always took time to inform him of his current activities.

Though Prince Bonaparte was in France at this time and was no longer as prominent in the affairs of the Philological Society, in April 1883, he asked Furnivall's assistance in prevailing upon Ellis to revise the English of his own newest study which he had completed in Paris. His work dealt with the "Neo-Latin Names of Reptiles." His Royal Highness recognized that it was an awkward kind of request to make though it seems peculiar that such an arrangement should be necessary considering the close personal relationship between Ellis and the Prince in the previous years.¹²³

Ellis was always tolerant of his old friend though there were many people who were critical of his scholarly abilities. When James Murray found that his own work on the Philological Society's dictionary was proving to be a continual strain on his nerves, he vented his irritation with the Prince to Ellis. It seems that Bonaparte had

¹²³Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections Add. MS 6186, Bonaparte to Furnivall, April 23, 1883.

provided for him some spurious derivations of words, and this kind of conjecturing on the part of the Prince resulted in the Prince's receipt of a letter from the lexicographer informing him that his [Murray's] business was with historical facts and not with fancies. Promptly Ellis was informed that it was impractical to maintain a dependence upon Bonaparte's work when he behaved in a "pig-headed manner on points which were obvious."¹²⁴ It may be noted here that Otto Jespersen, commentating on the wisdom of some of Ellis' choice of scholarly associates, was very critical of his high regard for Prince Bonaparte.¹²⁵

By midsummer of 1883 Ellis' analysis of Lowland dialects was taking longer than he had anticipated. He found it a tedious piece of work and was becoming confused by the varieties of speech in that country. One of his informants from the Whitelands Training College in Chelsea had departed, and Ellis could not verify the transcribed specimen since the informant had probably left for an unknown school. Ellis was obliged to stop his work on the dialects at this time because he became involved in making musical calculations for a Dutch friend. The actual writing

¹²⁴Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections Add. MS 6186, Murray to Ellis, June 18, 1883.

¹²⁵Otto Jespersen, "Zur Geschichte der Alteren Phonetik," in Linguistica: Selected Papers in English, French, and German (London: Allen and Unwin, 1933), p. 74.

of his book was now being postponed until October.¹²⁶ Realizing that all the transcriptions on the Southern dialects would require careful revision, Ellis wished to postpone the target date to Christmas.

In September 1833 Hallam casually asked Ellis his opinion about the work of R.C. Hope on dialectal pronunciation. In late September, Ellis was in no mood to praise the work of others on that subject. He airily dismissed Hope's work as "better than nothing."¹²⁷ Contributing to the condition of Ellis' upset nervous state was a communication from Hallam at this time lamenting the loss of a metallic memo book which contained notes on four and a half days of work in one of the Midland villages. Hallam trusted that an advertisement with a reward of five shillings would overcome the problem.¹²⁸ Goodchild's insistence on sending transcriptions according to his own notions agitated Ellis, and the revisions for Westmorland dialect came to a complete standstill because all of Goodchild's notes had to be further transcribed. Nothing was moving along the lines which he had hoped they would, and the writing of his book became more elusive than ever before.

¹²⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 41), Ellis to Hallam, August 19, 1883.

¹²⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 48), Hallam to Ellis, September 21, 1883.

¹²⁸Ibid.

Once more Ellis had undertaken to deliver a paper before the Philological Society on November 16, 1883: "The Dialects of the Lowlands of Scotland (Mainland Only)." To deliver such a paper was a delicate matter inasmuch as the redoubtable Dr. Murray, the principal authority on the subject, was in the Chair on that occasion. In his report, Ellis placed the southern boundary of the Scots' division in the extreme north of Cumberland and at the south of the Cheviots. He disagreed with Murray on the pronunciation of the vowels of the Mid and North Lowland and substantiated his views with illustrations drawn from the materials on which he had been working.¹²⁹

Of great importance after so many years of preparation was November 19, 1883, for on that day Ellis had at last started writing Part V of Early English Pronunciation. He informed Hallam (who had been keeping his own notes on Ellis' progress) that he had completed a brief outline of the entire work accompanied by a short account of the characteristics of each district in addition to a complete account of how he had determined the three principal borders, ten transverse lines, and the boundaries of the six divisions. He was planning that when he had completed the tracing of the boundaries of the twenty-two groups and the

¹²⁹"Philological Society," Academy, 24 (November 24, 1883), 353.

sixty-six districts, he would send Hallam the manuscript of what he had written in Part V up to that point.¹³⁰

By December 23, 1883 he was planning to start on the actual text dealing with the Southern Division. Ellis viewed the task as "slavish work," as he wrote.¹³¹ He expected to prepare a word list which would contain every word for which he had given evidence on the pronunciation, as well as the authorities, i.e., names of people who had provided the contributions. His published volume shows that the latter aim was to some degree carried out, but unfortunately he was never able to complete it. Philips, the printer, agreed to put Ellis' lines on the map which was being prepared, providing the text gave the distance and direction from places named on the map. Ellis' spirits seemed buoyant by the end of the year.

With his progress reports to Hallam was enclosed a remarkable circular of four closely printed pages. The tone of the circular can only be described as asocial. It was marked "Strictly Private." Ellis had arranged for it to be sent to all his associates in the learned societies, his friends, and casual acquaintances. Everyone must have been astonished, perplexed, and perhaps amused by the

¹³⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, November 20, 1883.

¹³¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 52), Ellis to Hallam, December 23, 1883.

attitude which the writer adopted. It was dated November 19, 1883 and indicated in the first section that Part V, "Phonology of Existing English Dialects" would contain no more than 450 pages, with the larger type yielding 525 words per page and the smaller type, 725. He felt at that point, however, that he had collected sufficient material for 1,000 pages. Ellis announced that there would also be a Part VI of 200 pages with a resumé of the completed five Parts of Early English Pronunciation.¹³²

Mysteriously, he acknowledged that there was only one other man besides himself capable of trustworthy work on speech sounds. In all probability this was intended to refer to Henry Sweet rather than to Thomas Hallam. The latter did not possess the scientific background in phonetics which Ellis valued so highly. Ellis pointed out that phonetics had occupied his attention for forty years and that he would regret having to leave behind after his death any incomplete projects requiring a knowledge of phonetics.

Because Ellis had lost fifty days a year as managing trustee of a London estate of more than three hundred houses, in addition to his own private affairs, there had been serious demands on his time. It is interesting to note that he did allude to Anthony Trollope's working method of writing one thousand words an hour. Ellis declared that

¹³²A.J. Ellis, "Explanations from A.J. Ellis," November 19, 1883 (Privately Printed).

his own brain had "already many times suffered from over-work."¹³³

After this elaborate preamble, Ellis informed the readers that he would refuse to see strangers about any subject for more than a half hour's "earnest conversation," as he called it. He refused to give advice on scholarly projects. There were to be no more lectures because each one meant a "week out of my life." He would not take the Chair at meetings or take office in a Society. Ellis put everyone on notice that he would attend no evening parties, afternoon teas, or garden parties. Ellis, an inveterate letter writer, planned to use only a post card except for letters bearing on his work. There is a touching earnestness about his determination to complete his work. He indicated that there was only a tolerable possibility of his surviving to accomplish his task.¹³⁴

The unusual manifesto provides an insight into the social life of a scholar like Ellis in the nineteenth century. It required a degree of strong determination to announce through this strange communication that nothing would be permitted to interfere with the "book." It was an unorthodox approach and typical of many of Ellis' idiosyncratic ways.

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid.

Christmas had almost arrived, and surprisingly Ellis announced at this late date another modification for dealing with the material. He decided to employ what he called the 'interlinear system' for dealing with all the comparative specimens and dialect tests within a specific dialectal area. He now planned to make word lists from these specimens and treat Hallam's lists of words in an interlinear way. Ellis was sure that these arrangements would help him see the differences more readily. He made it very clear to Hallam that he, too, would be required to change his system.¹³⁵

¹³⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 52), Ellis to Hallam, December 23, 1883.

CHAPTER XVI

ACCUMULATING SUPPLEMENTARY DATA AND DRAFTING

THE TEXT OF EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION,

PART V (1884-88)

Ellis was making significant progress on his dialectal map because informants from all over the country were assiduous in fulfilling the obligation which they had undertaken. Indexing problems, however, were mounting, and it was becoming very difficult for him to locate among the thousands of papers materials of a similar nature. The sheer bulk was overwhelming. He was spending an excessive amount of time in responding to Hallam's arguments about the shades of sound for the letter R and the need for underlining certain consonants to represent their length. Ellis began to make plans for the writing of an edition of Early English Pronunciation, Part V, employing Glossic notation. Let us share Ellis' problems as he constructs the complicated map and struggles with the obdurate Hallam during 1884-88.

Though the private circular of November 19, 1883 indicated that Ellis did not intend to become involved in any undertakings not directly related to his work, he contributed a long article to the Athenaeum of January 12,

1884 on the subject of deaf mutes, in which he enthusiastically endorsed young Alexander Graham Bell's achievements on behalf of the handicapped.¹ Ellis interrupted his dialect work to respond to the inquiries which the scientist frequently made.² It was the spirit of his private circular that Ellis observed rather than the letter. The next four years would be devoted to writing Part V of Early English Pronunciation, but the difficulties arising in connection with that project were multiplying at an alarming rate.

At the beginning of the year there was little progress made by Ellis in drawing the map to accompany the dialect survey. He realized that it was by no means as complete as he had thought it was. He also worked at this time with another map which he had cut into twenty-four little pieces. Envelopes containing these little sections still exist in the Bodleian Library's Hallam-Ellis Papers, and an examination of this fragmented map shows us how he pieced them together in order to determine the line or border of a particular dialectal feature. He found that the regular county maps were not suitable because different scales were used on the assorted editions published by the various firms. He considered the little fragment maps essential to his success in establishing the dialectal

¹A.J. Ellis, "Deaf Mutes," Athenaeum, January 12, 1884, p. 55.

²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 62), Ellis to Hallam, January 12, 1884.

areas for placement on his larger map.³

Hallam approved so highly of this method that he immediately requested copies of the same series of maps that Ellis used for his fragment map of the counties so that he, too, could mark and cut them up to form a duplicate fragment map. It was Hallam's opinion that he could then forward to Ellis one of the fragments along with suggestions for determining a particular dialectal line.⁴

True to form, on the day after Hallam wrote, Ellis changed his mind and decided that he would prepare his final version on a map of the same scale as he had used for his fragment maps, but on one sheet such as the 36 x 42" called the "Bicycling Map," published by Letts Sons & Co. He reported that he had recently sent Hallam the new edition of the "Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" maps, which Letts had also issued. Ellis wanted to spare Hallam any trouble, and to avoid future confusion, he cut up the revised map with numbers at the back as well as a distinguishing "X" for Hallam's fragments.⁵ Ellis appears to have become dependent on Hallam's acting as his sounding board for every single detail in the one-man linguistic undertaking.

³Ibid.

⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 69), Hallam to Ellis, January 28, 1884.

⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 23), Ellis to Hallam, January 29, 1884.

In February 1884, Ellis spent many hours arranging contributions alphabetically by district and within district so as to enable him to organize the materials of relating districts. This would make it possible for him to determine the extent of a particular dialect. He asserted that Lancashire, by far, was the most troublesome to him.⁶ As he worked, he indexed his material, but it became a formidable task as the papers mounted.

Ellis became very ill in March and could manage only the mechanical task of the indexing because it did not require much thought." He was then preparing the double index which was arranged according to counties and the places utilized for the survey within the counties.⁷ He had to go through thousands of pieces of notation and cross references necessitating all kinds of involved checking. It was the kind of work that progressed at an alarmingly slow pace because he still would not avail himself of anyone's assistance. The presentation of Part V of Early English Pronunciation is so complicated for us today that without the two indexes it would be impossible to utilize the great store of information in its hundreds of closely printed pages.

⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 81), Ellis to Hallam, February 9, 1884.

⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 96), Ellis to Hallam, March 1, 1884.

Ellis sadly reminded Hallam that he had great stores of useful material from C. Clough Robinson and Goodchild, but in so many cases only the results of analysis could be given. As he proceeded with the writing, he still could not visualize the final arrangement but dreaded lest he "break down altogether."⁸

There were times when Ellis' painstaking labors made him decidedly crotchety. He notified Hallam, ever faithful and obliging, to use only quarto form ruled paper written on one side. It made Ellis irritable to have to look back through letters since it wasted time.⁹

As was the case with many Victorian men with a scholarly bent, it was a matter of course for Hallam and Ellis to maintain a vigorous correspondence on a daily schedule. Each thought nothing of spending hours every day composing letters to his friends who shared a passion for dialects. As 1884 progressed Ellis became even more sensitive to unnecessary demands made on him. With perturbation, mixed with a degree of anger, he informed Hallam that he was disturbed by those letters which Hallam had sent in which he referred to the extensive correspondence which would be necessary concerning the Midlands. One of Hallam's

⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 102), Ellis to Hallam, March 10, 1884.

⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 73), Ellis to Hallam, January 29, 1884.

habits which drove Ellis almost to desperation was to send little bits of information piecemeal instead of all at once. "Letters [that he sends] are like open wounds to me. They drain the life blood out of me!"¹⁰ Ellis wrote. In spite of his steadfast resolutions, Ellis now planned to deliver a paper on the Insular Scotch before the Philological Society on April 4, 1884. The prospect of facing the membership, however, was beginning to unnerve him, he wrote Hallam, and he was very fretful.¹¹

Though his patience was strained, he supported his loyal but sometimes injudicious friend, Hallam, at this time during an unpleasant incident involving the English Dialect Society. In April 1884, the Reverend Mr. Skeat informed Ellis that certain critical remarks about the Society had been attributed to Hallam (when actually it was the short-tempered, acerbic Henry Sweet, who had made the unfortunate observations). Naturally, Hallam was very upset when he learned of this because he prized the good reputation he had so carefully earned in connection with his researches. Ellis took the trouble to soothe Hallam by assuring him that the members of the Philological Society respected and appreciated his work. Hallam had become so distraught that Ellis repeatedly had to calm him

¹⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 107), Ellis to Hallam, March 15, 1884.

¹¹ Ibid.

down and promised Hallam that he intended to make his obligations to him certainly evident in Part V of Early English Pronunciation.¹²

In 1884, Ellis served as Vice-President of the Philological Society and carried out the duties of that responsibility. The Spartan plans for directing his own affairs as set forth in the November 19 private circular apparently were no more than vain expostulations. The members heard him deliver on April 4 the paper which had been distressing him in the previous weeks: "The Insular Scotch Lowland Dialect and the Border Mid-Northern Dialect of the Isle of Man."

This lecture presented Ellis' preliminary survey of the Northern English dialects, consisting of accounts of the dialects of the Shetlands and Orkneys which Hallam had been able to procure for him.¹³ The author of the Orcadian Sketch Book, Walter Traill Dennison of Kirkwall, Orkney, was later to provide some dialectal information, for he gave Ellis interviews in August 1884 and later in June 1888, which Ellis palaeotyped, though it troubled him that he had not been able to hear genuine native "peasants" instead of a "highly educated gentleman," as he called

¹²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 112), Ellis to Hallam, April 2, 1884.

¹³"Philological Society," Academy, 25 (April 12, 1884), 265.

Dennison.¹⁴

Just about the time that Ellis was trying to prepare his description of Orcadian pronunciation he was concerned about the kind of work done in Manchester by members of the English Dialect Society, and this became the subject of a scholarly rebuke in the Philological Society on April 21, 1884. Dr. Murray, Henry Sweet, and Alexander Ellis complained once again of the Society's failure to consider the vital subject of phonetics and went on record that the English Dialect Society had sadly neglected the subject. As a result of this rebuke, J.H. Nodal wrote Hallam that he planned to hold a meeting to consider these criticisms.¹⁵

The allegations must not have had much effect, for the general nature of the volumes issued by the English Dialect Society as late as 1888 still did not place any emphasis on matters of phonetics but rather continued to provide much information in the way of folklore and etymology, often of a dubious nature.

Ellis wrote to Hallam at this time that he enjoyed going into the various parts of the country himself to collect dialectal specimens, but as he became older and his health failed, he was forced to abstain from such pleasure. In 1884 he experienced financial reverses,

¹⁴Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 791.

¹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Nodal to Hallam, April 21, 1884.

which had started three years earlier. He could not afford to make excursions in June 1884 because he was beset with serious financial losses.¹⁶

Goodchild continued to serve as a very reliable collector, and Ellis valued his ability to secure useful viva voces when he was travelling on business throughout Yorkshire. By the close of June 1884, however, Goodchild had been assigned to the Jermyn Street Museum of the Geological Survey, London, where he worked at clerical tasks because his heart was weak, and he no longer could do outdoor work. Ellis planned to arrange a meeting between him and Hallam, who were known to each other only in references which Ellis made in the correspondence.¹⁷ Hallam, of course, would come up to London.

Settling in London did not change Goodchild's practices, and he still aggravated Ellis with his insistence on fine distinctions which necessitated modifications in Palaeotype. Ellis had received the Wiltshire materials which Goodchild had revised for a second time, consulting his step-mother, a Chippenham woman. Ellis intended to see him several times in August of 1884 concerning the

¹⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 138), Ellis to Hallam, June 22, 1884.

¹⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 142), Ellis to Hallam, June 30, 1884.

recording of the dialects in a standardized and comprehensible notation.¹⁸

In addition to his principal helpers, Ellis relied on many obscure individuals. In spite of the fact that he collected material for each of his dialectal areas so that he would have ample evidence of the local speech patterns, Ellis was obliged to put aside portions that did not measure sufficiently up to his standards. For example, he received much help in Dorsetshire through viva voces from Mrs. Clay-Ker-Seymour of Hanford, as well as from the Reverend Mr. E.A. Dayman of Shillingstone, a little village five miles northwest of Blandford.¹⁹ The entire county received a comprehensive treatment though sometimes Ellis reluctantly omitted some of the material.

Bertil Widén, who later investigated the Dorset dialect with thoroughness, alludes to correspondence between William Barnes, the author of many charming poems of rural life, and Ellis. Widén regretted the small amount of phonology which Barnes provided in general, but points out that Ellis knew the particular Dorset district, though it was not included among the places treated in the discussion of Dorset in Early English Pronunciation. Ellis listed among his informants the Reverend Canon Bingham from

¹⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 147), Ellis to Hallam, August 1, 1884.

¹⁹Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 76-84.

Bingham's Melcombe, but he did not include any extracts from the section which Barnes knew so minutely.²⁰

For a projected visit in August, 1844, Ellis could offer Hallam very scant hospitality. There was only a small accommodation with a bed because there was no spare room proper. He suggested to Hallam that after the allotted four hours of joint work, he should visit the Health Exhibition.²¹ The Ellis letters do not allude to the August visit, but it is likely that it took place. It was a difficult summer for Ellis because he suffered a great deal from his recurrent rheumatism. In August he had to review many of his notes so that he could plan in detail the next list of places near London where Hallam could procure dialects.²² Most annoying of all things to Ellis was finding informants who were willing to sit for two hours during an interview.²³

As an employee of the railroad, Hallam took advantage of his privileges as a pass holder and went without cost to such places as Sheffield, Chester, Doncaster, and

²⁰Betil Widén, *Studies on the Dorset Dialect* (Lund: C. Gleerup, 1949), p. 12. No letters between Ellis and Barnes have been located.

²¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 147), Ellis to Hallam, August 1, 1884.

²²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 153), Ellis to Hallam, August 9, 1884.

²³British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, fol. 94.

Grimsby, but often he needed to draw upon his own resources to visit many other places in the country during his spare time. He hinted to Ellis that it would be helpful if the latter could arrange for the Philological Society to reimburse him for traveling expenses.²⁴ Though the Society was sponsoring much of the work, Ellis was most reluctant to call upon the group for additional expenditures. This request was another irritant among a growing list which beset Ellis at this time.

Not everyone shared Hallam's feeling about Ellis' studies. Possibly there was an element of jealousy present when Nodal dourly wrote to Hallam when Hallam had stopped all efforts on behalf of the English Dialect Society in order to pursue this all-consuming project of Ellis's. Nodal expressed his hopes that Hallam might have arrived at the end of "your Mr. A.J. Ellis' labours."²⁵ Nowhere in the Hallam-Ellis Papers is there any complimentary remark by either Ellis or Nodal.

One can only conjecture the response of the membership of the Philological Society when on the evening of May 1, 1885, Ellis read another report on his dialectal work covering the period from November 19, 1883. The paper consisted of preliminary matter, classification, and the

²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 176), Hallam to Ellis, December 19, 1884.

²⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 37, no fol.), Nodal to Hallam, March 7, 1885.

specification of ten dialectal lines across the country. The Academy observed that so much information would necessitate his executing the work on "too large a scale and recommended reducing it into a practicable size."²⁶

Ellis frequently enjoyed some of the quotations from people whose pronunciations had been recorded for him. At Butler's Marston, a town close to Warwick, the Reverend E. Miller reported that the Clerk would regularly say, "Spear us, good Lord" in place of "Spare us."²⁷ The speech in that town had been palaeotyped by Ellis in 1877, and in 1885 he suggested that Hallam visit it on his itinerary. Ellis had to be careful with Hallam concerning the planning of a trip, but he readily acknowledged his "unwearied diligence."²⁸

The informants sent all kinds of items to Ellis, who had to evaluate the possible merit of the material because it was not always dependable. Mrs. Francis, wife of the Vicar of Tysoe, a little town eleven miles southeast of Stratford-on-Avon, had written a glossary for the English Dialect Society. She informed Ellis that she could pronounce the dialect words though she could not write them. Ellis promptly dispatched Hallam to the Warwickshire town

²⁶"Philological Society," Academy, 27 (May 9, 1885), 334.

²⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 234), Ellis to Hallam, October 10, 1885.

²⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 176), Ellis to Hallam, April 29, 1885.

in order to take down this dialect.²⁹

Another interesting personality came to Ellis' attention. Ellis was highly amused at the account he received from Miss Anna M. Darby of Marklye (fifteen miles north of Eastbourne). A native of Sussex, she said that she knew all the old terms that were heading for extinction owing to the opening of the railroad at Heathfield. She reported to Ellis the havoc wrought on the domestic scene when a very old woman "disgusted" her husband, Miss Derby wrote, by buying a dictionary to keep pace with the changing times!³⁰

During 1885 Ellis spent considerable time analyzing material from the area which he called the Land of Wee, because of the local sound of the v. This embraced East Sussex and he noted that Sam Weller, created by Dickens, pronounced his name "with a wee." Unfortunately, he had not heard the sound himself but believed in its existence because of the report of his friend, the Reverend W.D. Parish of Selmeaton (six miles east south east of Lewes), the author of the Dictionary of the Sussex Dialect.

The 1885 Sussex work had its valuable applications years later in several historical investigations into the phonology of Middle English Sussex dialect. Since materials

²⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 234), Ellis to Hallam, October 10, 1885.

³⁰Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 132-33.

for studying that historical stage of English had been found wanting, Sven Rubin at Lund University in 1951 examined the existing documents for the rapes of East and West Sussex.³¹ Fortunately, Ellis had determined the modern dialect boundaries which corresponded with the two main dialect areas which were then existent in Old and Middle English. Rubin, thus, had a point of departure for an exhaustive treatment of a relatively small geographical area such as Sussex.

Writing an article for the Encyclopaedia Britannica presented great difficulties for Ellis because in November, when he was revising his work, he was horrified by the great length of the charts, tables, and alphabetical lists that he knew the editor probably would cancel. We get a picture of him at work in his account to Hallam. He had cut out Prince Bonaparte's alphabetical lists that he had first included. Ellis then had to remove all lists of European words because the article had been assuming the "proportions of a book."³² The article, entitled "Speech and Sound," was written for persons ignorant of phonetics in order to show them the characteristics of the sounds. Ellis felt that the article was too discursive, and after working at it for a long time without any satisfaction, he forwarded

³¹Sven Rubin, The Phonology of the Middle English Dialect of Sussex (Lund: University Press, 1951), pp. 12-16.

³²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 225), Ellis to Hallam, September 19, 1885.

the manuscript to Hallam for reading.³³

In 1886 two events were notable in Ellis' life. University College (London) made Ellis a Life Governor, but the pleasure of these honors was mitigated by his wife's illness, which obliged him to neglect his work in order to sit by her side all night on a great many occasions.³⁴

Each postal delivery brought more material to Ellis with subtle indications from Hallam that certain locales ought to be visited in order to get additional dialectal material. Wearily, Ellis responded to his suggestions: "If I were twenty years younger, it would be different!"³⁵ He was panicking and informed another friend, Fleay, that he was on the verge of nervous prostration. Despite this remark, Ellis reported that he was planning a long dialectal report at the Philological Society's meeting on May 7 when it would meet in the Council Chamber of University College. He absolutely did not have time, he wrote, to read the complimentary copy of Fleay's "dainty" [sic] life of Shakespeare.³⁶ Many scholars were sending him copies of

³³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 249), Ellis to Hallam, November 16, 1885.

³⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 387), Ellis to Hallam, March 8, 1886.

³⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 254), Ellis to Hallam, April 2, 1886.

³⁶Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Fleay, April 10, 1886.

their publications, and Ellis found himself becoming inundated by the number of works which called for a careful reading. He then provided his customary analytical correspondence.

Hallam did not always follow Ellis' suggested itineraries, for he had notions of his own. It puzzled Ellis to find that he was receiving much material for certain areas which did not help in solving the problems regarding places for which information was very scant.³⁷ For example, Hallam would provide Ellis with long lists of words from Peterborough, but the information did not satisfy Ellis.

Hallam did not appreciate his curt rejection of this material and immediately informed Ellis that he felt offended. Ellis, sorely beset, had to placate his assistant by informing him that his [Hallam's] work on both the Midland and East, as well as the sum, soom line (that is, the line on the map indicating the regions which pronounce the word some in a distinctive manner), had been the essential parts of the book, which otherwise would have been "marvelously incomplete."³⁸

As Vice President of the Philological Society, A.J. Ellis delivered on May 7, 1886, an account of the eighteen

³⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 262), Ellis to Hallam, April 20, 1886.

³⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 266), Ellis to Hallam, April 21, 1886.

years' work devoted to writing his account of what he called the "Existing Phonology of the English Dialects" in connection with the overall study Early English Pronunciation. He fervently believed in the significance of his labors and was convinced that his study was the best that could be prepared at the time. Ellis was somewhat concerned by the excessive bulk of his study and was ready to remove any redundancies and items which were of particular interest to him alone. The proposed date for the publication of his work, he announced, would be the autumn of 1888.³⁹ As Vice President he was able to arrange for immediate publication of his dialectal report in the Proceedings. He was glad to share information about his progress with all his friends and wrote at great length to Moncure Conway setting forth his intentions.⁴⁰

By June, Ellis learned that Hallam had travelled the area from Market Harbro to Tysoe. The notes which were sent to Ellis confirmed his original conjectures about the local varieties, but he was, as he called it, "morbidly anxious" to get the book finished.⁴¹ Nottinghamshire also caused Ellis much worry, and he decided that he must send

³⁹"Philological Society," Academy, 29 (May 15, 1886), 350.

⁴⁰Columbia University Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Conway, July 20, 1886.

⁴¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 301), Ellis to Hallam, June 16, 1886.

out cards of inquiry to all parts of the county. By the middle of the summer, though, he heard from only one half the recipients. "Clergymen are often inattentive!!" he wrote by way of explaining the poor results.⁴²

In contrast to the previous months, the beginning of September 1886 found Ellis in high spirits. He was finishing up the work for the Midlands and was waiting to get to the writing of the Northern Division, which, as he wrote, was "waiting like a hungry lion."⁴³ Ellis spent from thirty to forty hours a week at analyzing the dialects, but he could not do any more than that because the work was so taxing him. In order to be of assistance, Hallam suggested that Ellis might profitably use the memo books which he had in his possession and arranged to send all of them to London. The euphoria which Ellis felt at times would quickly vanish, and he would gloomily lament, "It's a race between me and death."⁴⁴

The long word lists which Hallam sent were now viewed by Ellis as a task which required the closest kind of attention because of the necessity of incorporating the words in the scheme he had already set up. By the beginning of November the description of the Northern Division still

⁴²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 313), Ellis to Hallam, July 24, 1886.

⁴³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 324), Ellis to Hallam, September 9, 1886.

⁴⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 334), Ellis to Hallam, September 22, 1886.

had not been started, and Hallam continued to send modifications of the Leicestershire notes. Employing a semi-jocular tone, Ellis referred to his symbols for his main dialect divisions. He wrote, "My family of six: S, W, E, M, N, and L are very requiring."⁴⁵

In his own way Hallam was working at an impressive rate on the dialect survey. By January 9, 1887, he had sent Ellis 1344 quarto sheets consisting of the comparative specimens, the Anglo-Saxon word lists, and hundreds of miscellaneous word lists. He kept a record of the number of written sheets he had prepared for every single county. For example, there were 243 for Derby, 197 for Lancaster, 127 for Staffordshire, 88 for Worcester, and 90 for Northants. He also mentioned in his notebook the great quantity of dialectal material he had noted down in his journals, which at that time had not yet been copied on to the quarto sheets for Ellis' perusal.⁴⁶

The Hallam ledger records the precise number of notebooks which he had formerly kept and which were no longer in his possession. He took exquisite care to record all the references in which Ellis had paid him the smallest attention, with page numbers. He computed that they

⁴⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 375), Ellis to Hallam, November 3, 1886.

⁴⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), "Notebook," January 9, 1887.

totalled for the period up to May 2, 1886, forty-five references.⁴⁷

Completely forgetting his earlier resolution neither to write more reports nor to engage in any activities which would hinder the progress, Ellis again appeared before his colleagues of the Philological Society on May 6, 1887, with his "Second Report on Dialectal Work," which announced among other things that his account of the pronunciation of the dialects of England required a final revision, and then it would be ready to go to press in October.⁴⁸ He was now able, he stated, to give an account of the Lowland Scotch Division. It was at this meeting that Ellis was able to distribute a copy of his dialectal map to everyone who was present.⁴⁹ Thoughtfully, he mailed to Hallam a half dozen of these maps, at the same time informing him that it was this map which he had explained not only to the members of the Philological Society, but also before members of the Royal Society Soirée, and the Royal Institution.⁵⁰

Ellis' ability to organize the thousands of details of a big project is remarkable, for in the section entitled "Results" at the close of his "Second Dialectal Report" he

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ "Philological Society," Athenaeum, May 14, 1887, p. 644.

⁴⁹ "Philological Society," Academy, 30 (May 14, 1887) 348.

⁵⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 442), Ellis to Hallam, July 6, 1887.

ENGLISH DIALECT DISTRICTS, by Alexander J. Ellis, 1887.



To illustrate Alex. J. Ellis's "EXISTING PHONOLOGY OF ENGLISH DIALECTS,"
and "ENGLISH DIALECTS—THEIR SOUNDS AND HOMES."

32. A.J. Ellis, "English Dialect Districts"..To Illustrate
The Existing Phonology of English Dialects and
English Dialects--Their Sounds and Homes,
1887, 1889

LOWLAND DIALECT DISTRICTS, by J. A. H. Murray & A. J. Ellis.



To illustrate Alex. J. Ellis's "EXISTING PHONOLOGY OF ENGLISH DIALECTS,"
and "ENGLISH DIALECTS—THEIR SOUNDS AND HOMES."

33. J.A.H. Murray and A.J. Ellis, "Lowland Dialect Districts"
...To Illustrate The Existing Phonology of English
Dialects and English Dialects—Their Sounds and Homes,
1887, 1890

provided a synthesis of the vast amount of material he had been gathering over the years. He emphasized that his investigations probably treated language types reaching back forty years, sometimes seventy or eighty years, and in some cases, even a hundred years. All his collected materials, in fact, revealed a succession of changes. Ellis' divisions were chosen on a purely phonetic basis with no regard to historical or political considerations. His "Second Dialectal Report" was extremely complex in its phonetic discussions, and Ellis was well aware that he had not exhausted all the possibilities of interpretation regarding diphthongs and fractures. Looking into the future, he remarked hopefully that some later philologist "possibly of German extraction" might exploit his materials properly.⁵¹ Of course there were the appropriate references in the "Second Dialectal Report" to Thomas Hallam for having furnished so much assistance in connection with the study. Because this kind of acknowledgment was vital to the peace of mind of Hallam, he continued to mark down all allusions and references made by Ellis into his notebook.⁵²

⁵¹A.J. Ellis, "Second Report on Dialectal Work," Proceedings of the Philological Society (1886-87), pp. xxi-xxxix.

⁵²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 2, fols. 167-78), "Dialectal Observations for the Fourth Report of the English Dialect Society."

At this time Ellis was also preparing an abridgment in Glossic symbols under the title English Dialects: Their Sounds and Homes in the English Dialect Society series. By the end of August he had completed the first draft of both his books. He still had, however, to write the "Introduction" and the troublesome chapter in which he planned to present his final conclusions about the distribution of the dialects. At this juncture, also, Mrs. Ellis had a heart attack, and Ellis felt very uncertain about carrying out his plans for sending to press the materials on the Southern Division as well as the parts on the Western and Eastern dialects.⁵³

Hallam fully recognized that he himself was merely in the background of Ellis' affairs and gratefully accepted the praise which was sent to him by Ellis in the daily correspondence. With the greatest pleasure imaginable Hallam transcribed verbatim into his notebook some words of commendation which Ellis had sent to him about the publication of his little dialectal article Four Dialect Words. "I am glad to see you come out as an independent worker," Ellis had written.⁵⁴ Hallam promptly copied out these words of encouragement and sent them to J.H. Nodal, but it is very unlikely that the latter was impressed by anything

⁵³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 451), Ellis to Hallam, August 30, 1887.

⁵⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 31, fol. 460), Hallam to Nodal, September 22, 1887.

which Ellis wrote about anyone.

A possible interruption in July had been averted when Frederick Gard Fleay, who was working on his biography A Chronicle History of the Life and Work of William Shakespeare (1886), was anxious to discuss Elizabethan language with Ellis. Unfortunately, the quarterly trust audits of the London properties which Ellis managed caused much unexpected difficulty for three days, and Ellis, who did not have any strength left, firmly told the Reverend Mr. Fleay that the dialect work was so demanding that he was unable to take any time to talk with anyone on unrelated points.⁵⁵

In November Hallam requested revises for those sections of Ellis' work for which he had furnished information.⁵⁶ The printer, meanwhile, was expecting the return of the proofs from Ellis by the end of the month, and Hallam's request only complicated his work further. Ellis was expected to have corrected a single unfolded sheet each week for the printer and accordingly he could not spend more than two days at the most in revising a proof.⁵⁷

Preparing the manuscript for the printer according to such a schedule induced extreme tension in Ellis. He

⁵⁵Folger Shakespeare Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Fleay, July 19, 1887.

⁵⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, November 23, 1887.

⁵⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, November 25, 1887.

started to make many errors in the numbering of the materials because there were discrepancies in his own working index. Fearing that the problems would only compound themselves, he decided to send the manuscript of the difficult section on the Midland Division to his colleague for revision in order to save time and trouble. Accordingly he sent the bulky five and a half pound section off to Manchester.⁵⁸

It occurred to Ellis that all his correspondence from Hallam was costing his friend much money for postage, and he requested him to set up a postage account. He expressed his concern: "I shall feel easier in my mind if you do!!"⁵⁹ The postage account for The Existing Phonology of English Dialects, for example, indicates the following: November 24, 1887 to June 1, 1889--\$17.9.0.⁶⁰ This covers only the short period for which Ellis requested Hallam to keep a record. Certainly in the years preceding 1887 the postage account must have been a financial burden, though Hallam had assumed it cheerfully.

Hallam, meanwhile, was not neglecting his investigations in the countryside. While he was getting proofs from

⁵⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, November 29, 1887.

⁵⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, December 1, 1887.

⁶⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 460), "Postage Report."

Ellis straight off the presses at Austin's, in London, he continued to travel on the weekends in Staffordshire in order to check the sounds of Burslem, Leek and Froghall.⁶¹ He wrote a summary account at the close of the year in his private record book, and an examination of the names of hamlets and villages he had visited evokes a delightful picture of the rural England that was beginning to change in so many respects. He spoke with people who were anxious to assist with Ellis' project in Christleton, Farndon at Broxton, Church Coppenhall, Darley Dale, Soxhill, Ossett, Ribblehead, and Giggleswick.⁶²

Back in London, however, offering hospitality was very difficult for Ellis. Hallam was ever ready to pay him a visit, but owing to Mrs. Ellis' poor health, Ellis could only entertain him at tea. Visits were important though, in spite of the home conditions then existing, because it was imperative that Hallam pronounce the Midland sounds for Ellis viva voce. He was obliged to respond to Hallam's plans for one such a visit in a despairing tone: "The work must be done while I am still alive!!"⁶³ Ellis wrote, referring to his book.

⁶¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, December 2, 1887.

⁶²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers, "Dialectal Observations for the English Dialect Society" (d. 21, fols. 167-68).

⁶³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 457), Ellis to Hallam, December 6, 1887.

Many of the people concerned with dialectal work followed Ellis' progress closely because there was always the possibility that he would treat a particular area of interest to them. At the close of 1887 Ellis believed that his labors on Part V would soon be drawing to a conclusion. Colleagues keeping up with the course of his work became aware that those geographical areas not yet researched were by this time unlikely to have their dialect peculiarities permanently recorded in Palaeotypic symbols.

J.H. Staples, for example, felt the highest regard for Ellis' investigations, and he, too, would undertake a study similar in nature, that would be published after Ellis' death. It considered Ulster dialect, which he presented in a Palaeotypic analysis.⁶⁴ He might have selected Henry Sweet's phonetic system, but he chose Ellis' notation so that he could provide a supplement to Ellis' work, making allowances for varying phonetic interpretation between two people. Staples attempted to show the relationship between Ulster English and "Scotch English," as he called it, based on five years spent as a businessman in Belfast, followed by years in the country collecting rents and overseeing the management of a farm.

⁶⁴ J.H. Staples, "Notes on Ulster English Dialect for Comparison with English Dialects by the Late A.J. Ellis, F.R.S., with Samples in Palaeotype, Comparison Specimen, and Word List," Transactions of the Philological Society (1896-97), pp. 357-98.

Staples corresponded on phonetic matters with Ellis and enjoyed several interviews with him in 1884. Because Ellis could not include Ulster in his English dialect description, owing to the limits of time, by 1887 Staples decided to publish his own work in spite of his concerns. Unlike Ellis, he did not localize the phonetic varieties because he could not do so with exactness. He despaired of ever achieving the exactitude which Ellis thought he had achieved in determining boundaries in English. Staples adopted Ellis' technique of tracing boundary lines of variant pronunciations of words, and he had the notion that it would be practical for him also to extend Ellis' "transverse lines" across the water to Ireland, thereby revealing some of the subdivisions of Irish English speech.⁶⁵

Staples' investigation is of interest since it is a good example of the techniques of conjecturing dialect boundaries which others came to employ. He showed the applicability of the sum line in Ireland. Throughout his work there is a deep admiration for Ellis' phonetic skills.

The discussion which followed the delivery of the paper allowed Ellis an opportunity to suggest that Irish sounds ought to be compared with those in the Scandinavian and Slavonic languages.⁶⁶ Furnivall remarked that the

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 370.

⁶⁶"Philological Society," Academy, 25 (June 28, 1884), 462.

Philological Society was glad to welcome Celtic students into its membership. Ellis was interested in the Irish sounds and had written Hallam back in 1885 that he had been working very hard with James Lecky on the subject.⁶⁷ Ellis never lost the opportunity of availing himself of first-hand explanations and spending long hours with those who could be of any possible assistance in his researches.

Hallam did succeed in getting two interviews with Ellis on December 21 and 27, and he had at last an opportunity to meet his rival, Goodchild. They carefully reviewed together Hallam's interpretations of some of the vowel sounds and an arrangement was worked out so that Goodchild could meet again with Hallam (probably in Manchester) and make suggestions.⁶⁸ A month later the meeting took place, and Hallam explained at length his convictions about the stressed and weakly-stressed i. Goodchild listened to disputed sounds and gave his opinion after much deliberation.⁶⁹

With sorrow Ellis noted in February 1888 that he could not read at all with his left eye because there was

⁶⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 12, fol. 221), Ellis to Hallam, September 15, 1885.

⁶⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, January 5, 1888.

⁶⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, February 2, 1888.

a "cloud" over it.⁷⁰ Probably cataracts were developing, and only surgery remained as a recourse. It was a very difficult period for Ellis in so many respects. He had to interrupt his proofreading activities because some material had arrived from Andover in Hampshire, where the distinguished Professor M.M. Arnold Schröder of the University of Freiburg-im-Breisgau, Baden, was spending the summer in recording the local dialect of Hampshire. Having studied under Henry Sweet, he was remarkably competent to make accurate transcriptions of the dialect. Canon Colber, the vicar of Andover, recommended that Schröder would find the speech of the local schoolmaster, Mr. Archard, very suitable for this exercise. Ellis received the notes taken by Schröder at a local harvest festival, but he did not trust some of the phonetic symbols utilized.

Ellis had to devote many long hours from his work with the proofs in order to transliterate Schröder's notes which had been taken in Sweet's notation. He found it troublesome, but the work done by the German professor was so painstakingly minute that it was worth the time that he devoted to it. It was difficult for Ellis to complete Part V and to adhere to a schedule planned with the printer.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 73), Ellis to Hallam, February 7, 1888.

⁷¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, January 6, 1888.

One of Ellis' shortcomings was his lack of attention to the exigencies of the schedule. Adding to his delays were numerous communications from Hallam about places for which he was already supposed to have information. For example, when Hallam suggested to him that information was needed for Kendal (Westmorland) on long vowels, Ellis had to ransack his word list envelopes as well as the alphabetical county lists. He had to remind Hallam that places had repeatedly been brought to his [Ellis'] attention which already had been treated.⁷² Ellis started losing his temper with Hallam over the interruptions, warning him to deal only with "what concerns yourself!"⁷³ Once again, Hallam was not the least perturbed by this rebuke. Lest Ellis be offended, Hallam offered to send his notebooks for Gloucestershire and several for Westmorland. At the same time he wrote Ellis, who certainly did not welcome the suggestion at this time, that without any inconvenience, late information could easily be put in the county lists "which are open," that is, not yet described in the book.⁷⁴

This was not helpful to a man of Ellis' habits, and he curtly reminded Hallam that under no circumstances would

⁷²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, January 7, 1888.

⁷³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, January 22, 1888.

⁷⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, January 27, 1888.

he add to the book and that the existence of proofs in pages prevented him from so doing. Late corrections were very expensive, and Ellis, who was very experienced in such print shop matters, would not yield to the importunate promptings of Hallam.⁷⁵ The latter also implied to Ellis that people spoke differently from the way in which Ellis had so heard them. With indignation Ellis responded to such observations, but the accompanying aggravation had its effect upon Ellis' health.⁷⁶

There were many days in 1888 when the increased tension as he wrote made Ellis regret his association with Hallam. Ellis was a dominant personality, who clearly saw his goal, no matter how distant it lay. Hallam, like so many stubborn people, was likewise quite inflexible. In February, 1888 Ellis wearily agreed to accept Hallam's marking of the long final consonants (e.g., ha \bar{m}), at the same time protesting that the condition altered when the word was uttered separately away from context. Hallam became bitterly unreasonable on the subject, and Ellis finally judged the speech as neither dialectal nor individual. None of his other dialectal assistants reported long consonants. If Ellis were to accede to Hallam's demands,

⁷⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, February 1, 1888.

⁷⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, February 3, 1888.

the problems in the composing room would mount because Hallam's special markings over the consonants would have to be cast in the foundry. The only recourse was to use both an acute and a grave accent next to each other. Hallam became incensed, however, when Ellis admitted that combining the two kinds of accent marks was a satisfactory solution to the problem for indicating the local usages which Goodchild had discerned. Ellis was very wrought up over these minutiae, and all that he could offer Hallam was the promise that a note would have to suffice for both printer and reader.⁷⁷

Hallam rarely discussed with others Ellis' mode of handling any of the problems connected with the writing of Part V, for he was, on the whole, discreet. It is, therefore, all the more surprising to learn that he wrote to his arch-rival Goodchild about the fact that Ellis was receiving the proofs in pages rather than in galleys. Hallam believed that this was a serious mistake because the word lists in such a form presented special difficulties with respect to making corrections.⁷⁸ No doubt Hallam was disturbed about any concessions which Ellis made in the direction of Goodchild. Hallam emerges from his correspondence as one who could not bear to share Ellis' approbation

⁷⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 7), Ellis to Hallam, February 4, 1888.

⁷⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 212), Hallam to Goodchild, February 11, 1888.

with anyone. It is hard to understand just why Hallam would have written to Goodchild inasmuch as the former was hostile towards him.

Despite the irritating nature of his contacts with Hallam and Goodchild, there were satisfying associations with many other scholars. Among the hundreds of informants whose speech was transcribed for the dialect survey of Part V of Early English Pronunciation there is none more distinguished than the man who would be the future editor of the English Dialect Dictionary, Joseph Wright. His home was the little hamlet of Windhill in the township of Idle and parish of Calverley, and early in 1888 Ellis was able to palaeotype a dialect test from Wright's own dictation of the Windhill speech in connection with his study of the language of Bradford in Yorkshire.⁷⁹ Ellis reported that Windhill was only a variety of that spoken in Bradford with a slight difference.

Wright at this time had just finished an account of the speech of his native village at the meeting of the Philological Society on February 17. Ellis was in the Chair on that occasion. For years Ellis had been emphasizing the great need of scholars who possessed both a theoretical and practical training in phonetics. Wright, in turn, made the same points as Ellis when he gave his paper.⁸⁰ Ellis was

⁷⁹ Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, V, p. 389.

⁸⁰ "Philological Society," Academy, 31 (March 8, 1888), 156.

not familiar with actual speakers of the West Riding in Yorkshire, and only the accuracy of his correspondents determined the degree of validity he could hope to achieve in his descriptions.

It is interesting to note here, however, that in 1898 when Wright was later compiling the English Dialect Dictionary he had occasion to pass along some of the sentences constructed by Ellis. Wright was in contact with Miss Allison, Secretary of the Yorkshire Dialect Society, and offered to send her a bundle of the Ellis sentences. He believed that these detached sentences rather than a "simple story" would yield the best results because they dealt with so many phonological and syntactical points.⁸¹

By March, 1888 Ellis' vision was almost gone in one eye, and he was almost blind from having to struggle with the corrections of Hallam's "portentous" proof, as he called it.⁸² In a letter two days later, Ellis wrote that he was in a deplorable mental condition over Hallam's method of marking the proofs by adding diacritics. He informed Hallam that the entire task was more than he could bear: "The

⁸¹ Joseph Wright to Miss Allison, February 11, 1928 quoted in Elizabeth Mary Wright, The Life of Joseph Wright (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 427. Vol. II, p. 427.

⁸² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 94), Ellis to Hallam, March 6, 1888.

result is not worth the labor."⁸³ The next day Ellis indicated that he had to do what was best for his "own book."⁸⁴

Promptly Hallam braved Ellis' wrath and insisted that consonants be marked in the way he wanted; moreover, he indicated that in a phonetic treatise all held consonants needed to be marked. There is a noticeable tone of defiance directed towards Ellis in Hallam's allusion to Sweet's Handbook of Phonetics (1877), which he claimed substantiated his opinions. Hallam wrote that he found such disagreement "painful and depressing"; however, he then proceeded to inform Ellis that if all the information which he had gathered at so much time and expense for the benefit of the three Societies was still to be forthcoming by him [Hallam], it was only fair that the same concessions given to Messrs. Elworthy and Goodchild should likewise be accorded to himself. It was a letter of insistence and a little pettishness.⁸⁵

In response to the unpleasant tone of Hallam's letter, Ellis calmly wrote to him saying, "Consider it my

⁸³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 89), Ellis to Hallam, March 8, 1888.

⁸⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 100), Ellis to Hallam, March 9, 1888.

⁸⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 96), Hallam to Ellis, March 9, 1888.

duty not to mislead the reader."⁸⁶ Ellis realized that he now had to face a very difficult decision. If Hallam were to act on his veiled threat of withholding information from being used by the Societies, Ellis would find himself in an impossible situation. There was no choice except to placate Hallam. Accordingly, in the mildest and pleasantest manner, Ellis suggested that Hallam could submit a section written in his native Chapel-en-le-Frith dialect, inserting all the medial length symbols at the end of the diphthongs as well as the long consonants. He insisted, however, that in a parallel column he himself would place what he believed to be the correct notations.⁸⁷ Hallam appears to have gotten over his anger, for on March 24 he notified Ellis cheerfully that he would go to Chapel-en-le-Frith in Derbyshire to hear again the dialect from an old cousin.⁸⁸ In a sense Hallam had won his little victory.

(Helge K keritz was critical of Ellis' reliability concerning the modern dialectal equivalents of Middle English \bar{e} \bar{e} \bar{a} a , but he was willing to lay the blame for the inaccuracies on Thomas Hallam.⁸⁹ This is one of the

⁸⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 106), Ellis to Hallam, March 12, 1888.

⁸⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 106), Ellis to Hallam, March 12, 1888.

⁸⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 118), Hallam to Ellis, March 24, 1888.

⁸⁹Helge K keritz, Suffolk Dialect, p. viii.

rare times that any criticism is directed to Ellis' chief assistant. KÖkeritz does not indicate his basis for such a view).

In early March 1888 Professor Johann Storm of Christiania wrote several detailed inquiries to Ellis on a variety of phonetic matters. It was at this time that Ellis was overwhelmed with 176 pages of difficult proofs for the Southern section in addition to many other problems with regard to other sections of Part V. He did take out time to respond to Storm, informing him that the term "vulgar" referred to the language of people with whom "one can't associate."⁹⁰ Evidently, Storm had plans for sending Ellis a very long list of questions about dialectal pronunciations. The cumbersome "schedule", as Ellis called it, is still extant, and it is apparent that there was little space between questions in which Ellis could place his replies. Exercising all his patience, Ellis referred Storm to the pages in Part IV where most of the answers could easily be found.

During this period, Ellis had to spend at least two hours a day at the bedside of his wife, and he complained to Storm that it "interferes greatly with my other work."⁹¹

⁹⁰University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 5, 1888.

⁹¹University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 11, 1888.

storm valued his friendship with Ellis and sent him a book of Danish dialogues with a French key. When the Cockney sheets appeared in proof, Ellis in turn immediately forwarded them to Storm because of the latter's interest in London speech.⁹²

Storm had been unsuccessful in directing his phonetic inquiries to Henry Sweet, who wrote that he did not know how other people spoke. In Ellis' view it was a poor excuse for not replying to the schedule of questions from Norway. Ellis remarked to Storm that with such reasoning Sweet was incapable of writing a book on English pronunciation because he did not represent the "whole of Englishmen and language requires at least two persons."⁹³

Ellis' letter continued with some further private criticisms of Sweet. He informed Storm that he had not yet examined Sweet's Elementarbuch and supposed that its author aimed at the "most slovenly colloquial utterance." Ellis had labored diligently at perfecting his Palaeotype and was critical of Sweet's ei, ou instead of ee'i, oo'u because Sweet's symbols conveyed to him a "most unpleasant effect." With an uncustomary lack of charity Ellis hinted that Sweet

⁹²University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, April 10, 1888.

⁹³University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 11, 1888.

must have learned English in a "different atmosphere" from him.⁹⁴

Sweet's works received commendatory reviews, and Ellis realized that there would never be complete agreement on phonetic matters between the two of them. "I consider Sweet hopeless as he, perhaps, considers me!", he wrote Hallam.⁹⁵

At this time Prince Bonaparte returned to London, and Ellis visited his old friend, who was recovering from a recent stroke which had affected his speech as well as his ability to read. The Prince could not write for any more than a quarter of an hour. By this time Ellis felt it even more difficult to make social calls.⁹⁶

No longer did the Prince discuss his philological explorations in the Pyrenees or in sections of Northern Italy. About a month later Ellis again visited the elegant residence of Prince Bonaparte, who, this time, was fretful

⁹⁴

^{Ibid.} Incidentally, Sweet has provided us with a brief description of A.J. Ellis' voice, which did not seem to be essentially different from his own. Ellis "reduced the breath effect to a minimum by contracting the glottis and giving a short impulse of force, passing on at once to the vowel, which, of course, gets rid of the breathiness." See Henry Sweet, A Handbook of Phonetics (Oxford: University Press, 1877), p. 62.

⁹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 214), Ellis to Hallam, June 8, 1888.

⁹⁶University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 11, 1888.

about the half page of closely written copperplate style which had taken him more than three hours to write. He had always used this beautiful calligraphy in preparing manuscript for press work rather than his usual "scribble," as Ellis called it.⁹⁷

Within his household, Ellis' daughter viewed her father's speech as "antiquated." He accepted her judgment in a tolerant spirit. She attended the ailing Mrs. Ellis, whose "congestion of blood vessels on the brain" was worrying her father so much.⁹⁸ The daughter, Miriam, does not seem to have shared any of her father's intellectual predilections. She liked to read palms or "palmise," as Ellis called it. Her role in this Victorian household was the model of filial devotion. Ellis' own physical problems were increasing in severity. By March, 1888 Ellis found that his visual problems were serious because examining hundreds of word lists in "higgledy-piggledy order" [sic] was taking its toll of his remaining sight.⁹⁹ Adding to Ellis' physical infirmities was the discovery that he was unable to hear vowels with the same degree of discrimination

⁹⁷University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, April 29, 1888.

⁹⁸University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, March 11, 1888.

⁹⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 120), Ellis to Hallam, March 24, 1888.

that he felt he before had enjoyed.¹⁰⁰

During April, 1888 Hallam began sending Ellis daily analyses of the sound of the letter R. These interpretations did not give any confidence to the already overworked Ellis. Hallam explained in infinite detail the possibilities that the letter could represent under a wide variety of combination with other letters, but Ellis did not wish to be subjected to these interruptions. Hallam's determination to raise minute points about the sound only made Ellis querulous. Hallam enjoyed recalling his own early days spent as a boy among the Ripley workmen on the Cromford and High Peak Railway, when he had the chance to hear the many forms of the Midland R. This neighboring dialect, however, differed slightly from that of the Peak's natives. Hallam was eager to share his recollections of his first awareness of dialect with Ellis, but the latter had no time to spare.¹⁰¹

Wearily, Ellis wrote Hallam that the pronunciation of the letter R, the first phonetic subject on which he had written as early as 1843, still remained his "greatest puzzle."¹⁰² He also informed Hallam that he objected to the latter's positive manner on the topic and reminded

¹⁰⁰ University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, April 29, 1888.

¹⁰¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 139), Hallam to Ellis, April 8, 1888.

¹⁰² Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 143), Ellis to Hallam, April 9, 1888.

Hallam that the "Introduction" to the Midland Division already contained all that was going to be said on the interpretation of the letter R.

The relationship between Ellis and Hallam was becoming very hostile. It was unfortunate that interpretations about the letter R were causing acrimonious feelings, but Hallam responded in an aggrieved manner when Ellis questioned his reliability in discriminating among certain diphthongs in the mixed speech of a certain region of Derbyshire.¹⁰³ Such criticism angered Hallam, who straightway assured Ellis that he felt completely confident about the quality of his audition. He wrote, "Witness the words recorded from the policeman in London many years ago."¹⁰⁴

The number of sheets for Part V that required Ellis' proofreading was growing rapidly. He was trying to complete writing parts of the section on Midland dialect and was neglecting the other proofreading. Hallam was not too cooperative about returning some of the material that he had promised Ellis regarding some of the local varieties of the dialect. Even the complete word list from Chapel-en-le-Frith had not yet arrived by the end of April. It may be recalled that Ellis grudgingly had assented to using markings so distasteful to him on this particular specimen

¹⁰³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 146), Ellis to Hallam, April 12, 1888.

¹⁰⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 148), Hallam to Ellis, April 14, 1888.

by way of compromise with Hallam. Hallam, however, did not allude to this list which had been such a source of ill feeling between the two men.¹⁰⁵ Finally, the long-awaited list arrived, and Ellis saw that Hallam had inserted many provincial substitutes for words in the printed list. Ellis found some of them interesting, but most were irrelevant.¹⁰⁶

At this stage of his investigation for Part V, Ellis started to prepare a special "Table of Dialectal Palaeotype." It was to contain modifications of the regular Palaeotype as well as additions necessary in the transcription of the spoken language. The most difficult part of the task was to provide references to those pages in his earlier volumes which contained explanations of the many symbols. Though Part IV summarized much of the material on pages xii to xiv, Ellis had to provide a more extensive account in this new "Table." He could not move ahead with the work on the "Table" until he had completed the proofreading of the sheets for the printer.¹⁰⁷

Professor Storm in Norway was interested in the modifications of the Palaeotype, and Ellis obliged him by explaining at great length those changes which he had

¹⁰⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 161), Ellis to Hallam, April 18, 1888.

¹⁰⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 162), Ellis to Hallam, April 28, 1888.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

recently adopted. In his letter, Ellis was critical of Sweet and Murray, who did not agree with him completely on all the interpretations of Palaeotype for dialectal purposes. Ellis observed that Murray was a "decided Scot" and "really only a secondhand authority on pronunciation."¹⁰⁸

Doubts frequently assailed Ellis about the accuracy of transcribing the fleeting sounds of speech, and he was not surprised that two persons with different backgrounds would recognize the same sound differently and then transcribe it otherwise. Reminiscing nearly fifty years after he had first started to study phonetics, Ellis recalled how everything then seemed to be relatively uncomplicated. By the close of April 1888, he wrote with resignation: "Now I am apt to take seaweed for rock."¹⁰⁹

Ellis' relationship with Hallam was not thoroughly strained. "There are limits to this! To do all you want would very materially spoil my book!" Ellis wrote. He became upset at this time because he still viewed Hallam's notation for the Derbyshire examples to which he had agreed as a disfigurement of his book. Hallam also was holding on to the section dealing with the Midlands which he was also proofreading for Ellis. Meanwhile, the manuscript of the

¹⁰⁸University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, April 28, 1888.

¹⁰⁹University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, April 29, 1888.

remainder of the book was all ready for the printer.¹¹⁰ Hallam was not disturbed by Ellis' rejection of some of the substitute words in the Chapel dialect word list. He calmly assured Ellis that one often got too scanty information and "very seldom too much."¹¹¹

By June 5, 1888 Hallam continued to keep the papers on the letter R which Ellis needed. The latter also sent a list of the Palaeotypic changes he had just made in Hallam's Peak specimen, informing him that he did so in order not to misrepresent him. With indignation he wrote to Hallam as follows: "But to delay the press a month for this purpose [to expand further his theories on the letter R] is shocking!!" Ellis threatened to make other arrangements.¹¹² Just what these were are not indicated in the correspondence, but obviously he was prepared to sever ties with Hallam unless his book could be published immediately.

Ellis' spirits were sagging under the ceaseless carping of Hallam. He wrote to Hallam that unless he [Ellis] was able to hear for himself Hallam's renderings of the letter R in its various interpretations, he could not consider them for the book. He was not at all willing to

¹¹⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 166), Ellis to Hallam, May 1, 1888.

¹¹¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 169), Hallam to Ellis, May 3, 1888.

¹¹²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 205), Ellis to Hallam, June 5, 1888.

accept Hallam's interpretations of the sound. He concluded the subject by informing Hallam that his [Ellis'] only comfort was that few people "care a fig" about it. By way of conclusion to the entire matter, he remarked:

Strange such differences there be,
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.¹¹³

The month advanced but no proofs came from Manchester.

Ellis fulminated: "It's preposterous!!!"¹¹⁴

The Hallam-Goodchild rivalry persisted and increased, but it played havoc with Ellis' peace of mind. When another complaint arrived from Hallam indicating that Ellis had commented in a critical manner on various points of his notation but had given the Chippenham dialect on Goodchild's full notation (with its 435 symbols and diacritics, exclusive of the marks for stress and quantity in vowels and diphthongs),¹¹⁵ Ellis became desperate about being able to get on with his own work. The preceding day Ellis had written Hallam, "If I made any changes, they ought to be the restoration of my own views. I don't accept yours."¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 214), Ellis to Hallam, June 8, 1888.

¹¹⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 220), Ellis to Hallam, June 18, 1888.

¹¹⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 229), Hallam to Ellis, June 20, 1888.

¹¹⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 223), Ellis to Hallam, June 21, 1888.

Surprisingly, Ellis still continued to send proofs to Hallam in spite of strained relationship between himself and Hallam. The printer, Austin, began sending proofs on thicker paper, and Ellis warned Hallam that postage rates would increase.¹¹⁷ To emphasize his concern, Ellis observed that any unnecessary changes would be expensive for the Societies.¹¹⁸

During July, 1888 Hallam sounded quite cheerful and in good spirits. He kept gathering dialect materials, and he was satisfied with his transcriptions from Huddersfield which he received from two natives at the Railway Hotel, Marsden.¹¹⁹ Two weeks later he was employing the dialect tests at Saddleworth with his cousin, John Hallam, who introduced him to old Edwin Thornton whose rendition of the local dialect appeared especially valuable.¹²⁰

Re-checking the early dialect tests, comparative specimens, and word lists was essential in preparing the manuscript for the printer. Ellis was understandably

¹¹⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 248), Ellis to Hallam, June 30, 1888.

¹¹⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 240), Ellis to Hallam, June 24, 1888.

¹¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 255), Hallam to Ellis, July 12, 1888.

¹²⁰ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 268), Hallam to Ellis, July 27, 1888.

chagrined, therefore, when Hallam notified him that he had lost on the train notebooks 63 and 64 for those counties collected by him in 1884.¹²¹

In July, 1888 Ellis' wife passed away at the age of seventy-three. With apparent detachment he noted that the arrangements caused "much interference in my work."¹²² Ellis wrote to Hallam on the very evening to tell him the sad news, indicating at the same time that he contemplated a change of residence from the Kensington home in which he had lived for so many years. Ellis viewed the move with great trepidation, for he had been accumulating large numbers of books and papers during those years in which he had been working in so many disciplines. His health, he felt, was declining rapidly, and he did not feel up to the demands which moving would necessitate.¹²³

The composing room at Stephen Austin's occasionally ran into difficulties with the exceedingly complex text for Part V. Ellis had to be notified whenever the pressmen would frequently fall behind in setting the material in

¹²¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, August 1, 1888.

¹²²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 272), Ellis to Hallam, July 27, 1888.

¹²³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 276), Ellis to Hallam, August 6, 1888.

print.¹²⁴ On August 12, 1888, Ellis learned to his dismay that the existing manuscript of Part V would now require an additional two hundred pages of text in addition to the "Preliminary Matter" and the "Results," making a probable total of 830 pages in the main text of that Part.¹²⁵ Though he was shocked at the situation, he ignored his pride and asked Hallam for as much help as possible. He wrote, "I am an old man over seventy-four and anything might carry me off."¹²⁶

Now that Mrs. Ellis had died and the domestic situation was about to change, Tristram, the elder of his two sons, was preparing to leave his home. He was an artist and was getting ready to sail to the East on a painting trip. Ellis arranged to take lodgings while his home was being renovated before his own removal from the property.¹²⁷ He sadly remarked in a letter to Hallam that his daughter was also leaving and that it seemed as if everything was making it difficult for him to complete his book. By the

¹²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 263), Stephen Austin to Ellis, August 7, 1888.

¹²⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 388), Ellis to Hallam, August 12, 1888.

¹²⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 280), Ellis to Hallam, August 25, 1888.

¹²⁷Ibid.

close of August there was still no response from Hallam regarding the unreturned material that Ellis required.¹²⁸

It speaks well for Hallam's generosity of spirit that he did not respond to Ellis' call for help with complacency and pettiness, but rather gently remarked that he could well understand Ellis' state of exhaustion, and he expressed his willingness to be of service. Hallam's finest character traits rose to the occasion.¹²⁹ Ellis was encouraged and heartened by his old friend's loyalty and wrote, "I shall now live for my book and regard everything else as an interruption."¹³⁰

Unfortunately, the feeling of renewed confidence quickly diminished and once again Hallam offered some suggestions. Ellis, nevertheless, closed the matter to any further discussion: "I shall add no more to my work. I must get it printed as it is."¹³¹ Such determination did not disturb Hallam in the least; he promptly informed Ellis that he, too, suffered from bouts of nervous exhaustion.¹³²

¹²⁸Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 291), Ellis to Hallam, August 31, 1888.

¹²⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 283), Hallam to Ellis, August 27, 1888.

¹³⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 239), Ellis to Hallam, August 28, 1888.

¹³¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 291), Ellis to Hallam, August 31, 1888.

¹³²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 295), Hallam to Ellis, September 1, 1888.

On September 7, Ellis proposed a deadline and wrote as follows: "I must finish printing by 30 April, 1889." He attempted to discourage Hallam from offering any other suggestions, but to no avail as usual. Ellis wrote him that the public was not interested in Palaeotype "ins and outs and flounderings."¹³³

Since he had allotted himself eight more months for the book, Ellis felt more comfortable about continuing his work on the list of the counties with an alphabetical list of all villages within each county. This index would refer to word lists, dialect tests, and comparative specimens which had been obtained for the villages. He planned to list only those personal names of informants whom he mentioned in the text. He stated that he could not write the section called "Results" until the main body of the text had been completed.¹³⁴

Ellis still maintained close contact with his chief dialectal assistants, and he became disturbed upon learning that Goodchild would not be able to examine the West Northern Division manuscript because he was planning to move to Edinburgh, where he had been offered a curatorship with the Geological Survey. In all probability Ellis had planned to

¹³³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 300), Ellis to Hallam, September 7, 1888.

¹³⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 301), Ellis to Hallam, September 8, 1888.

have Goodchild visit him at home to examine the material for the book. This valuable association was now drawing to a close.¹³⁵

Nothing had really changed regarding Hallam's arguments about the phonetic meaning of some of the Palaeotype.¹³⁶ The quest for perfection in the printer's setting of the Palaeotype was also impossible of realization. Ellis discovered some glaring errors which had escaped his [Ellis'] vigilance. He had always thought of himself as an excellent proofreader but Hallam's endless modifications of material that had already been correctly set in type were unacceptable to Ellis. Not only did Hallam suggest changes of pronunciation which Ellis had accepted, but he sent back all kinds of questions that were time-consuming for Ellis to answer.¹³⁷

The two "Reports on Dialectal Research" earlier published in the Proceedings of the Philological Society were now reprinted under the auspices of the English Dialect Society. Of course, this served as an additional kind of advance publicity for Ellis' forthcoming volume. When the

¹³⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 304), Ellis to Hallam, September 14, 1888.

¹³⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 314), Ellis to Hallam, September 24, 1888.

¹³⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 323), Ellis to Hallam, October 4, 1888.

"Reports" were reviewed, the commentator was complimentary in his judgment and hailed the approaching publication of the completed work. It would, he wrote "constitute an epoch in the history of philology."¹³⁸

While the Argyll Street house in Kensington was being renovated, Ellis had arranged for everything to be moved to his library, the one room which the workmen had not yet touched. Adding to his problems was discomfort caused by his rheumatic leg and back. It began to look, he recorded, as if the publication of Part V would be delayed.¹³⁹

Ellis now decided to take a new approach regarding the unreturned proofs that Hallam had been rechecking for him. He even had to hold off the change of residence so that he could complete the book. His new strategy was to utilize Goodchild's proofs as a basis for establishing himself the final corrections on those sheets which Hallam was supposed to be correcting. Goodchild had also been helping Ellis with some of the proofreading to ensure accuracy for those sections with which he had provided material. Where a decision had to be made in connection with the missing proofs that Hallam still kept, Goodchild's work would be the basis for Ellis' choices.

¹³⁸"English Dialect Society," Academy, 31 (October 6, 1888), 216.

¹³⁹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 330), Ellis to Hallam, October 13, 1888.

It is difficult to conjecture exactly what Ellis had in mind when he wrote the following lines to Hallam: "I may not be so accurate as if you revised the press. But I shall get the book printed! The present block shows me that I otherwise shall never see it through the press. With many thanks for past help."¹⁴⁰ There appears to be a possible dismissal inherent in these lines from Ellis. No other letter of his conveys the tone of finality such as this one does. It seems as if the matter is being taken out of Hallam's hands completely owing to the exigencies of time and the absence of patience on the part of Ellis for any more delays.

Obviously, Ellis was in earnest regarding his decision to rely upon the proofs of Goodchild as a basis for correcting those sections of the Midland Division which Hallam was still keeping. Nevertheless, it is surprising to read that Hallam was requested by Ellis to provide him with the Edinburgh address of Goodchild so that inquiries could be forwarded about the material.¹⁴¹ It is probable that Hallam was irked very much by this request.

Hallam and Ellis were similar in many respects. Both had a passion for detail, for without that quality the

¹⁴⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 367), Ellis to Hallam, November 16, 1888.

¹⁴¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 379), Ellis to Hallam, November 26, 1888.

dialect survey could not have proceeded. Each man maintained extraordinarily complete records. Though Hallam chafed under Ellis' strong comments, he did not reduce his annual statistical computations in connection with the Ellis work. For example, he recorded all his visits in 1888 to every obscure village and hamlet. That year the dialect survey had been carried into such delightful-sounding places as Lower Holker-in-Cartmel and Church and Cherry Tree, both in Lancashire. He listed in his records all the sounds which he specially investigated as, for example, the transitional types of short u from the Midland sound to that of the Northern u in Westmorland and Cumberland.¹⁴² Hallam derived intense satisfaction from making his annual summaries and believed that he had made a contribution to the work of Ellis far more significant than that of any other person.

¹⁴²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10), "Miscellaneous Papers of T. Hallam."

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUDING AN AMBITIOUS PHILOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

(1889-90)

Ellis' labors were drawing to a close; yet he was still obliged to deal with certain recurring difficulties. Hallam was still jealous about Goodchild's contributions to the dialectal survey. Owing to the precarious financial conditions of the Philological Society, Ellis' work had now become a serious liability for the organization. In spite of such unpleasant matters, Ellis was going ahead with plans for still another part to his investigation. An honorary doctorate was awarded by Cambridge for the achievements of a life dedicated to the advancement of scholarship. Here we shall examine the last years of Ellis' work on his dialectal survey and the events taking place in connection with the long-overdue academic recognition which finally came to him.

Up to the close of January 1889 Ellis had deliberately kept silent about Hallam's fulminations against J.G. Goodchild. The subject was distressing because Hallam could not refrain from describing his feelings. Finally, Ellis wrote to tell Hallam that he had no desire to give any sort of evaluations concerning the use he had made of

Goodchild's contributions. Referring to the work done by Hallam and Goodchild, Ellis wrote, "Both are extremely good."¹

Hallam was concerned over Ellis' behavior towards him and would not accept the "warm thanks" which Ellis had extended to him recently. When he recalled for Ellis the amount of work involved in securing the information on the Midland dialects, he only exasperated Ellis all the more. He was hurt that Ellis had not appreciated his efforts more than Goodchild's. He played upon every possible sympathetic tendency of Ellis by referring to the neglect of his private affairs. Hallam was worried lest the critics of the future should not view his work in the proper light.

He presented another ultimatum by insisting that all the Midland word lists had to be printed in accordance with his corrections; otherwise, he did not wish them to be printed at all. He "could not think of these lists appearing to disadvantage by the side of Mr. Goodchild's."² Jealousy was gnawing away at Hallam's peace of mind. Ellis again wrote back that he was unable to do what Hallam wanted but capitulated to the extent that he would add an explanatory note on the matter regarding the point of view which

¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 403), Ellis to Hallam, January 21, 1889.

²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 408), Hallam to Ellis, January 23, 1889.

Hallam held concerning Midland pronunciation.³

No matter how determined Ellis was in his point of view and despite his resolution not to go further into the discussion, he could not refrain from reacting to the deplorable Hallam-Goodchild rivalry. He informed Hallam that he emphatically had not favored Goodchild since it had been necessary to spend much time with him in clearing away, suppressing, and replacing large numbers of his symbols. It is doubtful whether this additional comment made much difference to Hallam, whose letters reveal a constant tendency to cause trouble.⁴

Though Ellis appears to have dismissed Hallam, the daily correspondence continued unabated. It is possible that Ellis had really permitted himself the satisfaction of indulging his own feelings of anger, but force of habit possibly made him ignore what might have been hasty reaction. It was unfortunate at this time to find that after so many years Ellis introduced personalities into his correspondence. He had never allowed them to sway him in his work except in the capitulation to Hallam with regard to the marking of the Chapel specimen.⁵ Referring to the

³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 413), Ellis to Hallam, January 26, 1889.

⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 428), Ellis to Hallam, February 14, 1889.

⁵Ibid.

minute details in Hallam's phonetic transcriptions, Ellis sharply wrote to Hallam, "I consider that I should have done quite enough by merely noting your peculiarities without exemplifying them at length in your own county."⁶

Early in February the Philological Society had overprinted itself in a number of publications. It would appear that inadequate attention had been paid to proper budgeting. Money was short and Ellis' book, which he planned to have completed by May 3, was a financial burden upon the organization. He started to wind up the details in connection with the expenses of compiling the material for Early English Pronunciation and requested Hallam to compute his postage accounts. At last the termination of the work appeared to be imminent.⁷

At this time Ellis composed his summary chapter entitled "A Few Results." It was an expansion of material which originally had appeared in the "Second Dialectal Report" and represented the conclusion of the labor of many years. On the last page Ellis dramatically wrote "Here I stop! Time and space fail me, and my long task must come to an end."⁸ Ellis arranged to have this chapter also

⁶Ibid.

⁷Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 414), Ellis to Hallam, February 2, 1889.

⁸A.J. Ellis, "A Few Results." Phonetische Studien, 'Mizellen', Marburg in Kessen, Verlag von N.G. Elwert, 1889, pp. 283-98. See also Early English Pronunciation, V, pp. 821-35.

reprinted in Phonetische Studien for the benefit of his many colleagues in Germany.

Now that the completion of Early English Pronunciation was at hand, and because so voluminous a correspondence had been exchanged between the two students of dialect during the years, Ellis wrote to Hallam, saying "Would you like to have such of your letters as I can find?"⁹ Intuitively, Ellis recognized that the letters might be of interest to others in the future and gave Hallam the opportunity of again owning the materials which had been accumulating for so many years. Candidly, Ellis admitted in his letter to Hallam that he was well aware that all would be destroyed after his own death because his own children had taken no interest whatsoever in those investigations which he had been conducting.

On the evening of May 3 at the Philological Society, the Reverend Richard Morris in the Chair, Alexander Ellis read his "Final Report on Dialectal Work," and he announced that all of Part V was in its final stages at the printer's. This meant, he said, that during the summer the members of the Philological Society, Chaucer Society and Early English Text Society would receive copies of the long-awaited final section of the study. For years Ellis had been providing these extensive progress reports, and the congratulations

⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 430), Ellis to Hallam, February 18, 1889.

that evening, according to the Athenaeum, were sincere and enthusiastic.¹⁰

Looking to the future, Ellis informed his colleagues that if his health permitted, he planned to bring out a sixth Part which would be a summary account and a collection of the evaluations and observations of all the scholars who had shared their philological theories with him.¹¹

Ellis' efforts in connection with the English Dialect Society were also drawing to a close. In 1889 he was constantly fighting against serious headaches while correcting the abridgment of Part V. He wrote the indefatigable Hallam that he could not become involved in any further phonetic discussions via the mails.¹²

Because the time was drawing near when the final Part of Ellis' work would be forthcoming, Hallam delicately hinted to Ellis that he would be grateful for a final copy "from the author." Already Hallam had been making plans to

¹⁰"Philological Society," Athenaeum, May 11, 1889, p. 603.

¹¹"Philological Society," Academy, 33 (May 11, 1889), 328. Discussing his plans with Professor Storm, he especially noted that he would have to consider Sweet's History of English Sounds when he was reviewing the investigations of other scholars for Part VI. See University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, September 21, 1889.

¹²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, June 21, 1889.

have the five Parts bound in leather.¹³ There is something admirable in Hallam's attitude at this point, considering his own role in the investigation of the English dialects. A month later he wrote suggestions to Ellis concerning how he would like the presentation copy to appear. Hallam wished Ellis to inscribe his [Hallam's] name to be placed on the blank leaf inside, but this was to be done prior to the binding.¹⁴

For days Hallam was indulging himself in contemplating the publication of the forthcoming volume, and Ellis courteously, though resignedly, inquired as to whether he preferred an "unstitched or stitched copy" [sic] before he placed his name on the flyleaf.¹⁵ It is refreshing after such extended acrimony to observe the two friends concerning themselves about trivial matters like the form of binding for the volumes. Hallam wrote that when Ellis should bind his own copy, he hoped the Hallam volumes would be prepared at the same time and in the same manner. He assured Ellis that he would reimburse him for the expense later. Parts I to IV would be bound the same way but in two volumes.¹⁶

¹³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 464), Hallam to Ellis, July 22, 1889.

¹⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 466), Hallam to Ellis, August 29, 1889.

¹⁵Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 468), Ellis to Hallam, September 4, 1889.

¹⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 470), Hallam to Ellis, September 6, 1889.

All this low-pitched excitement was very typical of the intensity and passion for details which so many nineteenth century scholars shared. The proper binding for a book was a matter of momentous concern. Upon further reflection Ellis became less cooperative about Hallam's desire for having the volumes bound in the same colors as his own. To do away with the irksome problem, he fended off Hallam by suggesting that he wait for the publication of Part VI, which he anticipated would be no more than 200 pages. He decided, however, to send Hallam a stitched copy. Ellis would order for himself, he wrote, "whole brown cloth, sewed-on tapes, each sheet separately (and not in two's), hollow back, marble edges, lettered on the cloth itself (not on a leather label)." The title was to be indicated as "Part V--Dialectal Phonology." Ellis assured Hallam that it was suitable for hard wear and "knocking about."¹⁷ Ellis seems to deliberately steer away from the subject of fine leather bindings which he was planning for himself. Writing in a theatrical manner, Hallam responded that even his stitched copy would be "a memorial for all time!"¹⁸

In August 1889, Ellis had spent some time with a friend in Ealing, near London, and during the visit seemed

¹⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 474), Ellis to Hallam, September 7, 1889.

¹⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 475), Hallam to Ellis, September 10, 1889.

to derive pleasure from writing to Hallam about the arrangement of his library in his new quarters as well as finishing the manuscript of his dialect volume for the English Dialect Society.¹⁹

Getting this abridgment, English Dialects--Their Sounds and Homes, was not an easy matter. The Glossic notations had to be slowly checked by Ellis against the manuscript. He wished to honor his commitment to the English Dialect Society for preparing this abridgment before beginning his projected Part VI of Early English Pronunciation.²⁰ At this time, also, he was involved with work on the American Philosophical Society's plans for a congress on international language.

With only a servant to take care of him, Ellis prepared to make his new home at 21 Auriol Road in the Barons Court section of Kensington, near his half-sister and his two married sons. He advised his friends to address letters to him at the Royal Society because he knew that all correspondence would reach him there "like a shot."²¹

¹⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 278), Ellis to Hallam, August 23, 1889. Ellis' library has not been located. Brown and Vardy, Ellis' solicitors, have not been able to locate the library. Perhaps it has been dispersed by his heir, Tristram Ellis.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, September 21, 1889.

Little is known about Ellis for nearly a year.

Hallam contributed a report on dialect work to the Manchester City News. He reviewed all his work with Ellis and provided some detailed statistics which certainly could not have pleased Ellis. For example, Hallam stated that he had collected information from 121 places in Lancashire, noting that Ellis had used material for only 46 of them. His article conveyed the inference, though subtly, that Ellis' observations were not as complete as they should have been.²²

Also in Manchester the situation of the English Dialect Society was becoming rather insecure at this time. It was in a hopeless financial situation, and the Honourable Secretary, John Nodal, could only propose moving its headquarters to Oxford, where it could possibly derive additional support from the scholarly community in that city. The appeal for money which had been made for a continuation of the Society seemed doomed to failure, and the Treasurer, Mr. Milnar, recognized the desperate condition to which the group had been reduced.²³ Ellis had been removed from the affairs of the English Dialect Society for a long time.

The story of the English Dialect Society's great English Dialect Dictionary, edited by Joseph Wright, has

²²"English Dialects," Manchester City News, March 15, 1890.

²³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 36, no fol.), Nodal to Hallam, April 12, 1890.

part of its origins in Ellis' work, but it is an exciting development which must be postponed for now.

At this time Hallam wrote to Ellis about his recent thoughts about the problematical R,²⁴ but Ellis was concentrating on his own work on the abridgment. He wrote to Hallam that he doubted whether he could insert anything about R in the alphabetical "Index to Glossic" in his abridgment because of the lack of space and extra expense.²⁵

Since the disagreements over Part V were out of the way and he could afford to be magnanimous, Ellis later wrote Hallam that in the abridgment there were certain designations he [Ellis] had finally chosen for the untrilled R. Pleasantly Ellis suggested that he would still welcome additional discussion on the matter from Hallam--and unwillingly opened the way for a spate of postcards from Manchester to London.²⁶ However, Hallam's excited communications concerning his notions of R sounds in various localities still did not clarify matters for Ellis,²⁷ and the latter reported that he

²⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 484), Hallam to Ellis, July 1, 1890.

²⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, July 2, 1890.

²⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, July 16, 1890.

²⁷ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Hallam to Ellis, July 17, 1890. Hallam continued his discussions of R in a letter of July 25, 1890. (See Hallam-Ellis Papers, d. 14, no fol.). These exchanges

would be unable to modify his account in the text of the abridgment.²⁸

In addition to his problems with Thomas Hallam, Ellis was very much aware of the directions which Henry Sweet's investigations were taking at this time. Ellis had heard Sweet in 1874 deliver before the Philological Society three papers on the historical changes of the English vowels during the centuries. Almost sixteen years later Ellis was still studying Sweet's History of English Sounds as well as his Primer of Phonetics. In some ways, this was a trial for Ellis. With some degree of petulance, Ellis observed that Sweet's pronunciation was very different from his own.²⁹ It seems likely that Ellis was referring to the differences in accent between himself and Sweet. This would appear to be the case because in the latter's discussion of Narrow Romic the comparison with Ellis' Palaeotype indicates marked variations. Doubtless Ellis planned a refutation of Sweet's treatment of the history of the English sounds in the proposed Part VI. Sweet, usually abrasive in his personal relationships, commended wholeheartedly Ellis' impartiality

about the sound were very special to Hallam, and there is a separate collection of the relevant papers in the Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14), "Correspondence on the Letter R."

²⁸ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, July 18, 1890.

²⁹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 14, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, July 31, 1890.

and caution which allowed theories never to overrule facts.³⁰ In the summer of 1890 Ellis was still not satisfied with Henry Sweet's description of the letter R in his Primer of Phonetics, and he considered its treatment by Sweet in the History of English Sounds as "still more difficult" to understand.³¹

When Part V was reviewed by the Athenaeum at the end of August, the reviewer called immediate attention to the fact that what he termed this "collateral investigation,"³² a study of dialects designed to elucidate early English pronunciations, took up more pages than were given to the original topic. He condemned Ellis' five Parts as lacking in unity and method but perceptively considered Part V to be an independent treatise with carefully verified material. It would appear, however, that the reviewer had neglected the importance of Ellis' use of dialect tests, comparative specimens, and classified word lists. He gave little attention to describing the tremendous effort Ellis had expended in trying several approaches for the attainment of his goals. He also gave the impression that Ellis had methodically moved from step to step, whereas that had not been the case

³⁰ Henry Sweet, History of English Sounds, p. 463.

³¹ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 23, fol. 81), Ellis to Hallam, August 20, 1890.

³² "Early English Pronunciation--Part V" by A.J. Ellis in Athenaeum, August 30, 1890, p. 282.

at all. Ellis' private correspondence readily shows that he had modified continually his methods of investigation without having given too much advance thought to abandoning a particular method that was not yielding the expected results.

An interesting observation was made also at this time by the critic in the Athenaeum. He asserted that it was possible that the pronunciation of a particular dialect speaker was influenced by the presence of strangers. There is the chance that the informant might have provided a more precise pronunciation rather than a dialectal one, so that the recorded results are possibly more misleading than could otherwise have been expected with a "less delicate method of notation."³³ Ellis' point appears to be that this delicate notation might not have indicated casual dialect, but somehow a studied rural speech.

In compiling the word lists according to their original vowels, the critic noted that Ellis had made errors because of the untrustworthy character of those Anglo-Saxon dictionaries which he had been obliged to consult. Certain words such as nōsu were placed among the ō examples, and in feohtan, the diphthong, or "fracture", as it was called, was treated as long.³⁴

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

Because the reviewer believed that education had slowed up some of the natural sound changes in the stages of phonetic development, the notion that dialects, supposedly archaic, reveal the older pronunciation was felt to be open to question. The reviewer of Part V believed rather than the dialects represented an advanced stage over that of standard English. Ellis received sound commendation for his work, "which probably no other living man could have accomplished with equal success."³⁵

The eminent orientalist, William Dwight Whitney of Yale, also commenting on the last part of Early English Pronunciation, regretted that it had not appeared in time for him to have used it as the basis of his own phonetic work. He wrote as follows: "If it had reached me earlier, I should perhaps have laid it at the basis of my own exposition, only noting such deviations from the author's scheme as I found it necessary to make."³⁶

Among those other scholars contemporary with Ellis, Joseph Wright had tried to account for Ellis' inaccuracies by assailing the hurried manner in which the dialect text and classified word lists were taken down, partly through

³⁵Ibid., p. 283.

³⁶William Dwight Whitney, Oriental and Linguistic Studies. Second Series. The East and West; Religion and Mythology; Orthography and Phonology, Hindu Astronomy (New York: Scribner, 1893), p. 204.

their not having been revised.³⁷ The Ellis correspondence in most cases does not bear this out because there are obviously many instances of careful revision.

Although Hermann Paul, author of Grundriss der germanischen Philologie, recognized the "epoch-making qualities" of Ellis' first four Parts of Early English Pronunciation, he did not provide any judgment on the fifth volume which was at press when his own work made its appearance.³⁸

Following the publication of the last volume of his investigation, Ellis attained a high measure of satisfaction from the academic recognition which his alma mater Cambridge University accorded him. The Master of Trinity College had written early in May of 1890 at the behest of the Cambridge Senate to find out if he would accept an honorary doctorate. Ellis was completely surprised because at no time had he ever solicited such recognition. He was to be honored principally for his investigations of the English dialects. Ellis wrote, "It is curious that my degree comes from the downtrodden dialects."³⁹

³⁷ Joseph Wright, A Grammar of the Dialect of Windhill in the West Riding of Yorkshire Illustrated by a Series of Dialect Specimens, Phonetically Rendered; with a Glossarial Index of the Words Used in the Grammar and Specimens (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1892), p. 174.

³⁸ Hermann Paul, Grundriss der germanischen Philologie (Strassburg: Trübner, 1891), p. 119.

³⁹ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, A.J. Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, Ellis to Hipkins, May 23, 1890.

When the Daily News indicated that the University would confer certain degrees and included Ellis' name among the recipients, his friend, Alfred Hipkins, was genuinely delighted that the long-deserved recognition was to be made. In a letter Ellis, however, cautiously reminded Hipkins that an announcement did not automatically constitute the conferring of the honorary degree. He also reminded Hipkins that the words Litt. D'd [used as a verb] was not to be read as "literally dead." Wittily, Ellis observed that it was appropriate for him to be made a teacher of letters because he had been for so long at work on the letters of the alphabet. He enjoyed every subtle nuance of meaning which he saw. The Litt. D. represented the plural form litterarum and the Senate's translation of "Doctor in Letters" seemed strange to him.

In his letter to Hipkins, Ellis wrote about the invitation he received to dine with the Vice-Chancellor and the Master of Trinity College as part of the festivities attendant on the great day. He was also invited to attend another dinner in connection with the occasion by John Peile, the Master of Christ's College. Of course, Ellis attended the one given at which the Master of Trinity (his alma mater) was present. Ellis knew Peile from his associations with the Philological Society.

Ellis was drawing heavily upon all his physical resources and even the pleasurable task of writing about the

honor was, as he remarked in the same letter, like "shaving at sea--a slash and hold fast." On June 10, 1890 he arrived in Cambridge with his voice in poor condition, but he soon gave himself over to the pleasure of meeting old friends and renewing acquaintances.

The degree was given to Ellis for his many achievements in several disciplines. It was phrased as follows in the ceremonies:

Mr. Alexander J. Ellis

Claudit seriem viri eiusdem aequalis, qui doctrinae rudimentis primum Salopiae, deinde Etonae, denique Trinitatis in collegio maximo imbutus, eadem in Academia isdem e studiis laurem suam primam reportavit. Sed ne his quidem finibus contentus, etiam musices mysteria perscrutatus est, et philologiae provinciam satis amplam sibi vindicavit. Quanta perseverantia etiam contra consuetudinem, ut Quintiliani verbis utar, 'sic scribendum quidque iudicat, quomodo sonat' ! Quanta subtilitate de linguae Graecae et Latinae vocalibus disputat; quam minuta curiositate etiam patrii sermonis sonum unumquemque explorat ! A poetis nostris antiquioribus exorsus, non modo saeculorum priorum voces temporis lapsu obscuratas oculis et auribus nostris denuo reddidit, set etiam nostro a saeculo in dialectis variis usurpatam litterarum appellationem, signis accuratis notatam, posteritati serae cognoscendam tradidit. Venient anni (licet confidenter vaticinari) quibus dialectorum nostrarum tot varietates, non minus quam Arcadum et Cypriorum linguae antiquae, hominum e cognitione prorsus obsolescent; tum profecto viri huiusce scriptis cura infinita elaboratis indies auctus accedet honos.

"Mortalia facta peribunt
nedum sermonum stet honos et gratia vivax."

Interim a nobis certe sermonis Britannici conservator animi grati testimonium, honoremque diu debitum, diu duraturum, accipiet."⁴⁰

⁴⁰"Intelligence," *Academy*, 32 (June 14, 1890), 408.
A suggested translation of the Latin citation follows:

The London Times also took note of Ellis' honorary award and duly acknowledged the significance of Early English Pronunciation.⁴¹

Thomas Hallam's pleasure over the details of Ellis' degree was keen. In the notebooks he kept for recording any item regarding Ellis, he laboriously translated the Latin citation, but the result is awkward and very confusing at times.⁴² With sincerity he wrote to Ellis, I have sometimes

"Mr. Alexander J. Ellis ends the list, the equal of the same man (as previously mentioned), who was imbued with the elements of learning first at Shrewsbury, then at Eton, and finally at great Trinity College, at which academy he has gained the first laurel (i.e., a 'first'). But not content with achieving these goals, he examined the mysteries of music and conquered the wide province of philology to his own satisfaction. With what unusual perseverance, to quote Quintilian, 'he judges how language sounds through writing'! With what subtlety does he argue about the sounds of Greek and Latin speech! With what curiosity does he explain every sound of our ancestors' tongues! Starting with our ancient poets, he restored the sounds of past centuries made obscure to our eyes and ears by the lapse of time, and he has even handed over for our age the names of letters taken in various dialects, noted in accurate symbols, so that they may be known by posterity. Years will come (one may prophesy with confidence) in which so many varieties of our dialects, no less than the ancient tongues of Arcadia and Cyprus, will grow obsolete and beyond the recognition of man. Then will the infinite care of this man in these complex writings merit honor.

'Mortal deeds will perish; still less stand the living honor and esteem of speeches.'
 Meanwhile, surely this savior of British speech will receive the testimony of gratitude and honor long owed him, long to endure."

⁴¹"Honours," London Times, June 14, 1890, clipping in Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 9, fol. 8).

⁴²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 9, fol. 7), Hallam's Miscellaneous Ledger.

wondered why this very appropriate recognition of your literary labours was not made much earlier."⁴³ He felt that such recognition had long been in the minds of the many scholars who had appreciated Ellis' erudition and prodigious labors.

While in Cambridge Ellis had arranged for photographs to be taken of him in his doctoral robes. With much pleasure he sent one to his loyal friend, Hallam.⁴⁴ The voluminous dark robes contrast with his impressive white beard. In 1890 he was very portly, and in the photograph his monocle lends a dignified air. The Cambridge photographer, Colin Lunn, was careful to include numerous folios on a nearby table as well as an elaborately carved rosewood chair next to Ellis as he posed.⁴⁵

Walter Skeat commented on the conferring of the doctorate on Ellis in his reminiscences entitled A Student's Pastime.⁴⁶ He regarded the belated recognition of Ellis by Cambridge with a sense of justice fulfilled. Skeat remarked

⁴³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 38, fol. 162), Hallam to Ellis, June 30, 1890.

⁴⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, fol. 492), Ellis to Hallam, July 23, 1890.

⁴⁵British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, Photograph of A.J. Ellis.

⁴⁶Skeat, A Student's Pastime, p. lxxi.

with satisfaction that philological studies were at last being granted recognition by universities as exhibited by the granting of honorary degrees. He alluded to Stephens of Copenhagen and Zupitza of Berlin, but in the case of Ellis it seemed strange to him that Cambridge had delayed so long in honoring one of its own men. Skeat conjectured that the cause for Ellis' not having been honored was possibly owing to certain theological restrictions which were held by the university up to that period.

Ellis was pleased with his new title, for he wrote a note of correction to the editor of the Phonographic Magazine in the United States in which he reminded him that the proper designation in that publication ought to be "Dr. Ellis" rather than "Professor Ellis."⁴⁷

Ellis' spirits were soaring during these days of honor. Adding to the satisfactions was the return of his son, Tristram, from Athens and Constantinople. He invited his friend, Moncure Conway of South Place Chapel, to join him at an exhibition of his son's paintings. Ellis wrote Conway that he had moved from Argyll Street and he now lived in lodgings near St. Paul's School. He no longer could attend South Place Chapel and had given up his seat there "since Lady Day last."⁴⁸

⁴⁷Letter of Ellis to Howard, October 21, 1890 in Phonographic Magazine, January 1891, p. 9.

⁴⁸Princeton University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Conway, June 18, 1890.

The letter to Howard mentioned above is the last one that Ellis is known to have written. He sent along with the letter another one to his old friend, Benn Pitman, whom he hoped Howard would be able to locate. The letter to Pitman was written in phonography. Ellis informed Pitman that the original researches in connection with a third edition of the Plea about the changes of spelling had led him to write the first paper on Shakespearean pronunciation. This, in turn, led eventually to the dialect survey, culminating in the honorary degree from Cambridge. Ellis told Pitman that his [Ellis'] own regular handwriting had by this time become very unsteady, and that his shorthand also was easily misunderstood. Ellis' main complaint to Pitman was the "incurable one of seventy-six years."⁴⁹

He was becoming seriously debilitated by illness at the end of October 1890. He was so weak that he could barely manage the stairs, and on one occasion bruised his shoulder and side. It had become necessary for his son, Tristram, to telegraph the family doctor, Mr. Orton, to come to the house after Ellis had experienced an alarming coughing seizure. The son was obliged to send for a nurse to attend his dying father. On October 28, a rupture of a blood vessel occurred, and Ellis died instantly. It was a source of comfort to Tristram that his father had not been

⁴⁹Letter of Ellis to Benn Pitman, October 21, 1890 in Phonographic Magazine, January 1891, p. 10.

by himself in the house when he expired.

Tristram sent an account of his father's last hours to the old family friend, Alfred Hipkins, whose distress and grief were very great upon learning about the passing of his faithful Sunday companion.⁵⁰ Because of Ellis' prominent place in the London scholarly world, he received a full obituary in the Times.⁵¹

In accordance with the custom of nineteenth century obsequies, funeral cards (which Ellis had designed himself) were sent to friends and relatives. The card indicated that on November 1, 1890, the interment of Alexander Ellis would take place at Kensal Green Cemetery.⁵² Tristram, Edwin, and Miriam, as well as the four Hipkinses followed the body of "one of the best of men."⁵³ According to the records at Kensal Green, Ellis was buried in grave 31247140 next to his wife.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, fols. 33-34, Tristram Ellis to Alfred Hipkins.

⁵¹ A.J. Ellis (Obituary), London Times, November 3, 1890, p. 6, col. 6.

⁵² British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, fol. 37 (Funeral card).

⁵³ British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Hipkins Papers, Add. MS 41638, fols. 38-40 (Remarks by Edith Hipkins).

⁵⁴ Personal communication from Kensal Green Cemetery and personal examination of grave site.

Ellis' will named as his executors his son, Tristram James Ellis, and his nephew, James William Sharpe of the Masters of Charterhouse School, Godalming, Surrey, and formerly Fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He bequeathed to his executors the household messuages in the Hoxton Estate in the parish of Shoreditch--Nos. 161, 163, 165 Hoxton Street; No. 86 St. John's Road and No. 1 Upper St. John St. and for them to receive rents and profits and to pay an annual income to his daughter, Miriam, and son, Edwin. The remainder of the estate, including his personal effects, went to his son, Tristram. The will was probated on November 11, 1890.⁵⁵ The law firm of George Brown Son and Vardy no longer holds any documents relating to Alexander Ellis, and the older partner of the firm, who might have had some knowledge of Ellis' affairs, died some years ago.⁵⁶

The Philological Society at this time heard speeches about their late distinguished colleague given by Henry Bradley, F.J. Furnivall, and Walter Skeat, and expressed its sympathy to Ellis' family.⁵⁷ At the meetings of the London Mathematical Society, Ellis' passing was noted with deep

⁵⁵Somerset House (London)--Last Will and Testament of A.J. Ellis (personal examination).

⁵⁶Personal communication from legal firm of Brown and Vardy.

⁵⁷"Philological Society," Athenaeum, November 15, 1890, p. 667.

This is the Last Will and Testament

of me Alexander John Ellis now of 25 Regent Road Kensington in the
 Liberties of Middlesex and London Fellow of the Royal Society and Fellow of the
 Society of Antiquaries I appoint my eldest son Francis James Ellis of 187 Holland
 Park Road Kensington aforesaid (commonly known as Fritham Ellis) and my
 nephew James William Sharpe one of the Masters at the Charterhouse School (standing
 in the County of Surrey and formerly Fellow of Gonville and Caius College Cambridge
 Esquire and husband Henry I devise my executors to pay all my just debts and
 funeral and testamentary expenses as soon as conveniently may be after my decease
 out of my personal estate I bequeath to my said executors all the my several
 writings in the Honiton Estate of my nephew James William Sharpe aforesaid in
 the Parish of St. Andrew and Church of St. Andrew of Middlesex & London viz. the 11th, 12th,
 and 16th Honiton Street N: 56 Saint John's Road & N: 1 Upper John Street upon trust
 to receive the rents and profits thereof and to pay all necessary expenses and out-
 goings payable for ground rent rates taxes & insurance & to pay the net annual
 income arising therefrom to my daughter Elvira Anne Ellis and my youngest son
 Edwin John Ellis in equal shares during their joint lives and after the death of one
 of them then I direct my said executors to pay the whole net annual income to
 the survivor for his or her life and after his or her decease to treat the said house-
 hold premises & houses as part of the residue of my estate and as to all the rest
 residue & remainder of my estate and effects whatsoever and wheresoever I give
 devise and bequeath the same unto the said Francis James Ellis both real & in
 personal for his absolute use and benefit and hereby revoking all former Wills by
 me at any time heretofore made I declare this to be my last Will and Testament
 and witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this thirteenth day of September 1890
 one thousand eight hundred & eighty nine — Alexander John Ellis
 Signed and declared by Alexander John Ellis his testator as and for his last Will
 and Testament in the presence of us who at his request in his presence & in the
 presence of each other all being present at the same time have hereunto subscribed
 our names as witnesses — John F. Aldcock Esquire of Newland Terrace Kensington
 Solicitor — William John Robben's Esquire to the above.

On the 11th Novr 1890 Probate of this Will was granted to Fritham
 Ellis one of the Executors.

34. Last Will and Testament of Alexander John Ellis (1814-90),
 Probated November 11, 1890
 (Courtesy of Principal Probate Registry, London)

regret though there were those who recalled him as being at times hypercritical and a "man of irritating crotchets" but "never disagreeable in putting forward his views."⁵⁸ At the time of his father's death Tristram sent to the Society a great many of Ellis' mathematical manuscripts particularly those which treated further "Stigmatics," which Ellis believed would have been a valuable part of mathematics.

Ellis' relationship with the Academy had always been most cordial. It was noted by the staff that he had been a "gentleman of the old school whose dignified courtesy and consideration for the opinions and feelings of others was not always found among philologists."⁵⁹

Thomas Hallam, now seventy-four years old, more than anyone else, felt sorrowful that his old associate of so many years had died. Those letters which had passed between them--argumentative, witty, pettish, critical, and laudatory--had been a vital part of each day's affairs for so long. Hallam's sorrow was very deep, and in a quiet restrained line he wrote to Ellis' son: "I feel his removal very much."⁶⁰ As the chief contributor to Ellis' dialectal

⁵⁸"A.J. Ellis," Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society, 21 (1891), 458-59.

⁵⁹"A.J. Ellis," Academy, 33 (November 8, 1890), 420.

⁶⁰Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 38, fol. 165), Hallam to Tristram Ellis, November 4, 1890.

researches, he felt that a mainstay of his daily life had been taken away. Sadly, he wrote Tristram that his father had sent the thousands of letters to him filled with many details about the London scholarly world because it afforded him [Hallam] so much pleasure.

Towards the end of his life, however, Hallam began to feel increasing concern lest people did not properly acknowledge the precise part he had played in Ellis' dialect survey. For example, he wrote to Ambrose Pope, who was planning to compile a Staffordshire Glossary, that Ellis had based many of his observations on the Hallam Derbyshire contributions. Hallam's letter sounds querulous on this point, though he does acknowledge Ellis' recognition of this obligation.⁶¹

Another letter is in the same vein. He wrote with resignation to a friend in Much Wenlock (Shropshire) about his own part in the dialectal investigation. Hallam appears to have derived much comfort from recalling that Ellis had mentioned him in at least a hundred places in Early English Pronunciation. All of his correspondence at this time was mournful in tone, and he was obviously grieving over Ellis' death. Though their relationship had often been stormy, it had been extraordinarily close for two scholars who were

⁶¹Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fols. 309-12), Hallam to Ambrose Pope, June 1, 1895.

geographically far apart.⁶²

Hallam realized that the years of dialectal research with Ellis were of prime importance in the history of philology, and several years before he died he began to make provision for the disposition of the vast amount of the notes, dialect transcriptions, journals, and personal letters which had accumulated during his years of association with Alexander Ellis. Hallam expressed to Dr. Murray his own concerns about disposing of this material. The two men had actually never met, and when Hallam wrote of the imminence of his own death, Murray commented that he had always imagined him to be a younger man. Gracefully, he acknowledged to Hallam the importance of the materials. He, too, felt that the Ellis papers were valuable. The nineteenth century was drawing to a close, and Murray was despondently looking back at the past. In one of the most poignant remarks coming from that group of philological scholars, he lamented: "Alas that Mr. Ellis has left us; Sweet deserted us [went to Germany]; and who is left?"⁶³ Murray appears to be referring to the group of phoneticians who were prominent in London.

Hallam eventually decided that the dialectal materials should go to the Bodleian Library. Almost all the

⁶²Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 38, fol. 169), Ellis to W. Hammonds, June 24, 1891.

⁶³Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 240), Murray to Hallam, September 9, 1891.

papers which he bequeathed there were predominantly Ellis materials; and Anthony Mayhew, the Secretary of the English Dialect Society in 1894, along with Skeat and Wright, appreciated the significance of preserving this huge manuscript collection as a record of the scholarly investigations in regard to the English dialects. Mayhew wrote that they were all happy that Hallam's collection would be "safely garnered in the Bodleian."⁶⁴

In addition to making provision for his enormous collections, Hallam prudently decided to leave in his will \$500 towards the expenses of the English Dialect Dictionary. This was particularly welcomed by Joseph Wright, who also valued the preservation of the Hallam-Ellis materials and wrote to Hallam expressing his gratitude: "All future philologists will be indebted to your most munificent bequest."⁶⁵ Skeat also wrote Hallam that a printed record of his benefaction would be inserted either by dedicating to him a volume of the English Dialect Dictionary or in some other manner.⁶⁶ The news of Hallam's intentions was later to appear in the Sheffield Independent after Hallam's death.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 262), Mayhew to Hallam, March 14, 1894.

⁶⁵ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 264), Wright to Hallam, March 18, 1894.

⁶⁶ Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 33, fol. 268), Skeat to Hallam, March 20, 1894.

⁶⁷ Taylor Institution, Oxford University, Joseph Wright Papers, Clipping Services Notebooks, Sheffield Independent, September 14, 1895.

In conclusion let us examine the observations of several distinguished scholars concerning Ellis' contribution in philological and dialectal matters. Otto Jespersen was one of the scholars who carried on Ellis' work in phonetics. After he had taken his degree, he went to London, where he had the opportunity of meeting Ellis, Sweet, and Viëtor. He was part of the chain which links one scholar's investigations to those of another who follows. Niels Haislund wrote of Jespersen that he was Sweet's "dearest pupil."⁶⁸ Throughout his writings Sweet frequently acknowledged his own indebtedness to Alexander Ellis.

Jespersen viewed Early English Pronunciation as an inexhaustible mine of information, but principally for the phonetician rather than for the student of the history of the English language. He held the opinion that Ellis was the most learned linguist of his time as evidenced by the wealth of observations he made on the interrelationships of many different languages.⁶⁹

Joseph Wright regarded Ellis with deep respect and valued the contributions made by many people in connection with his own English Dialect Grammar. He chose, nevertheless, to acknowledge in a separate section of his work his

⁶⁸Niels Haislund, "Otto Jespersen," Englische Studien, 75 (1943), 273-83.

⁶⁹Otto Jespersen, "Zur Geschichte der Älteren Phonetik," in Linguistica: Selected Papers in English, French, and German (London: Allen and Unwin, 1933), p. 74.

indebtedness to the "monumental" investigation of A.J. Ellis.⁷⁰

Eugen Dieth, on the other hand, wrote that he viewed Ellis' dialect work as a "stupendous tragedy."⁷¹ Although so much of it is consulted by dialectologists, there are many who reject the information embodied in Early English Pronunciation as either inaccurate or wrong. Professor Dieth's censure of Ellis' study may be correct in many respects but today's students of the history of our language readily appreciate the breadth of his scholarship and the ambitious spirit which prompted him to undertake so complex an investigation.

Shortly after Ellis' death in 1890, his dialect researches became a source for further European phonetic studies. Fritz Franzmeyer of the University of Strassburg presented as his Inaugural-Dissertation a detailed study of the loss and addition of consonants in the English dialects by classifying all the examples which Ellis had provided in Part V. He contrasted them with similar examples which Wright provided in the English Dialect Dictionary.

⁷⁰ Joseph Wright, The English Dialect Grammar Comprising the Dialects of the Shetland and Orkney Islands and of Those Parts of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales Where English Is Habitually Spoken (Oxford: Henry Frowde, 1905), p. ix.

⁷¹ Eugen Dieth, "A New Survey of English Dialects," in Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association 32 (1946), 75.

This book is a systematic study which takes into consideration dissimilation and metathesis, but Franzmeyer offers no conclusions other than his own elaborate organization of the data found in Ellis and Wright.⁷²

Eduard Sievers (1850-1932), the distinguished German Professor of Philology at Jena, was especially indebted to Ellis' Early English Pronunciation because of Ellis' theory of transition-sounds or glides. Sievers indicated that his principal work, Introduction to the Phonology of the Indo-Germanic Languages, would have assumed a materially different form if he had not utilized Ellis' work and Bell's Visible Speech.⁷³

In reviewing Dieth and Orton's Questionnaire for a Linguistic Atlas of England, Raven I. McDavid, Jr. paid tribute to Ellis' work for being the basis of linguistic geographical distribution. Because the Ellis work, as well as Wright's English Dialect Grammar and his English Dialect Dictionary are uneven, in McDavid's judgment, the coverage has been an object of regret to scholars who have been

⁷²Fritz Franzmeyer, Studien über Konsonantismus und Vokalismus der Neuenglischen Dialekte auf Grund der Ellis'schen Listen und des Wright'schen Dialect Dictionary: Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde einer Hohen Philosophischen Fakultät der Kaiser-Wilhelms-Universität zur Strassburg (Strassburg: Du Mont-Schauberg, 1906).

⁷³Eduard Sievers, Grundzüge der Phonetik zur Einführung in das Studium der Lautlehre der Indogermanischen Sprachen. Zweite wesentlich Umgearbeitete und Vermehrte Auflage der "Grundzüge der Lautphysiologie" (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1881), p. v.

trying to ascertain the relationships between British and American speech.⁷⁴ On the other hand, the modern Survey of English Dialects encountered many difficulties similar to the Ellis survey with regard to the extent of the coverage of certain areas. There were, however, some who were satisfied that the Ellis dialect survey did provide adequate information for certain dialectal areas.⁷⁵

Several matters related to Ellis' Early English Pronunciation deserve attention before the conclusion of this present account of his investigations. There are many interesting derivative works which are similar studies. For example, the numerous folio volumes comprising Dr. G.A. Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India (1927), analyzing the dialects of the political entities of India and the States of Hyderabad, Mysore, and Madras, bear a direct relationship with Ellis' work. Their pages evoke a picture of Imperial India, whose affairs were familiar to Ellis when he served as President of the Philological Society and had occasion to deal with the Royal Asiatic Society concerning the tongues of the subcontinent. In 1886 when Grierson described his ambitious plan to map the languages before the Oriental Congress meeting in Vienna, Ellis had almost completed the

⁷⁴ Raven I. McDavid, Jr., rev. of A Questionnaire for a Linguistic Atlas of England, by Eugen Dieth and Harold Orton, JEGP, 52 (1953), 563.

⁷⁵ Raven I. McDavid, "Two Studies of Dialects of English," in Studies in Honour of Harold Orton on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday, ed. by Stanley Ellis

bulk of the investigation for Part V on the English dialects. Grierson's undertaking was comprehensive and extraordinarily difficult because, like Ellis, he had to rely upon inadequate informants. He had to spend many a cold evening chatting over campfires with "village greybeards or listening to village bards."⁷⁶ Like Ellis, Grierson sent out printed questionnaires to gain information for determining dialectal boundaries. The magnitude of the task is apparent upon examining the folios, and though Grierson had the advantage of the resources of recording equipment, it is in the same inquiring spirit as had impelled Ellis to undertake the mapping of another group of dialects with so much courage and optimism.

Of course, many learned journals marked the appearance of Wright's English Dialect Dictionary when it was completed in 1905. The German serials commented on the publication of the work, and Professor Arnold Schröder writing for the Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung described the part Ellis' scholarship and dialect studies had played towards the attainment of Wright's goal. He also recognized Karl Luick's Untersuchungen zur Englischen Lautgeschichte

(Leeds Studies in English, Vol. II, 1968), University of Leeds, School of English, 1969, p. 24.

⁷⁶George Abraham Grierson, Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. 1, Part 1, Introductory, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publications Branch, 1927, p. 197.

as the "erste reife Frucht" of Ellis' efforts.⁷⁷

Among contemporary phoneticians who have considered the contributions of Ellis, Professor David Abercrombie of the University of Edinburgh has regarded him, along with A.M. Bell, as one of the "founders of the flourishing English School of Phonetics." He emphasizes that "All modern phonetic transcription derives from the work of Pitman and Ellis."⁷⁸

⁷⁷Arnold Schröder, "Die Vollendung des Englischen Dialektwörterbuches," Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung, October 13, 1905, No. 237, pp. 83-84.

⁷⁸David Abercrombie, "Isaac Pitman," in Studies in Phonetics and Linguistics (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 106-7.

CHAPTER XVIII

ENGAGING IN THREE COMPLEMENTARY INQUIRIES UNDERTAKEN IN CONNECTION WITH COMPILING EARLY ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Three specialized linguistic studies which Ellis made during the course of his work on Early English Pronunciation are interesting because they illustrate the exhaustive treatment he gave to minor sub-studies. The projects which merit closer examination are his study of accent and quantity, the reconstruction of the variants of the Yorkshire sheep-scoring system, and a consideration of Pennsylvania Dutch as an analogue of Chaucerian language. Ellis' outstanding proficiency in foreign languages enabled him to formulate theories regarding the determination of accentuation in Indo-European languages. Familiarity with the body of work being carried out by the philologists of the period led Ellis to substantiate his own views on the complex topic. In connection with his dialectal survey, he was also prompted to trace at considerable length the archaic forms of a rural counting system, which already had become extinct during his own time. Such an investigation led to many contacts with such distinguished scholars as George Leland and Henry Bradley as well as with many obscure

museum assistants and unknown clergymen. The work on the score represents the examination of a very minor item through painstaking scholarly exploration. The third of the specialized studies which Ellis conducted derives from his efforts to reconstruct fourteenth century sounds. Considering Pennsylvania Dutch as an example of a language which exhibits sound changes in transition, Ellis relied upon the assistance of the American scholar, Samuel Halderman, and a group of local amateur specialists to provide information about the spoken and printed forms of that dialect. Ellis' scholarly work during the twenty year period when he was preparing Early English Pronunciation presents a confusing succession of seemingly unrelated activities which obscure that principal work which was to be his general statement about English pronunciation. There was so much he wanted to secure for all time on paper, and he easily put aside some of the major sections of his philological work, for it required little excuse to be distracted from the gigantic undertaking. He was fortunate in possessing the ability to deal simultaneously with several demanding technical subjects without losing sight of the larger issues at hand. We shall now consider each of the three special studies in turn in order to understand the range of his interests regarding human speech.

Among the related phonetic investigations which Ellis pursued was the analysis of the nature of quantity

and pitch in various European languages. He frequently gave his attention to the subject during the years he was struggling with Early English Pronunciation. He believed that this aspect of phonetics required careful consideration and several times put aside his historical philology to study the problem afresh. Ellis' first treatment of the topic occurred in 1871 when he addressed the Philological Society.¹ It is, however, interesting to note that during the 1840's when Ellis had been preparing his Ethnical Alphabet in connection with his Essentials of Phonetics, he had studied many East European tongues and continued his studies during the following years. From time to time, Ellis reported that he had considered ways of specifying French accentuation but had abandoned the problem. He concluded that the accent of that language was indifferent, varying according to the speaker's feeling. Next, Ellis, in his remarks to the Philological Society, reviewed various stress features of other European languages. He observed that the nature of accent between Russian and Servian was different, whereas Bohemian accent occurred on the first syllable and Polish accent occurred on the antepenult. Ellis then proceeded to discuss the difficulties attendant on trying to ascertain in Spanish and Italian which part of the word was accented.

¹"Philological Society," Athenaeum, May 27, 1871, p. 659.

Shifting to an illustration of quantity, Ellis attempted to enlighten the audience by repeating certain words in monotones over and over within a period of five seconds in order to illustrate length. The remainder of the program appears to have been a collection of illustrations which Ellis selected from Anacreon and read in modern Greek sounds with attention to the proper quantity. Ellis' point appears to be that school Greek is wrong, and that modern Greek is closer to Anacreon's pronunciation.

During 1871 Ellis had been listening closely to the accents of French words in the nineteen visits he made to the Comédie Française, which had been performing in London. He began seriously to consider the existence of an accented syllable in the French word and wrote to one correspondent about two possible types: "loudness and elevation of pitch."² However, he still had not settled the problem of accent to his own satisfaction in spite of the French actors' wonderful delivery and superb diction.

In 1873 Professor F.C. Donders of Utrecht, President of the Academy of Sciences at Amsterdam, along with Sir Charles Wheatstone, sent Ellis several phonautographic drawings which Ellis displayed before the Philological Society on February 7, 1873, when he delivered his paper

²Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, July 10, 1871.

"On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis."³ Scott and Koenig's device schematically tried to show the different vowels at varying pitches. This attempt to represent vibrations by using a cylinder, stylus, and paper attracted much interest. The phonautograph, however, did not prove adequate to settle what Ellis called the "pitch glides," "force glides," and "form glides" which are introduced between vowels in diphthongs and vowels and consonants in syllables. Ellis made it clear that speech sounds melted into one another because some of the forms were not sustained for more than a fraction of a second of sound. He defined these glides as the sound changes heard during these transitions. He felt that the phonautograph with its quill for scratching off lamp black was unsatisfactory because it required a degree of force greater than the "delicate transmissive apparatus of the internal ear" to set it in action.⁴

Ellis' studies on accent and pitch interested Henry Sweet, but the latter disagreed with Bell and Ellis in regard to syllabification. Sweet believed that the determination of the syllable depends on the force with which sounds are pronounced rather than on the artificial

³A.J. Ellis, "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-74), pp. 113-64.

⁴Ibid., pp. 120-21.

syllabification of spelling books, in which each vowel stands for a syllable. Sweet and Ellis differed on their defining glides.⁵

In February 1874, Ellis had heard Charles Cassal, Professor of French at University College (London), deliver a paper setting forth his theories on French tonic accent. Ellis wrote his friend Meyer in Paris that he did not agree with the analysis.⁶ Charles Cassal, unlike Ellis, believed that it was indeed possible to determine the location of the French accent and could not accept Ellis' view that it was one of the most intricate of the many problems connected with phonetics.⁷ Cassal, however, agreed that persons not thoroughly conversant with a language had to be excluded as judges of the placement of the accent. Accordingly, Cassal rejected the views of those foreigners who had tried to offer testimony on the topic, particularly the German scholars. Cassal set about establishing convincing proof, via long lists of words, that a tonic accent does indeed exist in French. He presented a complex correlation between pitch in French words and the location of the accent.

⁵Henry Sweet, "Words, Logic, and Grammar," Transactions of the Philological Society (1875-76), p. 11.

⁶Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 16, 1874.

⁷Charles Cassal, "The Tonic Accent in Modern French," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-74), pp. 260-61.

Ellis still spent hours in writing long analyses of French accent to Paul Meyer in Paris. Ellis stated that he was not satisfied with his own conclusions regarding pitch and force in French, and he was determined to have "un compte exact de ce q'on entend par un accent tonique."⁸ Because the Latin accent had been treated differently in Spain, Portugal, and France, and was, as he thought, "transplanted" to Germany and England, he could not see how one could describe Latin's accent when its descendants' accents were still so unclear. His remarks to Meyer were discouraging. In discussing the fact that Frenchmen scarcely ever put a strong accent on the last syllable of an English word which possesses one in an Englishman's speech, Ellis gloomily told Meyer that discussions of accentuation would never be settled by French and English authorities until such a strange habit was explained.

Ellis was also interested in pitch as it was employed in languages. His views were examined by William Dwight Whitney of Yale, whose discussion of the possible sounds of the Sanscrit tones rejected the traditional parallelism with the Greek accent and supported retention of the Indian names. Ellis had asserted his views on paper "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis." The two scholars held

⁸Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits, Ellis to Meyer, February 24, 1874.

widely differing opinions of the interpretation of the Hindu accounts of tone.⁹

At this time Ellis frequently visited Furnivall, who was playing host to an unidentified Swedish chemist as well as the Swedish Doctors Högland, Widholm, and Erdmann. Henry Sweet was present at the meetings with Ellis, and the two scholars would spend many hours reviewing all the Swedish sounds. Ellis took careful note of the fact that in Swedish the voice does not glide through so large an interval as it does in certain Greek words.¹⁰ He likewise observed that in Icelandic there is no trace left of Danish or Norwegian accent.¹¹

In 1876 Ellis' enthusiasm for analyzing accent and pitch was still undiminished. He was pleased to learn that Professor Storm of Oslo was planning to come from Norway for a London visit. Ellis invited him to his home to discuss his own latest notions about Latin and Greek accent. Ellis descended sufficiently from his lofty academic heights in his letter to provide this distinguished Scandinavian scholar with the most complicated directions (complete with map) for taking the underground and tram to his home.

⁹William Dwight Whitney, Oriental and Linguistic Studies, p. 325.

¹⁰Bodleian Library, Miscellaneous Manuscripts: Letters (fol. 589), Henry Sweet to Gudbrand Vigfússon, December 11, 1872.

¹¹Ellis, Dioysian Pronunciation, p. 16.

Later, in 1879, Ellis learned that Henry Sweet had been observing to people that both he and Ellis had accepted Charles Cassal's views regarding the French accent. With indignation Ellis informed Storm that his paper "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Pitch" had been delivered before the Philological Society prior to Cassal's paper. The former wrote, "This will show that Sweet was in error so far as I was concerned!!"¹² Before presenting his paper, Ellis wrote that he had spent time with Henry Nicol and Gaston Paris, and they had verified French accent from M. Paris' reading a selection from Molière's Le Misanthrope; furthermore, Nicol checked Ellis' system of marking the stresses always on the last syllable. Ellis was incensed that anyone, particularly Sweet, would state that Cassal's ideas had convinced him [Ellis] to change. With asperity he wrote, "I always considered that he confirmed me!"¹³ In this same letter to Storm, Ellis wrote that it afforded him much satisfaction to know of Paul Meyer's "horreur" [sic] regarding the Cassal article on the French accent. Ellis agreed with Meyer, who had likewise stated that the Philological Society "se blâmera" for supporting such publications. Ellis calmed himself finally and several

¹²University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, August 7, 1876.

¹³University of Oslo, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Storm, June 14, 1879.

times exclaimed in his letter, "Think of that!!!"

In addition to his concerns about the tonic accent in French and Swedish, Ellis turned his attention to the relations between certain long vowels and diphthongs. Chapter IV of Early English Pronunciation served at this time as the foundation for E.L. Brandreth's contribution on what he called "vowel intensification."¹⁴ It is a term which appears to describe a sound change, for according to Brandreth, it is the "substitution of a stronger vowel sound for a weaker sound of a different quality; thus i is intensified, if e or ai are substituted, u by the substitution of o or au." In referring to strong stress of accent, Brandreth said in his letter that there is a loss or weakening of an adjoining syllable, and thus the word is compensated in one syllable for the loss sustained in another. Ellis had asserted that many words with long i or long u had been pronounced in the fourteenth century as simple vowels as in French ire, doute, but he had not accounted for vowel intensification occurring in Dutch, German, English, and Sanscrit although he had recognized the historical changes of the English vowels i and u into diphthongs. Brandreth makes reference to Ellis' comments on the guna changes in Sanscrit,

¹⁴E.L. Brandreth, "On Vowel Intensification, Especially with Reference to the Instances of It in the English Language," Transactions of the Philological Society (1873-74), p. 277.

(a word signifying modification and increase) which are attributed to the accent or stress.¹⁵ The former believed that the changes which historically took place in Dutch, German, and other languages are analogous to the Sanscrit ones and that if one can ascertain the causes of the vowel intensification in Sanscrit, it would be possible to assign such causes in other languages. On the other hand, Brandreth disputed Ellis' belief that the u in words like pure and cure in Chaucer's time had sounded like the modern French u until the beginning of the seventeenth century. Brandreth also repeated Max Müller's conviction that English lips could not make the French u clearly.¹⁶ Ellis later planned to refute Brandreth's views on the effect of stress on vowel intensification in Part VI of Early English Pronunciation.

There are matters of vocabulary, semantics, and folk culture presented, by the way, in the phonetic descriptions throughout the pages of Early English Pronunciation. Behind some of the obscure illustrations lies a fascinating investigation undertaken in connection with establishing a theory. The extensive correspondence shows us the meticulous care which Ellis took in order to trace each possible source of information which could substantiate his views. Though a

¹⁵Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 295.

particular piece of scholarly work may seem to be of minor significance in relation to the larger problems which Ellis attempted to resolve, he devoted to it the same planning and attention to detail as he was wont to do.

For example, on page xix in the "Preliminary Matter" of Part III, Ellis sets out "Examples of Universal Glossic." The last paragraph presents a very curious numbering system for counting the herds of sheep in the Yorkshire Dales. Using the term "score", Ellis traced the system of counting up to 20 in places so far apart and so differently inhabited as the North of Yorkshire and the formerly Indian part of Maine. The first ten numbers of the score have different names which vary considerably in the many versions which Ellis collected. The counting after 10 proceeds by forms equivalent to $1 + 10$, $2 + 10$, $3 + 10$, $4 + 10$. Generally there is a new word for 15, and the count proceeds by $1 + 15$, etc., and often there is a new word for 20. There are some interesting variations for the compounds of 15 among the Celtic languages. Ellis' search for information on the numerals led him to examine Welsh, Cornish, Breton, Gaelic and Manx sources among others. Behind the twenty numbers which Ellis lists and transliterates into the phonetic system he had devised for provincial glossaries is an unusual investigation which brought him in contact with humble rural people as well as with some of the distinguished

scholars of Europe. This study took place during the period when Part IV was causing him much anxiety.

Ellis had first heard the system from his wife's niece, a lady who had been living in Swaledale, Yorkshire, for more than thirty years. It may be recalled that Ellis had married Ann Chagtor of Yorkshire. The eminent authority on North American Indian languages, J. Hammond Trumbull, had come upon Ellis' notes about the score in the "Preliminary Matter" in Part III and told him of a similar system of counting among the Wawenoc Indians, an extinct tribe in Maine. Ellis' interest was aroused, and he set about collecting more than thirty versions from Westmorland, North Lancashire, Durham, Northumberland, Roxburghshire, Yorkshire, as well as from reports of the North American Indians.

Trumbull learned that Ellis had written more than a dozen letters of inquiry for additional information. The American was surprised that they shared a mutual interest in spite of the great distance which separated them.¹⁷ Ellis now reported to Trumbull an additional set of variants which his wife, originally from Wensleydale, recalled hearing her aunt employ about fifty years before that time.

Ellis was constantly aware of the evanescence of the greater part of folk speech and wrote down any curious

¹⁷Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, March 18, 1871.

provincialisms which came his way. Unfortunately, Mrs. Ellis' niece did not remember her original source and could only recall the "Scotch" method of counting sheep.¹⁸ This recurring failure of dialectal informants to secure the names of older sources whom they encountered was an ever-present exasperation to Ellis throughout his searches.

The Ellis correspondence is wonderfully rich in interesting details which for lack of space Ellis was obliged to omit in his publications. He wrote to Trumbull about attending a meeting at the College of Preceptors on March 8, 1871, when he had the good fortune to meet a gentleman who had actually heard a farmer use the peculiar system of counting on an East Riding farm owned by Lord Faversham. He advised Ellis to verify the scoring in the Pagmoor Almanack, an East Yorkshire publication, but this suggestion yielded no success. Ellis, however, was able to secure more variants from the same informant, making allowances for errors resulting from poor memory and the need for haste.

This tantalizing verification of the actual existence of the Yorkshire score in his own time prompted Ellis immediately to write to another friend in Leeds, who replied by sending him part of her servant's scoring system.¹⁹ He

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid. The reported numbers, from 1-14, were yan, te-an, tethery, nethery, pip, haytery, slatery, horny, corny, yandid, te-andik, tetherdik, netherdik. Ellis was puzzled by the form jiggit for 20 because 21 was yan-bumfit.

was interested in Trumbull's Indian system and wrote to Connecticut requesting more details. Ellis advanced a theory that the origin of the enumerative system was Scotch, i.e., Scotch-Gaelic, and arose from the usage of Gaelic drovers. He ventured a guess that the terms had made their way into Yorkshire, but he believed that the true source of the score possibly lay in Cumberland and Westmorland. Nothing seemed to daunt Ellis in his search, and he prepared to scour by correspondence the Lake regions.²⁰

Ellis expressed to Trumbull his disappointment in not securing in time for the American Philological Society's meeting his Cumberland version. Ellis again tried to elicit more information from his wife's niece, who was once more visiting the family from Yorkshire. He wrote Trumbull that he positively did not agree with those Yorkshire informants who were determined to call it Scotch since he was convinced that it resembled the Welsh language. Ellis firmly believed in the existence somewhere of a Cumberland version as a "connecting link."²¹

On February 6, 1874 Ellis spoke informally before the Philological Society on the Yorkshire sheep-scoring system. He had come to the rescue of the program that

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, July 10, 1871.

evening and spoke on that topic because of the scheduled speaker's illness. Trumbull was sent a page proof of Ellis' paper. In his remarks Ellis elaborated his theory of the Welsh origin of the Yorkshire numerals.²² He also graciously acknowledged his debt to Trumbull for the North American Indian discoveries "without which I should not have attended further to X." [i.e., 10]²³

Ellis dredged up every possible clue to the scoring system and did not hesitate to communicate with the most unlikely people. For example, versions of the sheep-score arrived from the father-in-law of his former governess via her husband as well as from the sister-in-law of Mrs. Ellis' niece! This search must have necessitated an enormous amount of industry by way of writing lengthy explanations to people who might know variants.²⁴

Trumbull was elated at receiving from Ellis yet another account of a new version of American Indian counting which had been supplied by an American who was visiting the British Museum. Some of the forms were very similar to those found in England. He had repeated it to Mr. Jenner of the Museum's staff. Ellis realized the value of maintaining the acquaintance of all persons who could be of assistance

²²Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, February 7, 1874.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

to him in a wide variety of interests. Jenner reported to Ellis that the unknown gentleman did not know any Welsh, and his native American mother from Cincinnati had learned the numerals from Indian hunters.²⁵

Most characteristic of Ellis' method of considering the problem was his thoroughness. In connection with his searches for the origin of the peculiar counting system in the north of Britain, in 1876 he inquired of the foremost authority on Gypsy lore, George Leland, whether in his travels he had met with the curious system of counting by "fives in a Welsh fashion," as he called it.²⁶ Ellis subtly conveyed to Leland his own doubts, but he did not want to rule out the validity of other possible forms.

In a following letter to Leland, Ellis commented on Trumbull's failure to explain the origin of the numerals he had found in Wawenoc. Ellis assured Leland that the origin of the Indian numbers was not Welsh but rather "ancient Cambrian" and noted the coincidence of finding the forms in both Old York and New York.²⁷

²⁵Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, November 28, 1875.

²⁶British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Leland Papers, Add. MSS 37, 173, fol. 456, Ellis to Leland, June 17, 1876.

²⁷British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Leland Papers, Add. MSS 37, 173, fol. 458, Ellis to Leland, June 21, 1876.

By 1877 Ellis had settled the matter in his own mind by titling his investigation the "Anglo-Celtic Score." Other scholars and antiquarians became interested and proceeded to send to Ellis additional versions of the score. By March he had now acquired a total of forty-two versions, including several which had arrived from J.G. Goodchild of York, who was later to work with him on the dialect survey on the north of England. Additional information arrived for the village of Torver from Canon Ellwood, the President of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society. Ellis had sent his manuscript of the "Anglo-Celtic Score" to that group to be read at its meeting because he believed that the score was a topic which would be of particular interest to its members.²⁸

The Reverend Mr. Ellwood of Torver Rectory, Coniston (Lancashire) introduced the topic of sheep-scoring at a meeting of his group in Furness on August 16, 1877, and Isaac Taylor, Rector of Settrington, near New Malton (Yorkshire) generously provided additional versions in time for Ellis to include them in his report to the Philological Society. This would be amplified with his [Ellis'] own observations and notes.²⁹

²⁸Trinity College (Hartford), Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Trumbull, March 12, 1877.

²⁹A.J. Ellis, "The Anglo-Cymric Score," Transactions of the Philological Society (1877-78), pp. 316-20.

At about this time the Reverend Isaac Taylor received a curious set of ancient numerals which seemed to be related to Welsh numerals. They, too, had been employed in counting sheep and cattle, and an old woman in Rathmell, near Settle, still used them for counting her knitting stitches. Taylor discussed their possible origin in a letter to the Athenaeum.³⁰ When Ellis read about this report, he promptly responded to Taylor's conjectures about the origin of the numerals in the Cymric branch of the Celtic languages. He stated that this Yorkshire specimen already existed in print, noting that Taylor's version had been derived from the same source as his own. He observed that Canon Ellwood of Torver Rectory, Coniston, had also secured the peculiar numerals. The discussion about the sheep-score began to center on the question of who had discovered certain versions first rather than on the origin of the score. Closing the matter, Ellis wrote that the Reverend Isaac Taylor was clearly in error in supposing that the subject had not been discussed in print.³¹

Henry Bradley, who later succeeded Murray as Editor of the Philological Society's Dictionary, entered the spirited discussion several days later, indicating that he,

³⁰Isaac Taylor, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, September 15, 1877, p. 338.

³¹A.J. Ellis, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, September 22, 1877, p. 371.

too, had arranged for a friend to repeat to him about a year earlier the strange numerals. They had been recited by an old soldier in Huddersfield. Bradley believed that their origin was ancient British rather than Welsh. He proceeded to compare his own version with those of Ellis and Taylor.³²

From Settrington Rectory in Yorkshire, Taylor sharply responded to Ellis' letter which had appeared in the Athenaeum and remarked that it was improper to ascribe to him blame for having included certain versions of the score which contained some English words in their forms. Taylor was unwilling to state his own views on the "Kymric affinities" of the numerals.³³

In a conciliatory manner, the Reverend Mr. Ellwood entered the heated Athenaeum dispute and suggested that the true solution could be found in some secluded valley in the Lake country. However, he reported that so far he had had no success in finding an explanation in the Annandale area suggested to him by Ellis.³⁴

Among Victorian scholars there existed strong feelings of mutual respect and courtesy. From America there

³²Henry Bradley, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, September 29, 1877, pp. 402-3.

³³Isaac Taylor, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, October 6, 1877, p. 433.

³⁴T.E. Ellwood, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, October 6, 1877, p. 433.

came a letter to the Athenaeum from Trumbull, setting forth his theory on the Indian counting system in which he advanced the idea that the New England colonists had probably used the numerals with the Indians when counting fish and beaver skins. He had taken special pains to delay printing his earlier 1871 paper on the score until Ellis had been able to publish his own findings.³⁵

On December 6, 1877, prior to his delivery of the paper on the sheep-score, Ellis wrote to Hallam, who continually served as his sounding board, that he did not quite approve of the views which Isaac Taylor held on the matter, and he was especially critical of the habit that Taylor had of referring to the score as the "Ancient British Numerals."³⁶

Ellis presented his paper before the Philological Society on December 7, 1877 with forty-four versions of the score, in addition to the seven American Indian ones which he had been able to collect. The title was changed to the "Anglo-Cymric Score." He could not satisfactorily account for the existence of the numerals in England any more than he could for their appearance in America.³⁷

³⁵J. Hammond Trumbull, "The Ancient British Numerals," Athenaeum, November 24, 1877, p. 662.

³⁶Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 10, fol. 360), Ellis to Hallam, December 6, 1877.

³⁷"Philological Society," Athenaeum, December 15, 1877, p. 777.

Ellis came to the conclusion in his speech that the score possessed no particular interest as the discovery of a lost system of numerals in an unknown language; however, as an illustration of the alteration of words which had been passing among peoples without being fixed in writing, it served as a salient item of philological interest.³⁸ In spite of the comprehensiveness of Ellis' paper, no one has yet definitively explained the sheep-score.

A recent study, however, has briefly looked at the question. Michael Barry came across the score in the Lake District in 1968 and made a few general observations concerning its possible significance. He gives scant attention to Ellis' full study although he does point out that the nineteenth century scholar was of the opinion that most of the informants were not sure of the verbal details of the score as well as the fact that even by 1825, when Ellis was himself a boy, the numerals were not widely used. It would therefore appear that the score has not completely died out even now.³⁹

We shall now examine a third project which Ellis undertook in connection with the investigations for Early English Pronunciation. He never hesitated about becoming

³⁸ Minutes of the Meetings of the Philological Society, December 7, 1877.

³⁹ Michael Barry, "The Yorkshire Sheep-scoring Numerals," Journal of the Lakeland Dialect Society, No. 30 (1968), p. 11.

involved in a lengthy study which could shed light on his larger work. During 1869 and 1870 he worked at analyzing an unusual American dialect which, in his opinion, was "an exact analogy to Chaucer's English."⁴⁰ In those parts of Pennsylvania--the 'Pennsylvania Dutch' districts--where German and English have mingled in a jargon peculiar to itself, German turns of expression are frequently found in the English spoken there.⁴¹ Ellis believed that Pennsylvania German or Pennsylvania Dutch, as he interchangeably called the language, enabled the reader of Part III to form an idea of a mixed type of living speech easily examined in modern times. This dialect, a kind of degraded High German, was spoken by the immigrants from the Palatinate of the Rhine and Switzerland who settled in parts of Pennsylvania and Ohio.⁴²

Ellis had learned of this dialect from his friend, Samuel Haldeman, who later became Professor of Comparative Philology at the University of Pennsylvania. Haldeman had come from Columbia, Pennsylvania, where he had been familiar with the dialect since childhood. He had sent Ellis a reprint of some satirical letters by E.H. Rauch entitled

⁴⁰Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 653.

⁴¹Albert C. Baugh, A History of the English Language (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), p. 123.

⁴²Ellis, Early English Pronunciation, III, p. 653.

Pennsylvanish Deitsh! De Breefa fum Pit Schwefflebrener
um de Bevv, si Fraw, fun Schliffletown on der Drucker fum
"Father Abraham" (Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1868).⁴³ Ellis promptly requested Haldeman to prepare a paper on this speech for the Philological Society, which Ellis planned to deliver for him. Ellis believed that the subject was of sufficient interest to be brought before the Society.⁴⁴

The paper was substantial enough to publish, but inasmuch as the Philological Society's resources were practically exhausted, Haldeman was obliged to draw upon his own financial assets to underwrite the publication expenses of his study of the dialect. Ellis, however, agreed to add any other observations which might occur to him.⁴⁵ Haldeman had implicit faith in Ellis' scholarly acumen.

In his introduction to Haldeman's work on this type of living speech, Ellis regretted the customary scholarly emphasis on classical languages, which could not be pronounced properly because all attempts at determining the sounds

⁴³"Pennsylvania German! The Letters of Pete Schweflebrener and Barbara, His Wife, from Schliffletown to the Printer of Father Abraham."

⁴⁴A.J. Ellis, "Notice" in Pennsylvania Dutch, a Dialect of South German with an Infusion of English, by Samuel Haldeman (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Reformed Church Board, 1872), p. v.

⁴⁵University of Pennsylvania, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Haldeman, July 5, 1869.

of such languages were strictly conjectural. Ellis felt confident that such a study as had been made by Haldeman was particularly valuable. He wrote, "We cannot learn life by studying fossils alone!"⁴⁶

Ellis' endorsement of Haldeman's efforts in writing a book on Pennsylvania Dutch resulted in several unforeseen developments. A friend of Haldeman's, the Reverend Dr. Mombert of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, also became interested in Pennsylvania Dutch and took it upon himself to write to Ellis, indicating that since there were already so many little pamphlets and booklets written in the dialect, he would willingly send a study with High German and English translations along with etymological notes. He urged Ellis to secure for him the support of the Philological Society in order to publish his study. Ellis forwarded Mombert's request to the Honourable Secretary, F.J. Furnivall, who handled this kind of situation. Ellis realized that it was completely out of the question for the Society to sponsor or publish two such specialized studies as those of Messrs. Haldeman and Mombert. He decided to let the two Americans carry out their studies on their own. Seeking Furnivall's advice with regard to this rather awkward situation, Ellis awaited the outcome.⁴⁷ Financial matters eventually

⁴⁶Ellis, "Notice" in Pennsylvania Dutch, p. vi.

⁴⁷Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

determined the matter, and the Reverend Dr. Mombert no longer contacted the scholars in England. Haldeman finally bore the entire expense for his study with no help from the impoverished Philological Society.

Ellis advised Haldeman that after receiving the paper, he had indeed made numerous important changes and had provided some other minor interpolations which had occurred. His attempts at getting the busy Professor Thomas Hewitt Key, the distinguished Latinist, also to check the Haldeman essay proved unsuccessful, and he found that he had to do all the revision himself.⁴⁸ Ellis was very confident of his own ability to re-work some details in Haldeman's study without doing harm to the original.

On June 3, 1870 Ellis presented Haldeman's original paper on Pennsylvania Dutch before the Philological Society. He included in it a number of delightful anecdotes for illustrating the dialect (which indeed are today still characteristic of the region). Haldeman's paper considered the part which the newspapers in Pennsylvania Dutch played in allowing readers in several parts of the United States to see material published in the dialect. Haldeman's study was exactly the kind of investigation which Ellis valued because it treated a topic which had both historical and

⁴⁸ Ellis, "Notice" in Haldeman's Pennsylvania Dutch, p. vii.

contemporary interest.⁴⁹

For the selection in Part III of Early English Pronunciation which Ellis later chose for illustrating the dialect, he printed one of Rauch's fictional letters from the weekly newspaper "Father Abraham" (a title referring to Abraham Lincoln). Haldeman provided Ellis with a transliteration of the selection into Palaeotype because Rauch's orthography was so peculiar for indicating the sounds of the dialect. Ellis then added two translations: High German and English.

This remarkable analogy between the weakening German with its mixture of English and Chaucer's decayed Anglo-Saxon with its mixture of Norman was of paramount importance to Ellis, because, in his view, it provided a modern instance of the way in which the English language had been built. Pennsylvania Dutch caught a language in the act of mixing with a neighboring language.⁵⁰

⁴⁹"Philological Society," Athenaeum, June 11, 1870.

⁵⁰Huntington Library, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to Furnivall, May 23, 1869.

CHAPTER XIX

A CONSIDERATION OF ELLIS' RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND PERSONALITY

From his earliest days as a Cambridge student, Ellis held pronounced views on philosophy and religion. His scientific bent welcomed any opportunity to express his own distinctive conceptions of ethics and organized religion. As an enthusiastic proponent of Auguste Comte's philosophy of religion, Ellis was held in the highest repute among the religious non-conformists of nineteenth century London. His religious convictions were set forth at length in a number of sermons and tracts which reflect the same logical thinking characteristic of his historical and scientific writings. Ellis showed himself capable of sustained philosophical thought. At the same time, his correspondence reflects an attractive personality. A contemporary memoir by a family friend delineates him with evident affection. Let us examine the personality behind the scholarly achievements in order to perceive an additional dimension to the intellectual career of the distinguished philologist and scientist.

There are relatively few references throughout Ellis' writings to his religious views other than the printed

discourses which were derived from the sermons he delivered at South Place Chapel, and his correspondence contains very few allusions to his philosophical and religious convictions. During his years of association with Isaac Pitman he did publish many phonotypic booklets of Biblical paraphrases as well as the phonotypic version of the New Testament. His publications along these lines indicate that he was supportive of religious texts during the 1840's, if only for educational purposes; but as will be shown here, he dismissed completely any anthropomorphic notions of Divinity.¹

Ellis' attitudes towards religion were clearly established during the student years at Cambridge. In the 1830's the law of Cambridge University required all students to declare themselves for the Established Church and to subscribe to the spiritual supremacy of the Sovereign as the Governor of the Church. When Ellis arrived at Cambridge, one of the most discussed problems in the universities was the controversy over admitting dissenters to degrees. Connop Thirwall, an officer of Trinity College, denied the essentially religious character of the College. He criticized the compulsory attendance policy of the institution and quarrelled bitterly with the Master regarding the nature

¹A.J. Ellis, Speculation: A Discourse Preceded by "Absolute Relativity"; A Meditation Delivered at South Place Chapel, Sunday 16th January, 1876, with the Readings and the Author's Hymns Used on That Occasion (London: South Place Chapel, 1876), p. 42.

and purpose of an English university. His remarks are of much interest as they bear on Ellis: "What then is the title and definition of an English University? Call them [universities], if you will, as they call themselves 'seminaries of sound learning and religious education.' Call them even, as they are called by the Dissenters, 'National seminaries of Education'."²

During Ellis' student days the attendance at Chapel was perfunctory, and the young men were desirous that the service be very brief. There were ingenious efforts to circumvent the University's attempts to maintain the unsettled religious climate of student life at that time. Ellis was at Trinity during the heated controversy over the required attendance at Chapel five times a week. The statutes of the University were not revised until 1844, seven years after Ellis had received his degree. Among other things which were abolished was the debated compulsory Chapel attendance. Ellis' religious acts perhaps caused him difficulties at Cambridge and hindered recognition because of institutional rules and religious beliefs. He had to wait until 1890, fifty-three years after he was graduated, to attain any special honors from his alma mater.

²Robert Robson, "Trinity College in the Age of Peel," quoted in his Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in Honour of George Kitson Clark (London: Bell, 1967), p. 330.

He was of the opinion that divinity lectures, sermons, church attendance, translating the Greek Testament, and learning catechisms by heart were only appeals to the intellect rather than to the feelings. In his two long contributions on education in the Phonetic Journal, he states, "As there are 'many mansions' in heaven, let us in charity hope that there are many roads leading to them, and trust that the heart of God is wider than the heart of man."³ Ellis appears to have been unwilling to accept the obligations of formal church from his earliest years and was always critical of doctrinal theology. Among the early papers extant from the mid-1830's when he studied at Cambridge, there exists one in which he makes reference to his refusal to oblige an uncle, Mr. Sharpe, who had requested him to stand as a baptismal sponsor.⁴

As a young man Ellis became interested in the writings of Auguste Comte (1798-1857), whose views on religion were in consonance with his own on matters of ethics and theology. He first learned of Comte in 1834 as a private tutor to a former Eton boy of his acquaintance whom he was assisting in Paris. While residing there Ellis acquired the

³A.J. Ellis, "The Problem of Education," Phonetic Journal, 7 (April 1848), 127.

⁴Cambridge University Library, Manuscript Collections, Add. MSS 6145, Ellis Papers: Miscellaneous.

first volume of Positive Philosophy.⁵ The orthodox disciples of the French philosopher were an interesting group in the Victorian period. They advocated an approach to religion which held much appeal to the scientifically inclined person at a time when science was in the avant-garde of all that was termed progressive. In England the Positivist philosophy was accepted by some highly intelligent writers like John Stuart Mill and George Eliot because Comte's philosophic system provided the "moral sanction for the reconstruction of Europe after the Revolution."⁶ In Comte's writings, however, there were many excesses and eccentricities which repelled people of the calibre of Mill and Eliot, with the result that the Religion of Humanity lost its appeal for many of its adherents.

Ellis was partial to the practical aspects of Positivism, and his connections with Comte, as well as with the South Place Chapel, constitute a part of the story of the movement among its English disciples. To a great extent Ellis was sympathetic with Comte's idea that we are influenced primarily by our predecessors and that we are working for following generations. Ellis explains at great length

⁵A.J. Ellis, Auguste Comte's Religion of Humanity: A Discourse Delivered at South Place Chapel, Sunday, 31 October 1880 (London: South Place Chapel-Trübner, 1880), p. 7.

⁶Walter Michael Simon, "Auguste Comte's English Disciples," Victorian Studies, 8 (1964), No. 2, p. 162.

his own concept of humanity as the "highest conceivable being" rather than the traditional concept of God as presented in the organized religions.⁷

He analyzed Comte's Religion of Humanity as the complete unification of man's whole thoughts, feelings, and practical action in one great principle--the service of Humanity. Comte's conception of Humanity was the "condensation of all our thoughts and emotions and actions." Ellis recognized that because Comte's doctrine is so immense, its acceptance "must be very slow."⁸

Comte devised a calendar to fix the meaning of Humanity securely in the mind by means of a daily presentation of some "effective organ of Humanity in times past, grouped under weeks and then months, to keep the idea lively in the mind and heart till all hesitation was overcome and the dogma thoroughly accepted and acted up to." This calendar was in a state of perpetual revision. Ellis had provided Comte with two quotations from Shelley--one taken from the "Song of the Earth" in Prometheus Unbound and the other from the 48th stanza of the Revolt of Islam. Comte replied that because he had been so moved by the thoughts of "malheureux Shelley," he had made provision to enroll him in the Calendrier Positiviste in the next edition.

⁷Ellis, Comte's Religion of Humanity, p. 11.

⁸Ibid., p. 43.

Comte had earlier proposed to rewrite the calendar in order to clarify the meaning of Humanity by presenting daily the "types and servants of Humanity," and Ellis suggested to him that the calendar should have a companion volume containing "Lives of the Worthies." In 1856 Comte responded to this suggestion by stating that this project would be of great value once the task of building the Temple of Humanity should have been achieved.⁹

After thus making a number of suggestions for the popularization of the Religion of Humanity, Ellis stated in 1880: "It will, I hope, be felt that all these suggestions are made in the most friendly spirit by one who, a quarter of a century ago, considered himself a Positivist but does so no longer."¹⁰ Three years earlier he had remarked to an unknown correspondent that he never troubled people with his own heterodoxy and that he felt that it was sufficient to have presented his own views in the published sermon on Comte's Religion on Humanity.¹¹

Ellis was sometimes requested to supply the service at the South Place Chapel during the absence of the Reverend

⁹Letter: Comte to Ellis, April 10, 1856 in Ellis, Comte's Religion of Humanity, p. 54 (Note to p. 33).

¹⁰Ellis, Comte's Religion of Humanity, p. 66.

¹¹Columbia University, Manuscript Collections, Ellis to ?, March 19, 1877.

Mr. Conway. He welcomed the opportunity to present his own religious views before the congregation with whom he regularly worshipped. Ellis had an affection for the place with its old sacramental vessels, preserved as relics, as well as the communion table, then used only for flowers. Until its renovation in 1876 the church contained high backed pews and a very tall pulpit. There were large galleries which could seat almost a thousand people.¹² During 1875 and 1876 Ellis delivered his discourses in which he set forth his philosophical and religious views. His presentations were so popular that he was asked to repeat each one on successive Sundays for those who were unable to hear them the first time. Salvation (1875),¹³ Truth (1875),¹⁴ and Duty (1876)¹⁵ contain some of his observations on moral

¹²Moncure Daniel Conway, Autobiography: Memories and Experiences. 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904), Vol. 2, pp. 39-40.

¹³A.J. Ellis, Salvation: A Discourse, Preceded by "The Works of Today," a Meditation, Delivered at South Place Chapel, Sunday, 10 October, 1875 (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1875).

¹⁴A.J. Ellis, Truth: A Discourse, Preceded by "Little by Little": A Meditation Delivered at South Place Chapel, Sunday, 9th January, 1876 to Which Are Added the Readings and Author's Hymns Used on That Occasion (London: South Place Chapel, 1876).

¹⁵A.J. Ellis, Duty: A Discourse Preceded by "Sociability": A Meditation Delivered at South Place Chapel, Sunday, 23 January, 1876 with the Readings and the Author's Hymns Used on That Occasion (London: South Place Chapel, 1876).

behavior and ethics.

It is interesting to consider the view taken by others with regard to Ellis' heterodoxy. For example, Thomas Hill, the American Unitarian and President of both Antioch and Harvard Colleges, was shocked by Ellis' disturbing reference to the legendary nature of the second and third chapters of Genesis. Because Ellis would sometimes make statements about Biblical matters in a very unorthodox fashion, Hill warned that this lack of sympathy with traditional theological interpretations might result in Ellis' occupying a low position in the annals of philosophy in contrast to his distinguished mathematical and philological reputation.¹⁶

Ellis belonged to the London Dialectal Society, a group which met upon the first and third Wednesdays of each month from October to July in order to debate various topics. In October 1878 he delivered before that group a paper "On the Common Area of Thought in the Different Significations of the English Word 'Religion'." He noted that the debaters used the word "religion" in the commonly accepted sense of doctrinal theology. As the aim of his paper was not to define that term but rather analyze the various uses of the word, Ellis formulated his own definition: "Religion, then, consists of regulating (régler) each individual nature and

¹⁶Thomas Hill, ed., Discourses Delivered at South Place Chapel, by A.J. Ellis (London: South Place Chapel, n.d.), p. 139.

binding again (rallier) all individualities."¹⁷ Ellis took advantage of the opportunity which the lecture afforded him of setting forth his own views of Comte's Religion of Humanity, which seemed to him to be the best theory which existed.¹⁸ He was, however, very careful to point out to the London Dialectal Society that his present essay on the meaning of the word was not a Positivist essay in disguise and also pointed out that he [Ellis] objected to the use of the word "Secularist" as applied to anyone who did not believe in God because the term itself was ecclesiastical. However, he justified the appropriateness of using the word "religion" in connection with one who held an ethical theory based on man's development, nature, and social state. Instead of temples, the Secularist would erect halls of science and would best answer the purposes of science.¹⁹ Ellis' conception of deity was a rational one as opposed to a sentimental one; it was also predicated on the notion of the role played by duty in bringing into action those constant relations which would produce the "most favorable results to the race."²⁰

¹⁷ A.J. Ellis, On the Common Area of Thought in the Different Significations of the English Word "Religion". A Paper Read before the London Dialectal Society (London: London Dialectal Society, 1880), pp. 8-9.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

At another meeting of the London Dialectal Society in 1879, the discussion was about to depart radically from the subject at hand by introducing Comte's discovery of the meaning of truth. Ellis, however, stated that such a subject could not be adequately treated in one evening, but he did observe that his religion could always be discussed because there existed provision for an exchange of ideas within his ecclesiastical system.²¹

Having briefly considered Ellis' religious and ethical concerns, let us examine how his personality influenced his close friends and scholarly colleagues. He was a man of the firmest convictions on every matter to which he directed his energies. Sometimes he wrote with such vigor on a particular subject that it would appear that he tolerated no disagreement from anyone at all. He emerges from the hundreds of letters he sent to his scholarly associates as a rather affable though strong-minded individual, one whose probity was above question on every matter. Whenever he spoke of members of his family, he was affectionate and admiring and was always attentive to their concerns.

We are particularly favored in possessing a verbal portrait of Alexander Ellis in the manuscript account of his association with A.J. Hipkins, written by the latter's

²¹ A.J. Ellis, On Discussion as a Means of Eliciting Truth: A Paper Read before the London Dialectal Society, 1879 (London: Dialectal Society, 1880), p. 28.

daughter, Edith.²² As a regular and esteemed visitor at the Hipkins household in Warwick Gardens, Kensington, Ellis was the principal figure in the social life of that musician's family. Mr. Hipkins' nephew, also a part of that circle, delighted in making sketches of his uncle's unusual and often eccentric guest.²³

Ellis, a portly gentleman, would always arrive, except during the summer, in his great coat, his "Dreadnought," with many pockets for manuscripts and articles for emergency. His entire dress contained twenty-eight pockets. He carried an enormous piece of luggage for the tuning forks and would carry the heavy ones slung over his shoulder. There exists a delightful sketch of the scholar with his head peeping out of the big tuning fork bag. Another of the cartoons shows Ellis, with little side curls, in conversation with the artist Alma Tadema of the Royal Academy. In bad weather Ellis always carried his furled umbrella, a "bumbershoot," which would always be at his side while he calmly sat with his hands folded over his paunch and his feet on the fender. The household especially derived amusement from Ellis' heavy gold watch chain whenever he would draw it out in order to consult his huge time-piece.

²²British Museum, Department of Manuscripts, Add. MSS 41638 (fols. 38-40), "A Few Notes on Dr. A.J. Ellis' Engaging Personality and the Photograph Taken within Five Months of His Death."

²³National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh), Manuscript Collections, The Hipkins Cartoons.

He employed a monocle when he wore formal attire, and there exists an amusing vignette depicting him with the eyeglass and his summer straw hat. When he told his host of the formal meeting at the Society of Arts on March 25, 1885, his artistic friend at Hipkins' home drew him as a rotund shape wearing full evening dress and ruffled shirt front, with the great umbrella beside him.

Other engaging sketches reveal Ellis in an entirely different light from the one in which we are accustomed to viewing him through his own writings. Frequently, Mr. Hipkins would arrange for an exotic instrument to be brought to his home in order for Ellis to ascertain its pitch. A cleverly executed cartoon shows Ellis straddling a huge Indian sitar. He is playing the instrument with great determination, and there is a noticeable glint in his eye as he tries to cope with the intricacies of the fingering. The Hipkins' nephew lost no opportunity to capture for posterity some of the humorous incidents which Ellis had related on some of his visits to Warwick Gardens. For example, in one sketch we see him having a "downer" and lying supine on icy Kensington High Street. In another sketch Ellis is shown sitting crosslegged, sewing on his own buttons even though there were five women in the household. Another merry drawing shows Ellis polishing his own copper kettles each Thursday. The Hipkins family often had a hearty laugh at Ellis' untidy state resulting from such

labor. The artist's caption for this little sketch observes that Ellis needs Pears soap.

Evidently Ellis had expressed Victorian shock at seeing at the National Gallery a display of Rubens paintings which included some of the Master's nudes. The scene was humorously captured by Hipkins' nephew as he shows Ellis furtively glancing in a scandalized manner from behind a pillar. Of course, the ubiquitous umbrella is included in the sketch. Frequently Ellis would reminisce to his hosts about his days as a student at Eton, where he was called, according to the caption under the sketch the "Round Tower of Windsor" because he was a chubby youth. The sketch depicts the elderly Ellis in an Etonian cap and collar. On another occasion, Ellis entertained the Hipkins family with an account of the exhibition of Javanese natives as they pole-vaulted at the Royal Aquarium. The ensuing vignette shows Ellis pole-vaulting along with the Javanese.

Ellis was almost paternal with Hipkins, who had a slight impediment in his speech. Miss Edith Hipkins recalled Ellis as very rotund and bald; he had declared that hair tickled him. Though the Hipkins household was hospitable at all times, Ellis would take only a French roll and butter along with some warm water and a little milk. She recollected Ellis' visit to the exhibition of "Inventions", when at the formal dinner he consumed a few strawberries and a glass of warm water.

He meticulously posted his own letters and balanced to a farthing his tradesmen's books. His shoes, made by a woman, were deliberately three inches larger than necessary, and his friends irreverently referred to them as "barges." It was noted that Ellis never touched alcohol in any form at all. He always carried around two sets of nail scissors, one for each hand, a corkscrew, string, and a knife sharpener so that he could assist his friends should there be any need.

His passion for keeping records on every possible matter concerning himself may be noted in his daily weighing himself with and without his clothes. The only concession to special clothing was the light blue tie for the Boat Race, which declared his allegiance. In his last years Ellis even took careful note of the minutiae connected with his regimen of work. He observed in a letter to Thomas Hallam that he had been unsuccessful in switching to a new brand of pen point. He disapproved of "Perry's for Planished Points."²⁴ No matter how trivial the information Ellis felt obliged to share every fact with Hallam to whom such matters were of vital interest.

Practical considerations regarding speech and diction were always of paramount importance to Ellis. For example, he determined mathematically the proper slope of

²⁴Bodleian Library, Hallam-Ellis Papers (d. 13, no fol.), Ellis to Hallam, June 12, 1888.

a reading desk so that the reader's head would not have to be bent downwards. During his life Ellis delivered several hundred addresses before groups of all types and size. He must have been a commanding figure of patrician bearing, at the same time an agreeable personality. He advised would-be speakers not to shout and believed that one should change the quality of the voice rather than resorting to clearing the throat. He recommended using an item called Spanish licorice rather than taking a sip of water.²⁵

Ellis would never denigrate the importance of education and was not pessimistic about the slow pace which the acquisition of wisdom involved. He enjoyed moralizing about the infinitesimal steps necessary to take in acquiring a good education. He was certainly in a superior position to appreciate the need for patience, having investigated mathematics, acoustics, and phonetics for so many years. Years later Pitman recalled he compared such an effort to the construction of the great dams of Holland, built "spade by spade, barrow by barrow load, drill hole by drill hole."²⁶

Another impression concerning Ellis appears in the recollections of Henry Drummond of Hetton-le-Hole, who in 1904 recalled having heard Alexander Ellis, "an old white

²⁵A.J. Ellis, Reading Aloud (London: Hodgson, n.d.), p. 16.

²⁶Isaac Pitman, "A.J. Ellis," Phonetic Journal, 99 (December 13, 1890), 592.

haired man with a mellow voice." The young man appreciated the appositeness of Ellis' illustrations, but particularly admired the author's modesty regarding the extent of his learning. The youthful Drummond remembered with great respect Ellis' quiet statement that he had always been a student and expected to continue going to school all his days.²⁷

Throughout the published works and large personal correspondence of Ellis are found an animation and liveliness which reflect his enthusiasm and genuine love of learning. His erudition is impressive, and his examples drawn from an extraordinary background of reading add a delightful tone to the scholarly material. Although Ellis' style sometimes possesses a degree of formality characteristic of much Victorian scholarship, a felicitousness of expression is present in all his investigations in science, mathematics, and philology.

²⁷Henry Drummond, "Dr. A.J. Ellis," The Phonographic Magazine and National Shorthand Reporter, May 1904, p. 139.

CHAPTER XX

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Knowledge has multiplied itself many times over in the years since Alexander Ellis first expounded his theories of language before the meetings of the Philological Society of London. Modern sophisticated equipment has replaced the old apparatus he used in his acoustical studies; computers have expanded his mathematical labors beyond his broadest expectations; another impressive dialect survey involving the latest recording equipment has been amassing data on regional speech habits with far greater precision than before was possible; the study of the classical languages, long in a decline, is again attracting the serious attention of many more students.

Ellis would have approved of much that has taken place in the eighty years since his death. Physics, philology, mathematics, and related disciplines have developed along remarkable lines since he conducted his experiments and presented his theories. He was indeed a "Universalgenie," equally endowed with a brilliancy of mind in a large number of disciplines. Freedom from pecuniary worries permitted him to live comfortably; consequently, he was to involve

himself with ease in the varied intellectual activities which characterized the Victorian Age, a time of extremes: idiosyncratic, transcendental, authoritarian, empirical, and democratic.

His role in the Spelling Reform was a vital part of the efforts made by nineteenth century men of social consciousness and good will who were stirred to improve society. Frequently they espoused causes which would bring to large numbers of an illiterate populace the benefits derived from some degree of education. To visualize today the teeming masses of the ignorant, one has only to turn to the numerous engravings of Victorian London made by the Parisian artist Gustave Doré when he visited "the mighty city from the Pool to the slopes of Richmond."¹

Ellis was familiar with the throngs of wretches crowding the Surrey Commercial Docks, the young coopers overhualing the damaged barrels in the dank breweries, and the hopeless waifs swarming the streets near Smithfield Market. He was willing to use his own money in a cause for the improvement of these illiterates, and both the Reformed Spelling Movement and the Reading Reform took their raison d'être from a wide variety of London's horrendous conditions. The hundreds of pages in Isaac Pitman's Phonotypic Journal

¹Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold, London (London: Grant & Co., 1872), p. 2.

attest to the determination of Ellis to help educate the masses in the 1840's. His close association with Pitman in the development of phonotypy inspired many other similarly motivated individuals to join him in this endeavor. We know that the Spelling Reform reached the masses because the shilling contributors were regularly listed in the many issues of the Phonotypic Journal. Support came from hundreds of small towns where inexpensive phonotypic exercise books were utilized. Ellis' contributions to the various Phonetic Soirées and other special meetings form a vital part of nineteenth century educational history.

Symbols held, above all, a special fascination for Ellis because they could be assigned any kind of value to serve his theories. Whether they were new creations which could provide the key to reading or were new adaptations of existing mathematical notations, Ellis was able to shift easily back and forth among a variety of disciplines, taking upon himself the task of developing new symbols to achieve his aims. He had the intellectual breadth which enabled him to expound in detail his abstruse theories in mathematics and physics.

He labored for years in presenting his conception of analytical geometry because it provided an opportunity of further communicating through a special system of symbols. This brought recognition by the most distinguished British

mathematicians of the Royal Society of London. Ellis' practical nature asserted itself in the ease with which he moved from the complex theoretical work of "Stigmatics" to the humble "Arithmetical Crutches for Boys and Girls." No false pride existed in this scholar.

In bringing to the English reading public the theories of Hermann von Helmholtz in connection with the properties of sound, Ellis went beyond the labors normally expected of a translator. His extensive amplification of the investigations of that great German physicist brought him in close contact with the other Continental scholars engaged in acoustical experimentation. This translation of the Tonempfindungen is linked to his scholarly pursuits in phonetics and spelling reform. He generously encouraged others in their work on the properties of true pitch, the sine qua non of musical performance, both instrumental and vocal. Ellis deserves recognition as the man who brought enlightenment to that scientific area.

His practical contributions to the improvement of the diction of singers led him to meet with amateur choral groups, composed of working people. All this took place in an environment very different from the elegance of Albert Hall. He could feel equally at home testing pitch with the laboring classes as hearing the choral masterpieces performed for the sedate audiences of the time.

Alexander Graham Bell acknowledged his indebtedness to Ellis for having provided much of the impetus to his earliest telephone experiments. Nineteenth century technological progress developed because men like Ellis possessed the requisite scientific background and willingly shared their expertise about the discoveries of other scholars with men like Bell who were making contributions of a practical sort.

Ellis was foremost among the men of learning who put phonetics on a more scientific basis, thereby loosing the hold which Latin and Greek had on the progress of comparative philology. Though the knowledge of the physiology of speech was limited at that time, Ellis studied that subject as carefully as possible in its anatomical context. He believed it to be absolutely essential for philologists to study phonetics and continually pressed for a de-emphasis on etymology, a development which his colleagues in the Philological Society of London were not too anxious to accept.

After many years of patient insistence, Ellis laid the groundwork for the eminent phoneticians, who in turn would develop much of his theorizing about language. Years of work in conjunction with Isaac Pitman, in addition to his own private phonetic studies and extraordinary knowledge of classical and modern languages, provided an excellent background for the study of the historical sounds of English.

The work in the Spelling Reform was preparatory to the direction which his labors were to take during the 1870's. Ellis' principal phonetic study, On Early English Pronunciation, a reconstruction of the sounds of the English language in the centuries preceding his own, is a monument to his capabilities because all modern studies of Chaucerian and Shakespearean pronunciations are derivative from his investigations. Though Ellis' reconstructions of those former sounds are conjectural, his work sets the direction for twentieth century investigations of the subject.

Fortunately, he was part of the comfortable social class that had the opportunity of utilizing the advice, enjoying the friendship, and sharing the current scholarship of England's most eminent philological pioneers. Moreover, he played a leading role in the activities of many of those learned bodies which sponsored the publications of the early literature of the English language. In the mid-nineteenth century the texts of many noteworthy writers for the first time were painstakingly edited. Ellis' solutions to the related linguistic problems were often incorporated among the textual readings for these editions. For example, the Early English Text Society, whose editions constitute an entire library of the old romances, recognized the value of Ellis' labors. F.J. Furnivall, whose leadership of the Chaucer Society, was influential in encouraging Ellis' investigations of the Chaucerian manuscripts in order to

establish the sounds of fourteenth century English.

As a leading figure in the Philological Society of London, Ellis was instrumental in creating an awareness among Continental scholars of the excellent quality of British philological study. Willingly he took a great deal of time from his own concerns to maintain a far-reaching correspondence on behalf of the Society, and during his incumbencies as President there was much progress in many areas of major investigation.

The magnitude of Ellis' reconstruction of the sounds of English in preceding centuries led him to another aspect of philological study, the recording of the varieties of the contemporary English spoken throughout the British Isles. He has given us the first reliable record of British local speech pattern through the use of Palaeotype, a complex notational system of his own invention, one designed to provide a written parallel to the spoken word. His dialect map in the first serious model of the nation's provincial speech habits.

From the vantage point of today, such an enterprise seems remarkable, for it is the first comprehensive account of the local dialects spoken within a period of British history during which time Ellis noted down the Victorian rural vernacular, an achievement which the famed novelists of that period had seldom been able to reproduce in their

works. He had presented the pronunciation of the various forms of one language by extending his researches from Land's End in Cornwall as far as Shetland in the North. With infinite patience he had assembled his information derived from living men and women and recorded in his Palaeotype either by himself or through long correspondence with others who had served as his surrogates. Prophetically, he was aware that the details resulting in the establishment of the dialectal boundaries of the country would be useful as a "fund for future philological investigations." (First Dialectal Report, xxxix)

An examination of the two volumes comprising Part V of Early English Pronunciation indicates the author's many radical changes in method during the early years of his researches. It is necessary to examine his approaches to dialectal research which appeared in the earlier volumes of the great work, as Ellis did not hesitate to retract any of his earlier statements or to modify drastically his views relating to linguistic geography. It is necessary for the reader of Part V to move back and forth among the five parts in order to see how he completed his investigations at their various stages during the course of the years.

The Existing Phonology of English Dialects assuredly is a labyrinth of conflicting and perplexing data aimed at the recording of the state of dialectal pronunciation in

Ellis' own time. In spite of his forebodings, Ellis did have the satisfaction of living to see his dialect survey completed. Interest in the Victorian Age today is at an all-time peak, and we are fortunate that the very essence of human life, speech, has been recorded for us in a manner that no other publication, popular or scholarly, has so comprehensively done. He has been successful in preserving the rhythm of daily experiences in the English countryside of the past century.

Ellis alone had to develop his method while doggedly fending off the importunate demands of his closest associate, Thomas Hallam, who continually attempted to deflect him from attaining his goal. The events leading to the writing of Part V help us to understand Ellis as a man who was able to synthesize gargantuan amounts of material from hundreds of assistants, and these of generally poor ability. Today's reader, however, still must exercise infinite patience in order to deal with the complexities found in the arrangement and organization of Early English Pronunciation.

It is important to note that Ellis' dialect survey was the forerunner of the modern Survey of English Dialects (SED), conducted by scholars at the University of Leeds. Modern methods have completely modified Ellis' nineteenth century approach. The massive systematic collection of a university's linguistic center range far beyond the original

work which Ellis compiled, but modern researchers still owe a very substantial obligation to that first comprehensive survey made a hundred years ago.

Though Ellis was considered "advanced" by many of his friends with respect to religious convictions, his unorthodox views were shared by many people earnestly seeking a clear definition of their basic ethical concepts, one which took no cognizance of historically organized religion. His participation in the activities of London's non-conformist religious life reflects some of the introspective tendencies found among many London intellectuals during the middle of the nineteenth century.

Both the optimism and thoroughness which characterized Victorian scholarly activity elicit from us genuine admiration today. Playing a prominent role among the host of men in the British learned societies, Ellis vigorously participated in the intellectual milieu, where his colleagues applauded his firmness of purpose, rare energy, and commitment to the study and exposition of many disciplines. Underlying these versatile efforts lay his belief in the efficacy of performing one's duty no matter how arduous and discouraging, for the task must be completed if one has the knowledge requisite for an undertaking. Ellis well deserves a place of honor among the most accomplished of the "eminent Victorians."

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APPENDIX B

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE, EARLY ENGLISHPRONUNCIATION, PART I (1869)

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE—LETTERS.

3

The mode of writing the "turned" or inverted letters is explained in each particular case. Italic letters have *one* horizontal line below them, as *i*; small capitals have either *two* horizontal lines, or *one* short oblique line, as *j*, below them, tailed letters as *g*, *j*, *p*, *q*, *y*, when they have to be printed as small capitals, may have a horizontal stroke *above* them, like *i*. The letter *h* may be also written with its stem crossed like *t*, and *f* with *two* cross bars.

For the purposes of alphabet arrangement, *æ*, *œ* are considered to be the same as *ae*, *oe*, and the turned letters

o p x v l a o w i j t modifications of

o e e e l n o œ f r r respectively.

Isolated letters, words, and phrases in palaeotype occurring in the midst of ordinary spelling are enclosed in a parenthesis () to prevent confusion.

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE.

Abbreviations.—A. arabic, C. chinese, E. english, F. french,
G. german, I. italian, P. provincial, S. sanscrit.
occ. occasional, = interchangeable with.

I. LETTERS.

A	a	— (æ), I. matto, F. chette, (mat to, shat)
Ä	ä	— (æp), G. menn, F. matchas, (men, matla)
:A	:a	— (æw), E. went, what, <i>august</i> , (want, what, aget-), see (æ)
A ₁	a ₁	Gaelic meth, good, (ma ₁); nasal twang
An	na	long of (n), E. father, I. meno, (faadh'a, maa'no)
As	sa	long of (s), G. mænen, (maæn'n)
:Aa	aa	long of (a), E. æwn, (aa'n), see (æ)
An	sa	long of (s)
Anh	nah	long of (ah)
Ash	sh	long of (sh)
Aaa	saa	long of (aa), see (a)
Æ	æ	— (æp), E. men, cat, sad, (mæn, kat, sæd)
Ææ	mæ	long of (w), P. E. Beth, (Bææth)
Ææh	meh	long of (mh)
Æh	eh	— (æw) = (æh) labially modified (w) or widened (eh)
Ah	ah	— (æp), occ. E. ask, staff, grant (ahæk, stahf, grahst)
Ah	oh	— (ohæ), Irish air, Austrian men (sohr, meh'n)
Äi	ai	E. aye, G. hein, (ai, main), see (ai)
Aa	aa	F. an, temps, cent, (aa, taa, saa), see (a)
Au	au	G. haus, (maus), see (ou)
Ay	ay	theoretical G. each (aykh)

B	b	E. <i>bee</i> , (<i>bāi</i>)
B	β	sonant of (<i>p</i>), which see, ? = (<i>bw</i>)
:B	ɸ	= (<i>bf</i>), lower lip against teeth, Brücke's β
'B	'b	= (<i>b*ɸ</i>), flat Saxon β, Rapp's ɸ
Bh	bh	G. <i>w</i> in the middle and south, (<i>v</i>) without the teeth
Bj	bj	= (<i>b*ɸ</i>)
Brh	brh	= (<i>bhg</i>), lip trill, G. <i>br</i> for stopping horses, Brücke's κ
Bw	bw	= (<i>b*w</i>), F. <i>beis</i> , (<i>bwa</i>)
C	c	= (<i>st</i>) ? nearly (<i>th</i>), Spanish <i>c</i> , and <i>e</i> before <i>e</i> , <i>i</i> , Badajoz, (<i>Bandaxooc</i>)
C	c	= (<i>st</i>) ? nearly (<i>dh</i>), Spanish <i>c</i> (<i>f</i>), ciudad (<i>ciudad</i>)
D	d	E. <i>dee</i> , (<i>dus</i>)
D	d	= (<i>d*ɸ</i>), usually accepted A. <i>د</i> , Lepsius's A. ɸ
:D	ɸ	= (<i>dɸ</i>), S. <i>ḏ</i>
.D	.d	= (<i>dɸ</i>), tip of tongue on gums
'D	'd	= (<i>d*t</i>), flat Saxon (<i>d</i>), Rapp's τ
Dh	dh	E. <i>thee</i> , Danish <i>ved</i> , (<i>dhii</i> , <i>vodh</i>), Welsh <i>dd</i>
Dh	dʰ	(<i>dh*gh</i>), Newman's A. <i>د</i> , Lepsius's A. ɸ
:Dhh	ɸhh	Lepsius's Dravidian sound, nearly (<i>ssh</i>)
Dj	dj	= (<i>d*ɸ</i>), Hungarian <i>gy</i> , E. <i>verdure</i> , (<i>vrɸjɸ</i>)
Dw	dʷ	= (<i>d*w</i>), F. <i>deit</i> (<i>dwa</i>)
Dzh	dʒh	E. <i>judging</i> , (<i>dzhodzhɸ</i>)
E	e	= (<i>æ</i>), E. <i>met</i> , G. <i>fett</i> , F. <i>jette</i> , (<i>met</i> , <i>fet</i> , <i>zhet</i>), see (<i>u</i>)
E	e	= (<i>æ-0</i>), E. <i>acrial</i> , F. <i>étal</i> (<i>acriol</i> , <i>etal</i>), I. <i>e chiuso</i>
:E	ɛ	= (<i>æ-0</i>), I. <i>e aperto</i> , occ. E. <i>met</i> , G. <i>fett</i> , (<i>met</i> , <i>fet</i>)
Ǽ	æ	= (<i>æ-0</i>) turned <i>e</i> , written <i>æ</i> , E. <i>bat</i> (<i>bat</i>), see (<i>u</i>)
Æ	æ	= (<i>æw</i>) = (<i>æ-0</i>), turned <i>e</i> , F. <i>que je me repente</i> (<i>ke zhe me repaɛt</i>)
:Æ	ɛ	= (<i>æ-0</i>) turned <i>æ</i> , occ. E. <i>bat</i> (<i>bat</i>)
Ø	ø	= (<i>æ</i>) = (<i>u-w</i>), turned <i>æ</i> , written <i>ø</i> , E. <i>mentien</i> , <i>real</i> , (<i>men'shen</i> , <i>rii'ul</i>)
Ee	ee	long of (<i>e</i>), E. <i>mare</i> , <i>Mery</i> , (<i>meer</i> , <i>Meern</i>)
Ee	ee	long of (<i>e</i>), E. <i>sailing</i> (<i>ee'liq</i>), see (<i>eei</i> , <i>ee'j</i>)
:Ee	ɛɛ	long of (<i>e</i>), like a bleat
ǣ	æ	long of (<i>æ</i>), replaces (<i>æ</i> , <i>æ</i> , <i>æ</i>) in South E.
ǣ	æ	long of (<i>æ</i>)
:ǣ	ɛɛ	long of (<i>æ</i>)
ǣ	æ	long of (<i>æ</i>)
ǣh	æh	long of (<i>æh</i>)
ǣh	æh	long of (<i>æh</i>)
Eei	eei	occ. E. <i>they</i> , (<i>dheei</i>), for (<i>dhee</i>)
Ee'j	ee'j	occ. E. <i>fate</i> , (<i>fæ'jt</i>), for (<i>fæt</i>)
Eea	eea	long of (<i>ea</i>), see (<i>æ</i>)
ǣa	æa	long of (<i>æa</i>), see (<i>æ</i>)
ǣh	æh	= (<i>æ-w</i>), West E. <i>sir</i> , first (<i>schr</i> , <i>fhrst</i>)
ǣh	æh	= (<i>æw</i>), occ. F. <i>es</i>
Ei	ei	Scotch <i>time</i> (<i>teim</i>), Portuguese <i>ei</i>

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE—LETTERS.

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ji	oi	usual E. eye, time, (oi, taim)
EA	ea	F. via (vea), see (A)
ja	aa	F. we emprewt, (aan-aapraa), see (A)
Eu	eu	I. Europa, (Euroopa), Cockney and Yankee town (town)
ju	ou	usual E. house, shout (nous, about)
F	f	E. fee, (fee), gentle hiss
F	f	= (fi), upper lip against lower teeth
F	f	violently hissed (f)
Fh	fh	= (f*kh)
Fw	fw	= (f*wh), the back of the tongue in the (u) position, F. fois, (fwa)
G	g	E. go, (go)
G	g	= (gj) = (g*ʒ), occ. E. guard, (gaid), F. gweux, (gwe)
:G	o	sonant of (x)
:G	'g	= (g*k), flat (g), Rapp's x
Gh	gh	G. tage, (taagh'e), Dutch g, S. ǂ
Gh	gh	= (gh) = (gh*ʒ), G. wiege, (bhiigh'e)
:Gh	oh	buzz of (kh)
.Gh	.gh	violently buzzed (gh)
Gj	gj	= (g), which see
Gjh	gjh	= (gh), which see
Grh	grh	= (gh), A. ǂ, heard in gargling
Gw	gw	= (g*w), F. goître, (gwitr')
:Gw	ow	= (o*w)
Gwh	gwh	= (gh*w), G. auge, (au'gushe)
:Gwh	owh	= (oh*w)
H	h	E. ho (hii), S. 𑌕 𑌕 𑌕, (hu, du, gu), jerked utterance
H'	h'	jerked whisper
h	h	with no capital, disartic, with no meaning by itself, but modifying the meaning of the preceding letter in any manner that is convenient, see (ah, th, sh, 'h), &c.
H	h	A. 𑌕 (hau)
	'h	a scarcely audible (o) as Cockney park, (pa'hk)
lh	lh	with no capital, disartic, variety of (h), see (lhh)
Hw	hw	a voiced whistle
Hwh	whh	an ordinary whistle, distinct from (wh, kuh)
I	i	= (i-o), E. event, F. fini, fische, (ivent', fini, fish)
I	i	= (ig), E. river, fanny, fish, (riv-z, fin-i, fish)
:I	i	= (ia), occ. G. ii, Swedish y
Ii	ii	long of (i), E. eve, (iiv)
Ii	ii	long of (i), E. happy... (maep-i), in singing
:Ii	ii	long of (i)
Iu	iu	E. fertility, (fuitel-iti)
Iu	iu	American variety of (iu)
Iuu	iuu	E. futile, (fuitel-til)

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INTRODUCTION.

<i>J</i>	<i>j</i>	E. <i>yet</i> , G. <i>ja</i> , (<i>jet</i> , <i>jaa</i>)
	<i>j̥</i>	with no capital, diacritic, palatal modification of preceding letter.
	<i>j̃</i>	faint sound of (<i>j</i> , <i>i</i>) into which E. (<i>ss</i>) occasionally tapers, see (<i>ss'</i>)
<i>Jh</i>	<i>jh</i>	occ. E. <i>huc</i> (<i>hiuu</i>), occ. G. <i>ja</i> (<i>jaa</i>), occ. F. <i>ail</i> (<i>aih</i>)
<i>K</i>	<i>k</i>	E. <i>key</i> , <i>can</i> , <i>coal</i> , (<i>kii</i> , <i>kæn</i> , <i>kool</i>)
<i>K'</i>	<i>k̥</i>	= (<i>kj</i>) = (<i>k*_j</i>), occ. E. <i>cart</i> (<i>kart</i>), F. <i>guene</i> (<i>kœ</i>)
<i>:K</i>	<i>x</i>	= (<i>kf</i>), A. <i>χ</i> (<i>kauf</i>)
<i>Kh</i>	<i>kh</i>	G. <i>dach</i> , Scotch <i>loch</i> , (<i>dakh</i> , <i>lakh</i>)
<i>Kh</i>	<i>kh̥</i>	= (<i>kjh</i>) = (<i>kh*_j</i>), G. <i>sich</i> , (<i>sziikh</i>)
<i>:Kh</i>	<i>kh</i>	related to (<i>κ</i>) as (<i>kh</i>) to (<i>k</i>)
<i>Ku</i>	<i>ku</i>	S. <i>ḡ</i> , upper G. <i>komm</i> , (<i>knom</i>)
<i>:Kh</i>	<i>kh</i>	violently hissed (<i>kh</i>)
<i>kj</i>	<i>kj</i>	= (<i>k</i>), which see
<i>Kjh</i>	<i>kjh</i>	= (<i>k̥h</i>), which see
<i>Krh</i>	<i>krh</i>	= (<i>khj</i>), Swiss <i>ch</i> , A. <i>ç</i> (<i>krhœ</i>)
<i>Kw</i>	<i>kœ</i>	= (<i>k*w</i>), E. <i>quœn</i> , F. <i>quœ</i> , (<i>kœin</i> , <i>kœn</i>), Latin <i>qu</i>
<i>Kœh</i>	<i>kœh</i>	= (<i>kh*wh</i>), G. <i>auch</i> , (<i>auckh</i>), Welsh <i>chw</i> , Scotch <i>gud</i>
<i>:Kœh</i>	<i>kœh</i>	= (<i>sh*wh</i>)
<i>L</i>	<i>l</i>	E. <i>low</i> , (<i>lœ</i>)
<i>L'</i>	<i>l̥</i>	Polish barred <i>l</i>
<i>:L</i>	<i>l̃</i>	= (<i>ll</i>), S. <i>ḡ</i>
<i>L</i>	<i>z</i>	turned <i>z</i> , written as <i>l</i> with <i>z</i> below, hisped (<i>l</i>)
<i>:L</i>	<i>l̥</i>	= (<i>ll</i>)
<i>Lh</i>	<i>lh</i>	whispered (<i>l</i>), breath escaping on both sides the tongue, E. <i>felt</i> = (<i>folllt</i>) at full, occ. F. <i>table</i> , (<i>tabllh</i>)
<i>Lh</i>	<i>lh</i>	whisper of (<i>l</i>)
<i>:Lh</i>	<i>lh</i>	according to Lepsius, Dravidian <i>l</i> in (<i>Tamih</i>)
<i>lh</i>	<i>lh</i>	whisper of (<i>l</i>)
<i>Lhh</i>	<i>lhh</i>	= (<i>l̥h</i>), breath escaping on the right side of the tongue only, Welsh <i>ll</i>
<i>lj</i>	<i>lj</i>	= (<i>l*_j</i>), I. <i>gli</i> (<i>lj̃</i>)
<i>ljh</i>	<i>ljh</i>	whisper of (<i>lj</i>)
<i>Lœ</i>	<i>lœ</i>	= (<i>l*w</i>), F. <i>loi</i> (<i>lœa</i>), Anglo-saxon <i>wl</i>
<i>Lœ</i>	<i>lœ</i>	= (<i>l*w</i>)
<i>Lœh</i>	<i>lœh</i>	= (<i>lh*wh</i>)
<i>Lœh</i>	<i>lœh</i>	= (<i>lh*wh</i>)
<i>M</i>	<i>m</i>	E. <i>me</i> , (<i>mii</i>)
	<i>m̥</i>	no capital, diacritic, = (<i>z</i>), which see
<i>Mh</i>	<i>mh</i>	voiceless (<i>m</i>), E. <i>tempt</i> (<i>temmht</i>) at full
<i>Mœ</i>	<i>mœ</i>	= (<i>m*w</i>), F. <i>moi</i> , (<i>maœ</i>)
<i>N</i>	<i>n</i>	E. <i>nup</i> (<i>nœp</i>)
<i>N'</i>	<i>n̥</i>	= (<i>n*_j</i>), see (<i>d</i>)
<i>:N</i>	<i>x</i>	= (<i>nl</i>), S. <i>ḡ</i>

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE—LETTERS.

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A	a	— no capital, written <i>ȳ</i> not joined to the following letter, diacritic, French nasality, the four French nasals, <i>vin</i> , <i>an</i> , <i>en</i> , <i>un</i> , are written for convenience (<i>va</i> , <i>aa</i> , <i>ea</i> , <i>ua</i>), though perhaps more properly (<i>ava</i> , <i>aa</i> , <i>ea</i> , <i>ua</i>), according to Mr. Melville Bell (<i>vna</i> , <i>aha</i> , <i>cha</i> , <i>ua</i>)
.N	.n	— (<i>nʃ</i>), see (<i>.d</i>)
Nh	nh	voiceless (<i>n</i>), E. tent = (<i>tennht</i>) at full
:Nh	sh	according to Lepsius, Dravidian nasal before (<i>sh</i>)
Nj	nj	— (<i>nʃ</i>), F. and I. <i>je</i> , Spanish <i>ñ</i> , Portuguese <i>nh</i>
Njh	njh	whispered (<i>nj</i>)
Nw	nw	— (<i>nʃw</i>), F. <i>noix</i> , (<i>nwa</i>)
O	o	— (<i>aw</i>) = (<i>oo</i>), I. <i>o</i> aperto, F. <i>homme</i> (<i>om</i>)
O	o	— (<i>xe</i>) = (<i>oo</i>), E. <i>omit</i> , American <i>stone</i> , <i>whole</i> , (<i>omit</i> , <i>ston</i> , <i>mol</i>)
O	o	— (<i>aw</i>) = (<i>oo</i>), turned <i>e</i> , written <i>o</i> , being used for small capital <i>o</i> which is not sufficiently distinct from the small <i>o</i> , E. <i>es</i> , <i>old</i> , (<i>on</i> , <i>od</i>)
OE	oe	— (<i>aw</i>) = (<i>oo</i>), F. <i>jeune</i> , G. <i>locke</i> , (<i>zhuen</i> , <i>bock</i>), Féline writes (<i>zhon</i> , <i>zhoxen</i>), for F. <i>jeune</i> , <i>jeune</i>
OE	e	— (<i>u-ae</i>), Galic <i>laugh</i> , (<i>laugh</i>)
:OE	oe	— (<i>o-oo</i>) = (<i>u-ae</i>), Rumanian or Wallachian 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'
Od	od	— (<i>shg</i>), written <i>oo</i> , E. <i>first</i> , (<i>faust</i>), see (<i>z</i>)
Od	od	— occ. F. <i>ail</i> , (<i>od</i> , <i>ailh</i> , <i>ailj</i>) or (<i>ai</i>), occ. Dutch <i>ay</i>
OEe	oeo	long of (<i>e</i>), F. <i>jeune</i> , (<i>zhuen</i>)
OEe	oe	long of (<i>e</i>)
:OEe	oeo	long of (<i>e</i>)
gye	gye	long of (<i>y</i>)
Oy	oy	occ. Dutch <i>ay</i>
Oh	oh	— (<i>ahw</i>) = (<i>shj</i>), (<i>o</i>) modified by raising the tongue
Oh	oh	— (<i>aw</i>), (<i>e</i>) modified by raising the tongue
:Oh	oh	— (<i>aw</i>) = (<i>shg</i>), (<i>o</i>) modified by raising the tongue
Oi	oi	North G. <i>new</i> , (<i>noi</i>), see (<i>uy</i> , <i>oy</i>)
Oi	oi	F. E. <i>boy</i> , (<i>bei</i>)
:Oi	oi	usual E. <i>oyster</i> , (<i>oist</i>)
Oa	oa	F. <i>box</i> (<i>boa</i>), see (<i>a</i>)
Oo	oo	long of (<i>o</i>), I. <i>uomo</i> , (<i>uoo</i>), P. E. <i>home</i> , (<i>moon</i>)
Oo	oo	long of (<i>o</i>), E. <i>home</i> , (<i>moon</i>), see (<i>oo</i>)
:Oo	oo	long of (<i>o</i>), drawled E. <i>odd</i> , <i>God</i> , (<i>ood</i> , <i>Good</i>), different from E. <i>owed</i> , <i>gued</i> (<i>aad</i> , <i>gaad</i>)
Ooh	ooh	long of (<i>oh</i>)
Osh	osh	long of (<i>oh</i>)
:Osh	osh	long of (<i>oh</i>)
Ooa	ooa	long of (<i>oa</i>), see (<i>a</i>)
Oou	oou	occ. E. <i>knew</i> , (<i>noon</i>)
Oou	oou	more usual E. <i>know</i> , (<i>neou</i>)
Oo'w	oo'w	etc. E. <i>no</i> , (<i>noo'w</i>), for (<i>no</i>)
Ou	ou	Dutch <i>ou</i> , P. E. <i>out</i> , (<i>out</i>), see (<i>ou</i>)

Ou	ou	P. E. house, (mons)
Oy	oy	occ. upper G. such, (oykh)
P	p	E. pea (pi)
P	p	= (p ^{*k})? = (pu)?, Lepsius's Peruvian or (Khotah-wa) p
:P	p	= (p), lower lip against teeth
Ph	ph	whisper of (bh), an old sound of ϕ ?
Pu	pu	S. $\overline{\text{u}}$, Bavarian pford, (puerd), Schmeller Gr. p. 137.
Pj	pj	= (p ^{*z})
Prh	prh	= (ph _z), whisper of (brh), which see
Pw	pw	= (p ^{*w}), F. pois, (pura)
Q	q	E. singer, linger, sinker, (siq'a, liq'ga, siqk'a), S. $\overline{\text{q}}$
Q	q	= (qj) = (q ^{*z}), distinct from (mj), S. $\overline{\text{q}}$
:Q	q	= (qj)
Qh	qh	= voiceless (q), E. sink = (siqghk) at full
Qj	qj	= (g) which see
R	r	E. ray (ree), breath passes over the tip of the tongue which trembles slightly, Spanish r suave.
R	r	uvula trill, F. r provençal or grasseyé, Paris, (Pari)
:R	r	= (r ₁), S. $\overline{\text{r}}$
RI	r	turned r, written as r with ⁻ above, E. vocal r when not preceding a vowel, ear, air, arc, our, poor, (iir, eer, aar, oor, paar), hearing, ailing, mooring, (hiir-riq, eerriq, maarriq,) pervert, marmur = (pervert, marmar) or (privat, marmar), or (privat, marmar), see (r)
Y	r	turned r, written as r with ⁻ above, E. palatal vocal r when not preceding a vowel, ear, air = (iir, eer) more accurately than (iir, eer), and (serf, surf) may be distinguished as (serf, surf) or (arf, arf), this distinction is frequently neglected in speech.
I	r	turned r, written as r with ₋ below, glottal low German trill, nearly (r)
.R	r	= (r ₂) strongly trilled Italian, Spanish, Scotch r
Rh	rh	whisper of (r)
Rh	rh	whisper of (r)
:Rh	rh	whisper of (r)
:Rhh	rh	Lepsius's Dravidian sound, nearly (rzh)
rh	rh	whisper of (r)
Rj	rj	= (r ^{*z})
Rsh	rsh	Polish przez, (przech), (r) very brief, (sh) distinct
Rw	rw	= (r ^{*w}), F. roi, (raa), Anglosaxon, and early E. ar-
rw	rw	= (r ^{*w}), occ. E. (arw) in place of (ar) = ear
Rzh	rzh	Polish rzez, (rzhar), (r) brief
S	s	E. so, (see)
S	s	= (s ^{*kh}), Lepsius's and usually received A. ص
Sh	sh	= E. she, F. chant, G. schen, (shii, shaa, shain)

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE—LETTERS.

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Sh	sh	— (sh), S. \mathfrak{H}
Shj	shj	— (sh ^h ih), occ. G. <i>stellen, sprechen</i> , (shjtel'en, shjprekhen)
Sj	sj	— (s ^h zh), Polish <i>ś</i>
Sw	sw	— (s ^h wh), F. <i>soi</i> = (swa) or (sua), not (sra)
Swh	swh	— (sh ^h wh), F. <i>choix</i> = (shwa) or (shua), not (swha)
Sz	sz	— G. initial <i>s</i> , <i>so</i> , (szso)
T	t	E. <i>tea</i> , (tii)
T	t	— (t ^h k), Newman's and usually received A. \mathfrak{b}
:T	r	— (t), S. \mathfrak{Z}
.T	.t	— (t), tip of tongue on gums
Th	th	— E. <i>thin</i> , (thin), modern Greek θ
Th	th	— (th ^h kh), Newman's A. \mathfrak{C}
:Thh	thh	Lepsius's Dravidian sound, nearly (tsh)
Tj	tj	— (t ^h j) whisper of (dj), occ. E. <i>virtue</i> , (vrtjin)
Tsh	tsh	E. <i>chest, match, catching</i> , (tshet, matsh, kætsh'iq)
Tw	tw	— (t ^h w), F. <i>toi</i> , (tua)
U	u	— (sw), F. <i>poule</i> , E. <i>Louisa</i> , (pal, Lu,li'za), see (u)
U	u	— (uw) = (ug), E. <i>pall, csek</i> , (pal, kak), generally confused with (u)
:U	v	— (vw), Swedish <i>u</i> short
Uh	uh	— (yw) = (up), I. <i>e chiusa</i> , (e) verging into (u)
Ui	ui	F. <i>oui</i> = (ui), F. <i>oui</i> = (u,i)
Uu	uu	long of (u), E. <i>pool</i> , (puul)
Uv	uv	long of (u)
:Uv	uv	long of (v)
Uuh	uuh	long of (uh)
V	v	E. <i>veal</i> , (viil), F. <i>v</i> , North G. <i>w</i> , see (hh)
F	f	— (vt), buzz of (f), which see
.V	.v	buzz of (f), which see
Vh	vh	— (v ^h gh), buzz of (fh), which see
Vw	vw	— (v ^h w), F. <i>voix</i> , (vwa)
W	w	E. <i>witch</i> , (witsh)
W'	w'	disartic, labial modification of preceding letter
W	w	turned m, written <i>un</i> , defective lip trill, occ. E. <i>veary</i> turned <i>u</i> , (vew'i tuuu)
Wh	wh	whisper of (w), E. <i>which</i> , (whish)
X	x	Spanish <i>x</i> , <i>j</i> , Quixote, Mexico, or Quijote, Mexico, (Kixoo'tee, Mee'xiikoo)
X	x	buzz of (x)
Y	y	— (iw) = (io), F. <i>hätte</i> , G. <i>lucke</i> , (yt, lyk'e)
Y	y	— (yo), Welsh <i>y</i> , and final <i>y</i> , <i>pamp, ewylls</i> , (pymp, ewalhh'ys), E. <i>houses, goodness</i> , (mauz'yz, gud'nyz)
:Y	y	Polish, Bohemian, Hungarian <i>y</i> , Russian <i>йер</i>

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INTRODUCTION.

Yi	yi	F. lui, annai, (lyi, aanyi)
Yy	yy	long of (y), F. sûte, G. gemath, (ðyyt, gemyt)
Yy	yy	long of (y)
:Yy	yy	long of (y)
Z	z	buzz of (s), E. zeal, miser, (ziil, mai-zz)
Z	z	buzz of (s), Newman's and usually received A. b, Lep- sius's A. ش
Zh	zh	buzz of sh, E. vision, F. gens, (vizh'un, zhas)
Zh	zh	— (zh), buzz of (sh)
Zhj	zhj	— (zh*), buzz of (shj)
Zj	zj	— (z*), buzz of (sj)
Zs	zs	final E. s, s, when fully pronounced, days, flies, buzz, (deezs, flizs, bazs)
Zs	zs	— (z*w), see (sw)
Zsh	zsh	— (zh*w), see (ash)

2. Signs.

- (^o) turned comma, when final, simple whisper, as E. bit, (bî^o); before a vowel, disartic, attempt to whisper the vowel, as ('a), whispered (a); before a sonant, disartic, semi-vocalise, see ('b, 'd, 'g)
- (^o) apostrophe, simple voice, F. able, (abl^o), E. little, rhythm, open — (lî^ol, rîth^om, œp^on), often written (lî^ol, rîth^om, œp^on), S. अ अ — ('a, 'i)
- (^o) double apostrophe, long of ('), S. अ अ — ('a, 'i)
- (-) hyphen, read words or letters that are written apart as if they were written close, opposed to (.), letter elided, as F. nous avons un ami, dit-il à l'homme, (nuz- avœz- œm- ami, dit- il à l- œm)
- (-) minus, before a disartic, remove its effect from the preceding letter in which it is inherent, thus (œ-u-œ means that the sound of œ is heard, when (u) is first pronounced and then the lips opened
- (i) turned l, A. l (;œ-lef), Hebrew s, Greek soft breathing (?)
- (,) comma, diæresis, begin the following letter as if it had no connection with the preceding, E. minutie = (miniu- shi,i), E. unerring, unowned = (œn,er'iq, œn,œnd')
- (,,) double comma, commence the following letter so gently that its commencement is difficult to determine, spiritus lenis (?)
- (.) period, pronounce the following letter emphatically
- (,) period and comma, commence the following letter with great abruptness, strongly marked hiatus
- (;) semicolon, open the glottis suddenly, A. * (nam'zn),
A. ^{سَمْعَان} آل قرآن (jal kur'aanu)

KEY TO PALAEOTYPE—SIGNS.

11

- (f) turned semicolon, close the glottis suddenly as in stammering, or suddenly cease any sound, as when startled, leaving a sound half uttered; (u') is a suddenly checked emission of breath, strongly resembling a click (†), as in Zulu (ik.u'wa), *Visible Speech*, p. 126.
- 6 turned 3, A. 8, bleat *baa* = (baegag)
- (c) turned comma and apostrophe, speak the following word in a subdued tone or *voix voilée*.
- (.) turned apostrophe, nasalize the preceding letter, but not as in F. nasalisation (A)
- (i) turned !, attempt to pronounce the preceding letter with inspired breath, (f, ph), calling a bird
- (†) attempt to pronounce the preceding letter with the air in the mouth without inspiring or expiring, click, E. tut = (t‡), E. cl'ck (tj8†)
- 5 turned 5, Caffir dental click, Appleyard's c, = (t‡), or (t‡†), as in (iqgblu'tri), *Visible Speech*, p. 126.
- 8 turned 2, Caffir cerebral (Lepsius) or palatal (Appleyard) click, Appleyard's g = (t‡†), as in (ngugaleen'), *Visible Speech*, p. 126.
- 7 turned 7, Caffir (uni-) lateral click, Appleyard's x, = (tj8††) with prolonged suction, as in (guglan'ri), *Visible Speech*, p. 126.
- 4 turned 4, Hottentot palatal click, Boyce's qe, = (tj†) probably, Lepsius's Standard Alphabet, 2nd ed., p. 79.
- 8 turned 8, Waco click = (x†), Haldeman, *Analytic Orthography*, p. 120.
- 0 turned 0, distend the pharynx and cheeks, 'widen' the sound.
- † made from †, take the preceding letter nearer the throat and further from the lips, inner position.
- † made from †, take the preceding letter further from the throat and nearer to the lips, outer position.
- † turned †, invert the tongue so that the under part strikes the palate, when pronouncing the preceding letter, see (p, l, x, n, sh, r)
- † protrude the tongue when pronouncing the preceding letter.
- § bi-lateral, allow the breath to escape on both sides of the tongue or mouth, but not over the tip of the tongue or through the middle of the mouth.
- 6 made from §, uni-lateral, allow the breath to escape on one side of the tongue or mouth only.
- 6 turned 7, trill any free part during the utterance of the preceding consonant.
- * link, form a new position by attempting to pronounce the two letters between which it is placed, at the same instant, but giving prominence to the first letter named, see (lj) = (l⁶r)

- ** governor, placed between two letters at the beginning of a phrase, shews that the first is to be pronounced like the second throughout, indicating a defect of utterance, as (l**), (l) pronounced with a nasal twang; when no letter precedes, it indicates that the effect of the following letter is heard in all letters, (**.p) close lips, (**t) protruded tongue, (**.) general nasal quality, (**') strained voice, etc., *Visible Speech*, p. 81.

- (.) turned period, before a word, speak the word emphatically as ('mii did it, nii 'did it); after a letter, (') shews that it occurs in an accented syllable, as (bii'iq, mek'iq, ripeor')
- (:) colon, before a capital letter, (in which case it is written below it, as o,) shews that it is the capital of a small capital letter, see (:E) capital of (e); after a letter, shews that it occurs in a secondarily accented syllable, as (inkom:prinen:sibil'iti, mii'wee:mman')
- ~~~~ written under a word indicates spaced letters, used to give prominence to a word in palaeotype, answering to *italics* in ordinary printing.

Following a Word.

- (..) low level tone, C. high (pniq)
 (..) high level tone, C. low (pniq)
 (..) rising tone, C. high (shaq)
 (..) tone rising from low pitch, C. low (shaq)
 (..) rise and fall, circumflex, C. (fu-kjen shaq)
 (..) falling tone, C. high (kwoor, kwii, kii)
 (..) falling tone to low pitch, C. low (kwoor)
 (..) fall and rise, inverted circumflex
 (..) stop voice in high pitch, C. high (shut, zhi', njipt)
 (..) stop voice in low pitch, C. low (shut, zhi', njipt)

Preceding a Word.

- (..) speak in a high key
 (..) speak in low key

PALAEOTYPE AND VISIBLE SPEECH COMPARED.

The diagrams on p. 14, transferred by Mr. Melville Bell's permission from p. 8 of his *English Visible Speech*, will be the best guide to the pronunciation of the vowels. Each of the first nine diagrams represents the position of the tongue for the four vowels written below it. For the first and third vowels in each diagram, the passages behind the narrowest part of the channel formed by the tongue are in the usual condition, but for the second and fourth vowel in each diagram, they are distended, making the vowels 'wide.' For the first and second vowel in each diagram, the lips are open. For the third and fourth vowel in each diagram, the lips are more or less rounded,—namely, for Nos. 1, 2, 3, as in No. 10, for

A.J. ELLIS--CHRONOLOGY

- 1814, June 14. Born at Hoxton (London)
1837. Bachelor of Arts--Trinity College, Cambridge.
- 1843, August 6. First wrote to Isaac Pitman concerning phonography.
1844. Published Phonetics: A Familiar Exposition of That Science...
1845. Published The Alphabet of Nature.
- 1848, January. Editor of The Phonetic Journal.
- , June. First attempt at writing dialectal pronunciation: "Duncan Gray".
- . Published The Essentials of Phonetics.
- 1859, February 14. Discovered in British Museum Salesbury's Dictionary in Englyshe and Welsh (1547).
- 1864, June 2. Elected Fellow of the Royal Society of London.
- 1866, December 7. Paper on "Palaeotype, or the Representation of Spoken Sounds for Philological Purposes by Means of the Ancient Types".
- 1867, January. Delivered paper on "Pronunciation of English in the XVth Century".
- , October. Began the MS. of E.E.P.
- 1868, July 16. First contact with Thomas Hallam.
- , August. First dialectal information for E.E.P. written from dictation.
- 1869, February. Publication of E.E.P., Part I.
- , August. Publication of E.E.P., Part II.

- 1870, April. Paper on "Glossic" delivered to the Philological Society, printed entirely in Glossic in the Transactions.
- 1871, February. Publication of E.E.P., Part III, with a "Notice" which initiated the systematic inquiry into English dialects.
- 1872, May 17. "First Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society".
- 1873, February. Paper on "Accent and Emphasis" delivered to the Philological Society, incorporated in E.E.P., Part IV.
- , May 16. "Second Address of the President to the Philological Society".
- , September. First distribution of the comparative specimen, used for collecting dialectal information.
- 1874, January. Paper on "Physical Theory of Aspiration" delivered to the Philological Society, incorporated in E.E.P., Part IV.
- , March. Paper on "Vowel Changes in English Dialects".
- , May 15. "Third Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society".
- , June. Published Practical Hints on the Quantitative Pronunciation for the Use of Classical Teachers and Linguists.
- 1875, March. Paper on "Classification of the English Dialects" delivered to the Philological Society.
- , June. Published translation of Helmholtz's Empfindungen.
- 1876, March. Lecture on dialects delivered to the London Institution. Showed first large dialectal map.
- , June. Published The English, Dionysian and Hellenic Pronunciations of Greek.

- 1877, March. Paper on "Dialectal Phonology" delivered to the Philological Society.
- , October. First distribution of word lists, used for collecting dialect information.
- 1879, January. Two lectures on dialects delivered at Newcastle-on-Tyne, with large map reconstituted.
- , February. Distributed dialect test.
- , April & May. Two reports to Philological Society on state of dialect investigation.
- 1880, December. Paper on "Dialects of South of England" delivered to Philological Society.
- 1881, May 20. "Tenth Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society".
- 1882, April. Paper on the "Dialects of Midland and Eastern Counties" delivered to the Philological Society.
- , May. Paper on the "Delimitation of English and Welsh" delivered to the Cymrodorion Society.
- , May 19. "Eleventh Annual Address of the President to the Philological Society".
- 1883, March. Paper on the "Dialects of the Northern Counties" delivered to the Philological Society.
- , November. Paper on the "Dialects of the Lowlands of Scotland (Mainland)" delivered to the Philological Society.
- , November 19. Started E.E.P., Part V.
- 1884, April. Paper on the "Dialects of Scotland (Insular) and of the Isle of Man" delivered to the Philological Society.
- 1885, May. Report to the Philological Society on dialectal work done since November 19, 1883.

- 1886, May. Published "First Report on Dialectal Work to the Philological Society".
- 1887, May. Published "Second Report on Dialectal Work to the Philological Society".
- 1889, May. Completed E.E.P., Part V.
1890. Publication of English Dialects, Their Sounds and Homes.
- , June 14. Cambridge University confers honorary doctorate.
- , October 28. Death in London.



