

Parochial Queries: Printed Questionnaires and the Pursuit of Natural Knowledge in the British Isles, 1650-1800*

We live in an “age of information” in which electronic media have revolutionised our capacity to acquire and disseminate knowledge. These circumstances have prompted the wave of scholarly attention now being paid to the origins, development and consequences of new technologies of communication over the centuries. As Paul Slack has written, “Studies of the information revolution brought about by modern electronic media have naturally prompted interest in how information was created, diffused and manipulated in the past and with what effects”.ⁱ As he points out, much focus in this respect has been directed towards the early modern period in Europe in which the invention of moveable type, the creation of a mass market for printed matter, and the expanding bureaucracy of both Church and State were among those developments which contributed to a huge elaboration of the ways in which ideas and instructions were transmitted and received.

For the most part, however, studies of the ways in which print transformed the possibilities of communication and knowledge exchange in early modern Europe have been concerned with the function of this new technology as a means of presenting and distributing information.ⁱⁱ There has been far less analysis of the use of the printed word in the process of contemporary fact-finding. During the seventeenth century, printed instruments were increasingly circulated by civil and ecclesiastical authorities, commercial organisations and private individuals, for the purposes not only of disseminating intellectual capital but also of acquiring it. It was at this time, for example, that the questionnaire, a tool so beloved today of government agencies, market

researchers and political analysts alike, first made its debut as a mechanism of data collection or opinion-seeking. Just as the printed word may be said to have been a vital “point of contact” between governors and governed, centre and locality, or authors and audience across early modern Europe in the sense of circulating information, so it can be seen to have provided a medium between these spheres in the context of amassing it.

In Great Britain and Ireland one particularly striking example of the deployment of printed questionnaires as a research strategy can be seen in their use by antiquaries, natural historians, and geographers, as well as by political economists and social reformers, in an attempt to collect information about counties or parishes across the constituent parts of the three kingdoms. The deployment of a series of published questions, circulated to the gentry or clergy in the localities, as a means of acquiring “natural knowledge” at the community level, became a standard and widespread methodology during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was adopted by scholars who sought a greater understanding of the past and present state of their nation or region for its own sake, as well as by “improvers” who wanted to ascertain the condition of society as a necessary step in rectifying its deficiencies. The printed questionnaire was an important, and somewhat overlooked, platform upon which the age of information was constructed.

I

The utilisation of the questionnaire as a research method by governments and churches was hardly new in seventeenth-century Britain. In the late eighteenth century, one of its great exponents, the Scottish parliamentarian and reformer, Sir John Sinclair, recognised

that the origins of the form might be traced back at least as far as the Domesday Book, and thought that perhaps the “first attempt of the sort in modern Europe” were the “interrogatories”, later known as “relaciones topográficas”, dispatched by the ministers of Spain under Philip II. In the late 1560s the royal chronicler, Juan Páez de Castro, had drawn up a list of questions to be sent to every community in Castile requesting information on its history, geography, economy, and population, in preparing a detailed account of the kingdom. This initiative probably provided the inspiration for the questionnaires, sent out by Juan de Ovando, both in New Castile and across the Spanish Americas, in 1569, 1570 and 1573 in an effort to find out more about every aspect of the King’s fragmented empire. Ovando was succeeded by Juan López de Velasco, who as “royal cosmographer and chronicler of the Indies”, dispatched a printed inquiry under fifty headings in May 1577, and in a second edition of 1584. A total of 208 surviving replies from the Indies and 166 from New Spain were returned to the central archives between 1578 and 1586, many with the manuscript answers still attached to the printed queries.ⁱⁱⁱ

When in May 1630 Gustavus Adolfus appointed Martin Aschaneun and Johan Hindrickson as the royal antiquaries of Sweden, he dispatched them to make a nationwide enquiry furnished with a set of heads of inquiry by which information for an historical account might be furnished “for the benefit and improvement of the kingdom”. The Church was involved in the distribution of these articles to every clergyman so that material might be gathered comprehensively down to the level of the parish.^{iv} In France, meanwhile, Richelieu issued a number of “enquêtes” in search of facts and figures on the state of the nation and Louis XIV’s great minister, Colbert, was another of the energetic administrators to appreciate the value of the questionnaire. In September 1663 Colbert issued “Instruction pour les maîtres des requêtes, commissaires departis dans les

provinces” to all intendants, thus initiating what would be an ongoing request for social data, economic statistics and political information from all parts of the country. These, in turn, may have influenced the notably wide-ranging ecclesiastical inquiries issued in a number of French dioceses during the later seventeenth century. When in 1697 the Duke of Beauvillier dispatched to the provinces another such questionnaire of nineteen points in preparing his memoir for the political instruction of Louis XIV’s grandson, the Duke of Burgundy, he was following a well-established practice. The account of Languedoc, written in response by Monsieur de Lamoignon de Baviile, would later be referred to disparagingly by Voltaire and subsequently by Sir John Sinclair who was able to peruse a copy of the manuscript as an example of what such inquiries might yield.^v

During the eighteenth century, the issue of “statistical inquiries” became a common strategy among European governments. Censuses of national population, which involved information gathering at the local level, were initiated in Iceland in 1703, Russia in 1718, Sweden in the 1740s, Austria in 1754, and in Norway and Denmark in 1769. In a number of German states, inquiries of a broader nature became fashionable in the second half of the eighteenth century. Sinclair, who experienced them at first hand, was much impressed, and he could point to similar surveys of national resources in contemporary Prussia and Saxony, as well as in Sweden, Sardinia and Tuscany, as precursors of his own Statistical Account of Scotland in the 1790s.^{vi}

In Britain the collection of information at the level of the parish by both Church and State had become a recognised part of the machinery of government by the sixteenth century at least. Thomas Cromwell instituted the Valor Ecclesiasticus, a register of all ecclesiastical income, in 1535, the parochial registration of vital statistics in 1538, and also the compulsory registration of land conveyances. In 1563 the creation of county record

offices was proposed to house transcripts of parish registers, the Privy Council persuaded the city of London to begin compiling bills of mortality for plague years, and it sent a circular letter to all bishops in England and Wales containing five questions about the administrative structures of their dioceses, including the number of households in each parish. The returns to the latter, received from a total of 4,708 parishes and chapelries across twelve dioceses, constitute “the earliest census-type data that we have in the history of this country”.^{vii}

Since the Reformation, bishops had conducted regular visitations of parishes within their dioceses, enquiring into the condition of clerical conformity, lay discipline, and church fabric. The earliest evidence for assessing numbers of communicants comes from the 1550s and the first recorded concern over the qualifications and conduct of the clergy derives from the 1560s. In 1603, Archbishop Whitgift circulated a letter to all dioceses containing seven questions including those about numbers of communicants and the extent of popish recusancy. Returns were received from 3,411 parishes across nine counties of England and Wales. This exercise had much in common with that conceived by the Lord Treasurer, Thomas Danby, in 1676 to determine the number of residents in each parish, and of recusants and dissenters in particular. The “Compton Census” was produced in response to three questions drafted by Archbishop Gilbert Sheldon to be sent to the bishops and from thence down to the incumbent and his churchwardens at the parochial level. The form and wording of these suggest that Whitgift’s text of 1603 was used as a model.^{viii}

In Scotland, meanwhile, a Royal Commission established in 1627 for the “Plantation of Kirks” issued a series of questions to the presbyteries requesting that the minister and elders provide information with a view to establishing the value of ecclesiastical lands

and settling the stipends of ministers. Although no copy of the queries appears to survive, the replies indicate that their scope was quite wide, including interest in the value of all rents and properties, the population size and physical extent of the parish, and whether or not it had a school or hospital. The extant returns from forty-nine parishes provide a detailed snapshot of social and economic conditions in the south east of the country at the beginning of Charles I's reign.^{ix}

Two years later the King agreed to support the completion of the mapping of Scotland begun by Timothy Pont, and the Kirk proved to be the main promoter of this project. Sir John Scot of Scotstarvit, Director of Chancery in Scotland, was its principal orchestrator and he enlisted the cartographic skills of Robert Gordon of Straloch. In August 1641 the General Assembly of the Kirk decreed that commissioners should distribute to every presbytery an "alphabet" of questions drawn up by Scot, following which they might "set doun the description of their severall paroches". These would accompany or inform the maps of Scottish regions and counties being edited by Gordon from Pont's manuscripts and to be printed in the Atlas Novus of John Blaeu of Amsterdam. Throughout the 1640s the General Assembly repeated its injunctions to presbyteries to complete their parochial descriptions for the Atlas project, although only a few accounts were returned to Scot. Gordon appears to have used questionnaires to elicit information in this way himself: his "Demandes touching the descriptions of the tuons of new and Ould Aberdein" survives, requesting historical and topographical information.^x

Two generations later, in 1720-1, the Kirk sought to update its information on parishes by circulating sheets of "directions" or "rules" to ministers asking for details about the geography, population, and natural resources of their livings. Dozens of replies came in over the following few years and 222 had been returned by 1733 amounting to a

significant body of topographical, social and economic data on around one quarter of Scottish parishes.^{xi} In the 1750s the General Assembly offered similar support to the Rev. Alexander Webster, who served as its Moderator and as a longstanding member of the committee of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, in his commission to enumerate the people of Scotland. Requests were sent to all ministers to return figures for their parishes and submissions from a total of 892 enabled Webster to compile a very accurate *Account* of the Scottish population in the mid eighteenth century.^{xii} By the time that Sir John Sinclair, as a lay member of the General Assembly of the Kirk and an intimate of many prominent ministers, conceived his Statistical Account in May 1790, therefore, the Scottish church had a long tradition of supporting and contributing to such enquiries.^{xiii}

The use of print as a medium through which to conduct parochial inquiries in England also went back to the sixteenth century. Edmond Bonner's printed visitation articles for the diocese of London in 1554 represent an early example. Edmund Grindal's for York in 1571 and Thomas Cooper's for Lincoln in 1580 are among Elizabethan survivals. By the late seventeenth century the form of these enquiries had become so standard that generic sets of articles were being printed with blank spaces for the particular details of time and place to be written in.^{xiv} At the same time, the expansion and elaboration of parliamentary taxation under the Stuarts also brought forth printed proforma to be filled out by local officials in making their records. By the mid seventeenth century local offices of the excise tax were supplied with printed forms on which to enter the names of defaulters. Printed instructions were issued to collectors of the Hearth Tax in 1664, the early 1670s, and 1684, while printed exemption certificates contained spaces for them to transcribe the names of the non-liaible.^{xv} In the early modern period, therefore, the printed

page was fully insinuated into the business of ecclesiastical and fiscal administration at the lowest level.

II

It was also during the seventeenth century that the printed questionnaire came to be utilised as an instrument of information-gathering more broadly in Britain. Under the influence of Baconian natural philosophy the formulation of “heads”, or “articles of inquiry”, became a common means of identifying issues for investigation and structuring empirical research among scholars who sought to collect improving or useful knowledge. Francis Bacon compiled a series of “topics”, or “directions of invention and inquiry”, in pursuit of the comprehensive “civil” and “natural histories” upon which he began working in the early 1620s. Bacon’s ideas set the agenda for much research into “natural knowledge” over the next two centuries, one characterised by the mixing of antiquities and natural history into an integrated account of phenomena past and present. His was a method based on first-hand experience in the field rather than reliance on the accounts of others, and by focus on a necessarily circumscribed geographical area in the interests of accuracy and detail. Moreover, his stress on the benefits of collaborative research pointed to the value of distributing such “heads” among would-be accomplices. Since systematic interrogation of the material world by observation and experiment was inevitably beyond the scope of any one individual, it could only be accomplished by the “united labours of many, though not by any one apart”.^{xvi}

Accordingly, those virtuosi who, over the succeeding generations, sought to realise the programme set out by Bacon, frequently drew up and disseminated sets of queries as a

framework for their investigations and an invitation to collective endeavour. Thus the pioneering inquiry into the state of Ireland undertaken by the group of progressive thinkers and social reformers that gathered around Samuel Hartlib in the 1640s and '50s was classically Baconian in this respect, as in others. In 1645 Gerard Boate began working on a comprehensive natural history of the country with the aid of information supplied by his brother Arnold. When Gerard died early in 1650 only the first part of the work had been completed and Arnold edited the text for publication two years later. At the same time he issued an alphabetical list of queries, An Interrogatory Relating more particularly to the Husbandry and Naturall History of Ireland, soliciting material for the three remaining parts of the project, printed as an appendix to the second edition of Hartlib's Legacie (1652), but which was also designed for detachment and separate circulation. This appears to give Arnold Boate the honour of being "the first author in England to publish such as questionnaire".^{xvii}

With Arnold Boate's death late in 1653, Hartlib handed responsibility for the Irelands Naturall History project to Robert Boyle and Robert Child. Copies of Boate's Interrogatory were sent to Boyle and within a few months "divers" replies had come in. After Child's demise, Robert Wood took a lead in distributing the questionnaire and sheets of answers were sent back to Hartlib and circulated to Boyle's sister, Lady Ranelagh. In the end, nothing came of the ambition to complete a scientific and holistic natural history of Ireland, although immediate legacies of the project were the "Gross" and "Civil" surveys of the country directed by Benjamin Worsley, and the great "Down" survey undertaken by William Petty, which between them had provided a wealth of topographical and economic information, together with remarkably accurate maps of almost the whole province, by the end of the Commonwealth period.^{xviii}

After the Restoration the Baconian methods pioneered by the Hartlib circle in Ireland were to have a direct and significant influence on research strategies adopted by the new science and its nascent philosophical societies across the British Isles. Petty's "Down" survey had been a model of scientific measurement and observation on the ground, and its employment of hundreds of common soldiers to carry out the work, an exemplary exercise in collective and "democratic" investigation. Petty himself was a habitual formulator of "articles of inquiry". As early as about 1650 he had drawn up a manuscript list of thirty-two "Enquiries concerning Bathe Waters", and their chemical and medical properties: the extent of its circulation is unclear but both John Aubrey and Edward Lhwyd would copy and utilise it years later.^{xix} Thereafter, Petty's writings were full of such "queries", reflecting his evolving interests in the history of trades, political arithmetic and social reform.^{xx} In the early 1680s, for example, he drew up, although never printed, "The Method of Enquiring into ye State of any Country", a comprehensive list of desiderata and interrogatories seeking information on all aspects of economic, demographic, political and natural knowledge.^{xxi}

Equally, Robert Boyle clearly drew upon his experience during the Ireland's Natural History enterprise when devising interrogatories with respect both to natural history and overseas lands, before and during his membership of the Royal Society's Committee on Foreign Plantations. His "General Heads for a Natural History of a Countrey, Great or small", together with his "Other Inquiries concerning the Sea" and "Articles of Inquiries touching Mines", were printed in early numbers of the newly instituted Philosophical Transactions.^{xxii} At the same time, the Society's experimental scientist, Robert Hooke, produced comprehensive "tables or heads of inquiry" with respect to both "natural" and "artificial" knowledge as the intellectual framework for its collaborative and cooperative research.^{xxiii} Hooke was also involved in drawing up questionnaires for seamen and

travellers abroad in pursuit of geographical information, akin to “Directions for Sea-men, bound for far Voyages”, which Lawrence Rooke published in the Transactions in January 1666. Queries aimed at a variety of different countries were produced, both in manuscript and print, and Hooke could later reflect with justification that, “the Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge has not been wanting in preparing and dispersing instructions to this end . . .”.^{xxiv}

Another notable example of this methodology in action was in the field of agriculture. At the first meeting of the Society’s Georgical Committee in June 1664 it was decided that in order “to compose as perfect a History of Agriculture and Gardening as might be”, appropriate “heads of inquiries” should be drawn up out of “Georgical Authors” and dispatched to “experienced husbandmen in all the shires and counties of England, Scotland and Ireland”. A version of the resulting questionnaire was published in the fifth number of the Transactions in July 1665 and would be given another circulation in September 1681 when John Houghton reprinted it in the first of his Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade. The dozen responses which it evoked initially, yielded an extremely detailed, if highly partial, picture of English farming practice after the Restoration.^{xxv}

Hooke’s geographical interests took a new turn in the late 1660s when he developed a close professional relationship with the publisher John Ogilby over the surveying of property boundaries in London after the Great Fire. In November 1669 Ogilby obtained a licence to produce a new atlas of the world that he proposed in four volumes dealing with each of Africa, America, Asia and Europe. By June 1670 he had decided to add a fifth volume on “Britannia” that was to consist of three parts: a road book of England and Wales, a collection of twenty-five city plans, and series of county surveys. Hooke was an

enthusiastic sponsor of this project and may well have been instrumental in persuading the ageing Ogilby to seek the aid of a printed questionnaire as part of a collaborative research strategy. In 1672 Ogilby secured the surveying and cartographic skills of the young Gregory King who organised standing lotteries in Bristol and London to raise money for the “Britannia” project.^{xxvi}

The London lottery was held at Garaway’s coffee house in Exchange Alley where Ogilby mixed regularly with Fellows of the Royal Society and others of like mind. It was a group composed of Ogilby, Hooke and King, together with the lawyer Sir John Hoskins, the architect Christopher Wren, and the antiquary and natural historian John Aubrey, who between them formulated two versions of Queries in Order to the Description of Britannia in 1673. In addition to the concern with administrative structures and antiquities, these queries bore witness to Hooke’s interest in natural history, topography and economic activity, as well as to Aubrey’s additional enthusiasm for “peculiar customs and manners”. These single folio sheets were clearly intended for distribution in the localities as a vehicle for soliciting information from qualified sources. One consisted of nineteen questions upon which it was said, “Information is desir’d in Writing; either upon certain Knowledge, or other good Authority, directing each Remark to the Number relating to it, and annexing thereto the County and Hundred wherein the Remark falls”. The other, of twenty-two questions, was addressed to “the nobility and gentry, and all other ingenious persons”, who were to return “such remarques of the county or place of their residence, or what they may be acquainted with”, to Ogilby at his house in the White Friars.^{xxvii}

In May, Ogilby as newly appointed Cosmographer Royal, granted Aubrey a licence to survey Surrey, as a result of which he undertook his perambulation of the county between

July and October and clearly had plans, never realised, to do the same in Sussex, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. His Surrey notes contain a copy of both sets of the Britannia Queries and they clearly provided a framework for the Baconian investigations, “mixing antiquities and naturall things together”, evident in the Natural History of Wiltshire which he had largely completed by the end of 1675. Aubrey’s research in Wiltshire was to remain ongoing and a decade later he was circulating some “Naturall Queres” of his own in pursuit of more information on the county, confessing to valuing greatly the “considerable remarques” that he received in response.^{xxviii}

Among Hooke’s other coffee house companions at around this time were a number of those who would play an instrumental role in the deployment of the printed questionnaire in this context. They included Petty, the natural historian from Oxford, Robert Plot, and the young Scottish cartographer John Adair.^{xxix} In 1673 Plot announced his intention “to journey through England and Wales, for the promotion of learning and trade”, and in so doing “to make strict inquiry after all curiosities both of art and nature” under ten “heads”. “I intend to contrive interrogatories for every head,” he wrote, “which read over to the most ingenious part of the nation, 'twill be scarce possible that any thing considerable should be pass't over”. The result was Quar's to be propounded to the most ingenious of each County in my Travels through England, a total of twenty-two questions on which he collaborated with Hooke and which were printed in 1674.^{xxx} In July 1675, Aubrey wrote of being in Oxford where “Dr Plott of Magd: Hall gave me his synopsis of his Naturall Hist: of England, about wch he has taken great paines”, and in aid of which he was transcribing from his “Description of Wilts all my naturall observations . . . and also I have sent for my notes of my survey of Surrey, where is a good store of such remarques”. Plot drew on Aubrey’s jottings but embarked on his own fieldwork, using the Quar's as the foundation for his Natural History of Oxfordshire, the manuscript of

which he brought into Garaway's for circulation among the company in November 1675, and which was in print by May 1677.^{xxx}

Back in Oxford, meanwhile, a Fellow of Queen's College, Thomas Machell, perhaps inspired by Plot's methods and certainly encouraged by Sir William Dugdale and Anthony Wood, decided to undertake a similar project in his native Westmorland. Taking Ogibly's Queries as a model and expanding upon them, he published, on 1 January 1677: That the Northern Counties which abound in Antiquities and Ancient Gentry may no longer be bury'd in Silence, Information is desir'd concerning the following Queries as they lye in order. This was the first set of such printed queries that was truly parochial in the sense of being explicitly addressed to individuals at the most local level. Its first section, "Queries concerning the parish in general", was directed at ministers, churchwardens and "ancient men"; the second, "concerning every particular lordship", was aimed at "the lord, steward, balive, or experienced tenants" of each manor; and the third, "concerning every city, town, village, hamlet, &c", was likewise intended for their most knowledgeable inhabitants. Machell itemised, in four quarto pages of detailed questions, the natural history and antiquities on which he sought information and also the many aspects of current economic, social and cultural life. His was the first set of inquiries, moreover, to request, in true Baconian fashion, an explicit indication of the source of the information supplied, and therefore of its reliability. He asked informants to write a "T", an "R", or an "E", before each answer in designating its derivation respectively from "Report and Tradition", "Evidence or Record", or "Experience or Knowledge of the present age".^{xxxii}

One of only two surviving copies of Machell's questionnaire is that which he sent to the antiquary and JP for Westmorland, Sir Daniel Fleming. On 26 March 1677 Machell

wrote to Fleming at Rydal Hall, near Grasmere, explaining that he had “enlarg’d Mr Oglebyes Queries, that I may be both able to satisfy them, and myne own curiosity. The end of which is to haue in readiness a local account how things stand at this day in each parish & lordship; to which I may refer (as a comon-place) all those collections I haue in readiness; and what euer else shall hereafter occur, either in historyes or ancient records.” He confessed his hope that gentlemen and clergy would help him, but showed a Baconian faith in the possibility of deriving wisdom from humble people of experience in insisting that the queries were also “contriv’d for ordinary capacityes, that the vulgar (possibly of slow apprehensions) who must be consulted in this vndertakeing, by giueing their answers to severall Queries in different terms tho to the same purpose, may luckily hit of som little circumstance fully discovering all that is sought for in 2 or 3 questions.” He referred to receiving help from Mr Stuartson the schoolmaster of Kendal and having “dispatch’d papers som time agoe to my friend & brother Mr Blennerhassat; wch (I make no question) he has dispersed among the ministers”.^{xxxiii}

Unfortunately the responses received by Machell were disappointing. On 1 August that year he wrote to Fleming again, somewhat dolefully: “If all other gentlemen were of your minde there would be no fear of sufficient encouragemt: but, wth som, my Queries finde cold reption; & those who are backward in their informations, will not be too forward in their contributions.” In fact only one reply to the queries survives among his papers, a short description of the parish of Melmerby sent to him by the rector Mr Singleton in June 1677. On 15 August Machell was himself instituted as rector of Kirkby Thore near Appleby and for the next twenty years, until his death in 1698, he rode around Cumberland and Westmorland, sketching, mapping, note-taking and interviewing, in pursuit of the programme which he had set out.^{xxxiv} In 1684 he was elected Fellow of the Oxford Philosophical Society and communicated a paper on Roman antiquities to its

Philosophical Transactions the following year. None of his researches otherwise found their way into print, although they were known and utilised by his fellow collegians Edmund Gibson and William Nicholson.^{xxxv}

On 14 February 1679, meanwhile, Plot issued another more detailed set of Enquiries in print and embarked upon the research that would lead to his Natural History of Staffordshire, published in 1686.^{xxxvi} There is nothing to suggest that Plot received any reply to his questions, however, either from Staffordshire or anywhere else and his works remained essentially those of the lone scholar. Throughout this period, Aubrey remained an enthusiastic disseminator of Plot's research agenda, but with little more success. In February 1681 Edward Tyson informed Plot that, "Mr Aubray, who gives you his service, desir'd me to acquaint you that there are some friends of his that are curious and intelligent in Nat: Hist:, and if they had your queres, might possibly be able to serve you; wherefore desires that he may have 6 copys of them sent him." One of these friends may have been Aubrey's cousin, Henry Vaughan, whom he encouraged to write a "Natural History of Brecknockshire", but without result.^{xxxvii}

Another was John Beaumont. In November 1683 Tyson again told Plot that Aubrey "desired of me some of your Queres for a gentleman in Somersetshire who is desirous of imitating you in the Nat[ural] Hist[ory] of that County. But to it he will add likewise the Civil and Ecclesiastic[al] Hist[ory].” The gentleman was Beaumont, who had been persuaded by his friend Robert Hooke to undertake the project and to whom Aubrey had also lent his notes on Surrey. In 1685 Beaumont sent to Plot his published three-and-a-half page pamphlet under nine headings entitled A Draught of a Design For Writing the History of Nature and Arts of the County of Somerset, which was read at the Oxford Philosophical Society on 17 March. The preface announced his ambition "to write the

History of Nature and Arts of the County of Somerset” akin to those of “the learned Dr Robert Plot in Oxford-shire, and newly in Staffordshire” by means of queries ”extracted for the greatest part from certain Heads of Enquiries formerly publish'd” by him. The naturalist William Cole reported Beaumont’s intention “to attend the gentlemen of that county the last weeke att Taunton assizes, to deliver his proposals and receive their subscriptions”, but his apparent failure “to divert and draw them of[f] from those destructive vulgar vices, the contagion of which is become epidemicall” is suggested by the fact that no returns appear to have been elicited and no “history of nature and arts” was ever written.^{xxxviii}

No more luck was had by the physician, antiquary and political theorist, Nathaniel Johnston, who in 1683 had printed a set of twenty-four Enquiries for Information towards the Illustrating and Compleating the Antiquities and Natural History of York-shire. Since the 1660s Johnston had been collecting antiquarian and topographical material, wapentake by wapentake, towards a comprehensive account of his native county. By the early 1680s he could claim to have “collected vast numbers of materials towards this great work”, but he now sought “the assistance of the Reverend clergy in each parish, to procure such further Information, by answers to the ensuing enquiries, as may enable him to perfect the same”.^{xxxix} Typically, in October that year, Johnston could write to his friend and fellow antiquary, Ralph Thoresby, in Leeds complaining that “such is the neglect or supineness of people, that I have not yet had one return made to me of the several hundreds of enquiries I have dispersed. Some few have sent me in some deeds, so that I must be forced to print a number more of enquiries without proposals, and a letter with them to desire gentlemen to make more expedition.” In December the following year he could still lament the “strange slowness in making any return to my inquiries”, and by August 1685 he was sounding impatient in desiring Thoresby “to get me all the

information you can, according to my Enquiries long since sent, whereof I have not one now by me ...”.^{xl}

His extant manuscripts suggest the help that he must have received from the local gentry in supplying him with records to transcribe, but his jottings on very few wapentakes reflect the range or detail of information that his Enquiries had sought. The young antiquary and vicar of Hatfield, Abraham de la Pryme, offered some help by writing marginal comments throughout Johnston’s notes on Doncaster and Hatfield, but these were places upon which he was writing histories of his own.^{xli} Nevertheless, despite the lack of specific returns to his questionnaire, Johnston’s own labours were exhaustive. In January 1694 he could boast having sufficient “materials for ten volumes” of published Yorkshire antiquities and was still hoping “to compress them in two or three”. A catalogue of his manuscripts, drawn up soon afterwards, listed over 100 volumes of notes, only some of which now survive, but on his death in 1705 the “great work” remained unrealised.^{xlii}

Another product of early 1683 with equally unrealised potential was Petty’s printed sheet of heads in search of data on: “1. The Number of Inhabitants, Male and Female. 2. Married and Unmarried, and their Trades. 3. Widdows and Widdowers. 4. The Age of each Person, Man, Woman, and Child. 5. The Number of Families and Hearths.” He also asked informants to record births, burials and marriages over the previous seven years, 1676-82, and to “Describe the Soyl and Scituation of the Parish, and the Reputed Number of Acres which it containeth”.^{xliii} This was the first time the basis for a census of population in Britain had been orchestrated beyond the aegis of the Church and put into print, but there is no evidence to suggest that Petty succeeded in dispersing it beyond a few friends or receiving anything but samplings in return. In March 1683 Francis Aston

remarked to Plot that Petty had given him “2 or 3 papers of inquirys to be sent to some parishes of 100 familys where the register of births, burials and christenings is kept.” In August 1685 Petty asked Aubrey to give him “an acct. of ye peeple of two or 3 parishes, according to ye directions I printed when I was last in England”, and the following year Aubrey dutifully “made extracts out of the register bookes of half a dozen parishes in South Wiltshire, which I gave to Sir Wm. Petty”.^{xliv}

Far more substantial results on the basis of genuinely collective effort were achieved both in Ireland and Scotland at this time, however. Any one of Petty, Aubrey or Hooke may have had some bearing on the set of sixteen questions further to a description of Ireland issued in July 1682 by William Molyneux. Petty was the first president of the Dublin Philosophical Society founded by Molyneux the following year, while Aubrey preserved a copy of these “Quaeries” among his Surrey notes. The responses were intended to inform an account of Ireland which was to be published as part of the New English Atlas proposed by the London bookseller Moses Pitt, a project for which Hooke had been a galvanising force. Molyneux seems to have circulated his questionnaire among the English gentry in Ireland with a remit to provide descriptions on a county basis. The result was that he received communications on at least nineteen Irish counties from fourteen identifiable individuals, many of them amounting to substantial and minutely observed narrative accounts of people and places from a distinctly Protestant and Anglo-Irish perspective. In the event Moses Pitt went to prison for bankruptcy and the Atlas was never realised. Molyneux had most of his replies neatly transcribed in two manuscript folios, and others survive in scattered sources, but otherwise the valuable fruits of this initiative went largely unrecognised and have never been fully published.^{xlv}

Meanwhile, on his appointment as Geographer Royal for Scotland in 1682 Sir Robert Sibbald had also set to work on that country's history, topography and present state, gathering material for his Scotia Illustrata which would appear in 1684. Sibbald was familiar with “The honourable Mr Boyle his wishes for wrytting of a natural history” and sometime in 1682 he published an Advertisement containing a dozen “General Queries, to which Answers are desired”, followed by particular questions aimed at each of the nobility, clergy, and gentry, the royal burghs and the universities. He followed this up, in perhaps October of the same year, with some more detailed printed instructions, In Order to an exact Description, intended to help prospective respondents record accurate results.^{xlvi} The responses that Sibbald's two questionnaires provoked were also considerable. Among his papers survive materials written or communicated by at least fifty-nine named individuals drawn from all regions of the country. This large network of contacts established with the aristocracy and gentry, ministry and officialdom, throughout the kingdom played a significant role in forging something of an intellectual community in late seventeenth-century Scotland. Like Molyneux in Ireland, he brought within his ambit people from disparate localities, encouraging them to contribute information that may never otherwise have been committed to paper, and in so doing providing an unprecedentedly detailed picture of the country in the 1680s.^{xlvii}

One of those enlisted by Sibbald was the cartographer John Adair. He had been commissioned by Moses Pitt to produce the maps of Scottish counties for his proposed Atlas and in May 1681 the Scottish Privy Council had given Adair licence “to take a survey of the whole shires of the Kingdom, and to make up mapps thereof, describing each shire, royal burgh, and other towns considerable, the houses of the nobility and gentry and the most considerable rivers, lochs” and other features. For Sibbald he “wrotte . . . a description of Stormont, Gowrie, and the adjoyning part of Anguse”, and “a

description of Strathern in 5 pages”, while continuing to work on his county maps throughout the 1680s. In 1694 Adair printed his own broadsheet containing fourteen Queries, In Order to a True Description; And an Account of the Natural Curiositys, and Antiquities, of which two copies survive. Its scope was as wide as other examples of the genre, encompassing most aspects of natural history, antiquities, and curious phenomena. No replies appear to be extant, but the exercise may have contributed something to his now lost manuscript, “A Journal of the Voyage made to the North and Western Islands of Scotland” of 1689, the topographical Description of the Sea Coasts and Islands of Scotland that he published in 1703, and the “Short Account of the Kingdome of Scotland”, completed four years later though never printed.^{xlviii}

At the same time Sibbald continued to draw on his correspondents in seeking input to the considerable body of published and unpublished work on which he laboured until his death in 1722. In 1692 he was engaged by William Nicolson of Queen’s College, Oxford to contribute to another great collaborative project by retranslating and providing additions to the Scottish section of the new edition of Camden’s Britannia being prepared by his colleague Edmund Gibson. Another recruit to this project was Robert Plot. In the early 1690s Plot had resigned his keepership of the Ashmolean Museum and settled in London and at Borden, near Sittingbourne in Kent. From these bases he proposed new natural histories of both Middlesex and Kent, and London and Westminster. Fragmentary antiquarian and topographical notes from a tour through Kent that he took in August and September 1693 have survived, as has a manuscript copy of his detailed set of queries into the particulars of agriculture in the county.^{xlix} In August 1694 he had printed Enquiries to be Propounded to the most Sincere and Intelligent in the Cities of London and Westminster, a broadsheet, now surviving in a sole copy, containing typical questions, under seven heads, about history and antiquities, flora and fauna, topography

and remarkable phenomena.¹ Neither of the two projected volumes had been completed by Plot's death in April 1696, although he lived long enough to see his "Additions" to Kent and Middlesex published in the new Britannia the previous year.^{li}

It was also William Nicolson, who persuaded Edward Lhwyd, the Celtic scholar who had succeeded Plot as keeper of the Ashmolean, to write the Welsh "Additions" for the revised Camden. Lhwyd's famously exhaustive researches owed much to the methodology perfected over the previous generation. His papers include a copy of the first set of Ogilby's queries, both of the first two sets of enquiries published by his mentor Plot, and also those of Machell and Molyneux.^{lii} To these he would add in due course the Certain Heads intended to be treated, of in a Natural History of Northamptonshire which he persuaded John Morton to issue in 1700.^{liii} For the Britannia he devised a written questionnaire of his own, sent to the gentry and clergy of Denbeigh, Merioneth and Montgomery, before embarking on a tour through Wales later in 1693.^{liv}

With work for the new edition of Camden behind him, Lhwyd announced the proposal to produce his magnum opus, the Archaeologia Britannia, a comprehensive comparative study of the language, history, literature and culture of the Celtic inhabitants of the British Isles. Only the first of his four projected volumes ever appeared, the great Celtic dictionary, but in 1696 Lhwyd published Parochial Queries in order to a Geographical Dictionary, A Natural History, &c. of Wales, four folio pages of thirty-one questions on the geography and antiquities, natural history and customs of the country. With space provided underneath each query in which to write an answer, this was the first such questionnaire in which a response was actually invited on the printed sheet. 4000 copies were circulated in all parishes of the principality and Lhwyd's extensive correspondence makes it possible to chart the efforts made to disperse them. John Wynn was justified in

warning him in January 1697: “You must not expect the sheets to be sent you back with observation under proper heads...”. Indeed, only twenty-seven copies of the Parochial Queries, with answers duly filled in the spaces, have survived among his collected papers, but returns in one form or another exist from a total of 146 parishes across Wales, making this easily one of the most successful exercises of its kind.^{lv} Between 1697 and 1701 Lhwyd continued his fieldwork into Ireland, and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, where he seemed content to confine his circulation of queries to informed parties in manuscript form.^{lvi}

Material for the Britannia project was also supplied from Gloucestershire by Richard Parsons, chancellor of the diocese of Gloucester since 1677, who had been amassing antiquarian and other information during his annual parochial visitations. At some point he printed Queries in order to a Survey of the County of Gloucester to aid these inquiries, requesting information on twenty articles under headings of ‘The Church’, ‘The Parish’ and the ‘Parishioners’ in their past and more especially their present state. What response these elicited is not clear, but on his death in 1711 Parsons left two volumes of antiquarian and topographical notes on the county, which answer to his heads parish by parish. Only one of these has survived, containing what is apparently the sole extant copy of the Queries, and some of his material was incorporated, largely unacknowledged, into Sir Robert Atkyns’ Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire (1712).^{lvii}

Parson’s Queries demonstrate the obvious overlap between the ecclesiastical visitation and the academic enquiry after “natural knowledge”, and this reciprocal relationship was developed by another of Nicolson’s circle at Queen’s College, William Wake. Wake was already a distinguished historian of the medieval English church when in 1705, as Bishop of Lincoln, he came to preside over the largest diocese in the country, an area stretching

from the Thames to the Humber and encompassing more than 1300 parishes. The following year he issued his first set of visitation articles to churchwardens within the see and augmented it with a raft of seven written queries to all the clergy asking for additional information on the state of their parishes and condition of their flocks. These included questions about the patron of the living, the local gentry, the schools, almshouses and hospitals, as well as: “Are there any Monuments of Note in your Parish Church or Chappell? Or what other Antiquities do you know of within your Parish?” Wake digested the returns into a speculum that was to provide a handbook in the aid of diocesan administration thereafter. This represented a significant expansion of the remit of the ecclesiastical visitation and on his translation to the archdiocese of Canterbury in 1716, Wake continued the practice of asking broader supplementary questions of the clergy in his four-yearly visitations up until 1728.^{lviii}

When Edmund Gibson succeeded his friend Wake at Lincoln, he was mindful that “the practice of transmitting queries to the clergy, which began with my pious and learned predecessor, is of such great and apparent use, that I should think myself much wanting, not only to myself but my successor if I did not continue it; especially having found the manifold advantages of it, by my own experience”. In 1717 and 1720 he issued printed questionnaires addressed to “[. . .] Parish in the Archdeaconry of [. . .] and Deanery of [. . .]”, with the details to be filled in by hand before they were sent, and he continued to record the acquired information in the diocesan ledger. Gibson took the procedure with him to the bishopric of London in 1723 and it rapidly became established as the model for episcopal visitations across England and Wales during the eighteenth century.^{lix}

One of Wake’s correspondents while he was Bishop of Lincoln had been the antiquary Browne Willis of Whaddon Hall, near Fenny Stratford in Buckinghamshire.^{lix} Willis had

been gathering material on the antiquities of his county for several years when in April 1712 he printed a set of a dozen Queries on four folio pages, with spaces provided in which to write answers, for distribution to local “gentlemen and clergymen”. In the course of his pastoral duties, Wake “dispersed these queries all over the county” of Buckinghamshire on Willis’s behalf. When the latter came to take stock of the returns in January the following year, he was disappointed to have received only thirty and these of variable quality. Willis did little with them, although the responses from the hundred of Buckingham may have contributed something to The History and Antiquities of the Town, Hundred and Deanry of Buckingham that he eventually published in 1755.^{lxi}

Another of Willis’s friends was the young antiquary and future non-juring bishop of the Church of England, Richard Rawlinson. In 1714 Willis sent Rawlinson four copies of the replies to his questionnaire, those for Hardwick, Farnham and East Claydon written on the printed sheets themselves, and another from Fulmer forming a separate account, all of which the latter kept as a reference. The two men may have discussed the matter when Rawlinson visited Whaddon Hall two years later. Thus it was following Willis’s example, that when Rawlinson set out on a tour of almost every Oxfordshire parish in the company of the publisher Edmund Curll in 1718, he carried with him his own printed questionnaire.^{lxii}

Rawlinson’s inquiries, addressed To the Reverend the Clergy and Gentlemen of the County of Oxford, were concerned with the usual wide range of topographical, historical and social information, including population size and agricultural practice, resident gentry and church buildings, land tenure and manorial customs, feasts and market days, schools and charities, antiquities and local customs. He received replies from Thomas Fletcher, the minister of Bloxham, and from Daniel Ayshford of Swyncombe, written on the

questionnaire itself, as well as separate descriptions of Nettlebed and Pishill from Robert Horn, and of Watlington by Thomas Toovey, but apparently no other responses. It was instead from their extensive field trip that Rawlinson and Curll managed to amass a considerable body of antiquarian notes on the county.^{lxiii} Rawlinson does not seem to have been discouraged, however, for in a subsequent attempt, equally unrealised, to update John Norden's Elizabethan History of Middlesex, he cut and pasted his Oxfordshire queries into another mocked-up questionnaire which looks as though he had been intending to try the method again in another county.^{lxiv}

In February 1720, meanwhile, Browne Willis responded to an enquiry from the Essex antiquary William Holman by sending him another old copy of his Buckinghamshire queries, that which had been returned from the parish of Cheddington. "All I can say in the matter", Willis advised Holman, "is that if you think any p[ar]t of it for your purpose you may extract it and print such like queries but by my fate you must [not] depend on much . . .". Holman seems to have taken this experience to heart, apparently remaining content to pursue information further to his own researches by personal letter rather than printed questionnaire.^{lxv} Willis was clearly more encouraging in this respect to the young John Hutchins, however. Since becoming curate of Milton Abbas, Dorset in 1723, Hutchins had begun work on local antiquities and when Willis, himself a native of neighbouring Blandford, visited the area in 1736, he persuaded Hutchins to undertake a full-scale history of the county. To this end Willis drew up and had printed at his own expense a set of six Queries relating to the County of Dorset that, together with a circular letter, were ready for Hutchins to distribute in April 1739. By October, Hutchins could only report to Willis that: "I have not received many answers to my Querys, but have some good accts and assistance, and am promised more. Those who have any curiosity are ready to assist, but I wish we had more of such persons. This was ever a complaint in

all yt ever attempted such a design, and there is nor remedy but patience. However I have hitherto met with encouragement enough, not to dispair”. His patience would eventually bear fruit in the two folio volumes, The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset, although not published until after his death in 1774.^{lxvi}

Among Willis’s correspondents was also Francis Peck who devoted his life to the recovery of the antiquities of Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Rutland. In 1729 Peck published a single folio sheet of queries soliciting information on the natural history and antiquities of Leicestershire and Rutland and on his death fourteen years later he left an unfinished manuscript work on the subject. This eventually passed into the hands of John Nichols who drew on it when writing his History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire published in four volumes, 1795-1815.^{lxvii}

It may well have been from his friend Peck that the rector of Fersfield, Francis Blomefield, had the idea of issuing a similar questionnaire in pursuit of An Essay towards a Topographical History of Norfolk that he first proposed to write in June 1733. This set of twenty enquiries was printed and distributed to about 240 clergymen across the county early in 1735. Blomefield’s “Book of Memoranda”, kept between 1733 and 1736, listed the names of those to whom he had sent a copy, against some of which he noted “Returned” or “Answered”. Only fifteen of these replies survive in his papers, but the actual response may have been more substantial as in November that year he could write to one of his assistants, Antony Norris, of “what great helps have come in by my queries, sometimes having 20 or 30 sheets besides books, letters, records and papers, for a single hundred”. In what was a genuinely co-operative enterprise, Blomefield also received substantial help from a number of other qualified collaborators around the county and the first part of the history rolled from his private press in March 1736.^{lxviii}

In 1740 the Scottish historian and topographer, William Maitland, returned from London, where he had been both a fellow of the Royal Society and a member of the Society of Antiquaries, and began working on an account of his native land. To that end he compiled in 1741 “a large set of queries, with a general letter, and transmitted both to every clergyman in Scotland”. The General Assembly urged its members to assist him in the project “by drawing up, and sending him, answers to his printed queries concerning their respective parishes”, but between 1742 and 1744 Maitland received only twenty-four responses, most of them deriving from the county of Angus. It was later said that “the return fell so very far short of his expectation, that he laid aside his design in disgust”, and in the event only the first volume of The History and Antiquities of Scotland was published just before his death in 1757.^{lxi}

No more success was enjoyed in Ireland by the Physico-Historical Society of Dublin, founded in the early 1740s, which at the same time “sent circular letters to many curious and learned gentlemen” across the country with the intention of gathering information for an Irish equivalent of Camden’s Britannia. So little was gained from this exercise that only a “premature skeleton” of a natural and civil history of County Down was published in 1744, but it gave the Society the opportunity to advertise its grander design and prefix an extensive list of queries “in order to instruct every man in the nature of the enquiries to be made in their respective neighbourhoods”.^{lxx}

One person who took inspiration from this was the physician of York, John Burton. Sometime between the beginning of his antiquarian work, around 1745, and the completion of the manuscript of what was planned to be the first volume of a history of Yorkshire, in 1754, Burton issued a similar questionnaire. At the end of his Monasticon

Eboracense: and the Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire, printed at York in August 1758, he reproduced the Dublin Society's inquiries together with a copy of his own "Queries in order to shew the Geography, History and Antiquities, of the County of York: published several years ago by J.B. M.D." His seventeen questions on the antiquities and fifteen on the natural history of the county were intended for "the improvement both of its history and husbandry" and he printed his own study of Hemingbrough parish as an example of what might be done. At the same time he proposed the foundation of a society in Yorkshire on the Dublin model, "to consider proper methods of acquiring and propagating a competent knowledge of this county". In the event, Burton's queries yielded little response, he had failed to complete a second volume of his history by his death in January 1771, and the foundation of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society would have to wait until 1822. But he continued to press his case to the end. As late as February 1769 he was writing to the archbishop of York, seeking the support of the church for a society in emulation of "the good example set us by ye nobility and gentry in Ireland". He recalled that "some years ago I printed a set of necessary queries to be sent to each parish, towards furnishing materials for other parts of ye History of Yorkshire, as ye enclosed will show. To such of ye clergy as I was acquainted with I did send one each, and have had returns, but they are very few. But if ye society be once formed, and at ye visitations a person distributes a copy to each parish, desiring an answer to 'em, ye work will be soon prepared . . ." ^{lxxi}

The reception of other contemporaneous ventures was similarly indifferent. In the late 1740s the Herefordshire antiquary Richard Walywn of Longworth was working on a history of his native county on a parochial basis. Seventy years previously Thomas Blount of Orleton had compiled two manuscript volumes of notes on the history of the county, arranged alphabetically by parish, and Walwyn drew upon these before printing

his own set of “Queries relating to the County of Hereford” under six heads late in 1749. Walwyn’s death the following year prevented progress on the project, despite the ongoing efforts of his father to the same end.^{lxxii} More successful by far, however, was Jeremiah Milles, prebendary and future dean of Exeter Cathedral. His Queries for the County of Devon, distributed in 1753, yielded fully 263 returns mostly from the parish clergy and almost all filled in on the two folio sheets on which his 120 numbered questions were printed. The scale of this response, from around 57 per cent of parishes in the county, makes Milles the most successful exponent of this research technique before the end of the eighteenth century. He had his replies bound up in alphabetical order by parish and then proceeded to write up finished notes on each one in turn, filling the five folio volumes in which they were left on his death in 1784. In total Milles’s material amounted to a substantial body of first-hand information on Devonshire past and present.^{lxxiii}

Milles had been an active fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in London since 1741 and it may have been in emulation of his example that the Society’s Vice President, James Theobald, proposed it produce its own such questionnaire relating to matters of civil and natural history, “whereby such gentlemen of learning and industry as should be disposed to promote usefull and entertaining researches of those kinds, might be directed in their choice of materials, and the Society reap the fruits of their labours and knowledge”. To that end he drew up and had printed an octavo pamphlet, Queries Proposed to Gentlemen in the Several Parts of Great Britain, In hope of obtaining, from their Answers, a better Knowledge of its Antiquities and Natural History, read out at a meeting of the Society in June 1754. The response seems to have been minimal, even after the interrogatories were given a wider circulation when Edward Cave published them in the Gentleman’s Magazine for April 1755. “Some Account of the Parish of Hapton, in the County of

Norfolk” by Robert Chaplin, and a very full account of Sherborne in Dorset by Peter Smith survive amongst the Society’s letters and papers. Theobald pressed on alone, compiling “parochial histories” of eighteen places across ten counties over the following three years and presenting to the Society in February 1758 a manuscript volume of “Observations on the Antient and Present State of Monmouthshire” which he said had been “drawn up in pursuance of the Queries published in order to obtain materials for a General and Local History in England”.^{lxxiv}

Theobald’s initiatives had, in turn, some emulators of their own, however. Another member of the council of the Society of Antiquaries at this time was Edward Rowe Mores and when, in the later 1750s, he came to investigate the history and present state of parishes in Berkshire, he adopted the same research strategy. Two printed versions of his “Parochial Queries for the county of Berkshire”, one dated 17 May 1759, yielded eighteen conscientious replies from the county’s parish clergy over the summer of that year. These returns clearly fed into the work that he never completed but which was seen through the press after his death by fellow antiquary Richard Gough as Collections Toward a Parochial History of Berkshire (1783).^{lxxv} In 1769 Thomas Pennant used, with a few omissions, Theobald’s questionnaire for the Society of Antiquaries as his “Queries, Addressed to the Gentlemen and Clergy of North-Britain, respecting the Antiquities and Natural History of their respective Parishes”, circulated prior to setting out on his tour through Scotland in June that year, the account of which was first published in 1771. Theobald’s questionnaire, as reprinted in the Gentleman’s Magazine, was reproduced again for the northern audience when it appeared in the Scot’s Magazine for January 1772. In the April number of the same journal for that year, Pennant announced his intention to make another tour in Scotland and published a further twenty-two queries

addressed “To every gentleman desirous to promote the publication of an accurate account of the antiquities, present state, and natural history of Scotland”^{lxxvi}.

In the same year, the Dublin Society, a body founded in 1731 and dedicated to the improvement of society by the acquisition and application of useful knowledge, formed a select committee for antiquities. Its joint secretary, Charles Vallancey, proposed the circulation of a parochial questionnaire in search of information further to the promotion of economic and social reform in Ireland. 4,000 copies of the questionnaire were printed, but just forty answers were received and many of these were said to be “perfectly trifling”. Only an account of the parish and adjoining district of Kilronan in Roscommon, written by the eminent antiquary Charles O’Conor in August 1773, was reported to be of any value, and the Society’s antiquities committee was disbanded the following year.^{lxxvii}

The Durham antiquary, George Allan, claimed inspiration from the efforts both of the Dublin Physico-Historical Society and John Burton of York when issuing his “Queries proposed to the Clergy and Gentry” further to a “civil and ecclesiastical history of the antient and present state” of the county palatine in 1774.^{lxxviii} When in 1780 John Nichols began editing, at the suggestion of the then director of the Society of Antiquaries, Richard Gough, the multi-authored Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica, containing antiquarian accounts arranged by county, he prefaced the first volume with a survey of the questionnaires relating to “ecclesiastical, civil, and natural history” issued in the eighty years between Edward Lhwyd and George Allan. The fifty-six questions relating to the topography, antiquities and present state of the parish which Nichols’ drew up himself, together with a further fifty-five concerning its natural history, amounted to a consolidated list of “all that have before been circulated, somewhat differently modified and enlarged”^{lxxix}.

Milles's example in Devon was followed in the next generation, both by William Chapple and Richard Polwhele. In the 1770s Chapple distributed a questionnaire as part of his project to produce a new edition of Tristram Risdon's early seventeenth-century "chorographical description" of the county with extensive "notes and additions".^{lxxx} Polwhele may have got the idea from Chapple for the queries for a "History of Devonshire" that he published in the Gentleman's Magazine in December 1790. A year later he was forced to insert another note in the same journal lamenting that since no responses had been received to his full questionnaire, he would resort to six very specific questions on which he needed an answer. Perhaps the responses to Polwhele improved, however, since The History of Devonshire that he published in three volumes, 1793-1806, bears witness in its detailed footnotes to the fulsome information that he clearly received from correspondents.^{lxxxi}

When the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland was founded in November 1780, "for investigation of antiquities, as well as natural and civil in general, with a view to the improvement of the minds of mankind, and to promote a taste for natural and useful knowledge", one of its earliest acts was to distribute a circular letter to members requesting that each should provide a report on his own parish. The queries, devised either by the 11th earl of Buchan or the scholar-bookseller, William Smellie, both prominent members of the Society, were arranged under seven heads covering geography, agriculture and population, communications, minerals and fossils, trade and manufactures, antiquities, and other miscellaneous matters. Only eight reports were presented over the following decade, all of them eventually printed in 1792 in the first volume of the Society's journal Archaeologia Scotica.^{lxxxii}

Finally, the epitome of the parochial queries issued in the British Isles during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came in May 1790 when Sir John Sinclair produced his questionnaire “drawn up for the purpose of elucidating the Natural History and Political State of Scotland”. Sinclair’s concern was to establish the present state of the nation with a view to improving its economic prosperity and material condition. His 160 questions, to which another eleven were added subsequently, dealt with “Geography and Natural History”, “Population”, “Productions”, and “Miscellaneous” matters, and were largely concerned with the state of parishes and people as they then stood. Only eight interrogatories dealt with historical matters, and Sinclair later advised that while, on the one hand, “the more information that can be given regarding the population, and the political circumstances of the country, the more desirable”, on the other, those “questions regarding the natural history, and the antiquities of the parish, are not so essential”. Ultimately, he would be completely successful in alternately persuading, cajoling and embarrassing the clergy of Scotland into furnishing him with responses. With the support of the General Assembly of the Kirk and the authority of his public office, Sinclair managed to elicit responses from every one of the 938 Scottish parishes and edited them all for publication in twenty-one volumes between 1791 and 1799.^{lxxxiii}

Sinclair’s achievement was not only the summation of parochial research by questionnaire in early modern Britain but also the fullest realisation of the essentially Baconian enterprise of information-gathering by coordinated collective effort. In one sense Sir John was specifically the product of the enlightened political economy of the later eighteenth century in his quest for knowledge as a basis for the amelioration of the condition of the people and practical benefit of the nation, but in many ways his motivation and his methods had much in common with those of the Hartlib circle or the early Royal Society five generations before.

III

The success achieved by Sinclair in ensuring replies to his questionnaire serves to emphasise some of the reasons why fact-finding exercises of this sort had previously met with such a partial and variable response. Sinclair had been able to realise Bacon's vision of a collaborative and comprehensive programme of research based upon first-hand empirical observation, by a combination of the generally capable assistance of his informants and his own dogged determination.

By the late eighteenth century the parochial clergy in Scotland had been well schooled in one of the country's five universities and the atmosphere of "enlightenment" in contemporary Scottish cities had helped to inculcate notions of rational reform and social improvement among most. "Science almost universally flourishes among them", one apologist had claimed in the 1770s.^{lxxxiv} Sinclair's questionnaire was thus received by a constituency that was, for the most part, both able and willing to engage with his enterprise. At the start of the project Sir John had reserved the right to edit the replies before printing them, but such was the quality of the compendious responses he received that he could not help but publish them in full. "I found such merit and ability, and so many useful facts and important observations in the answers which were sent me", he confessed, "that I could not think of depriving the clergy of the credit they were entitled to derive from such laborious exertions." Within two years, fully 525 parish reports had been returned to him, and a further 250 materialised over the following two.^{lxxxv}

Inevitably, not all of the 938 parochial ministers across the country had either the capacity or the desire to act with such industry and enthusiasm, and ultimately the completeness of the Statistical Account was due to Sinclair's assiduous and unrelenting management. In January 1791 he sent to every parish copies of four of the best among his earliest returns as examples of good practice, and an accompanying letter encouraged ministers to be as complete as possible in their accounts. A total of twenty-three circular missives followed between December 1792 and December 1797 variously persuading incumbents of the merits of the enterprise, praising their achievements to date, and goading the dilatory into a response. The first of these let it be known that profits from the sales of the published work would go into a fund for the benefit of sons and daughters of the clergy; while another circulated the "unanimous vote" of the General Assembly in May 1793 that all ministers who had not yet contributed should do so "with all expedition in their power, to complete a work of such apparent public utility". As time went on Sinclair's tone became rather less patient and ever more insistent. "I am persuaded, that you will see the necessity I am under, of urging you again upon this subject", he wrote early in 1796, "as it would be in the highest degree disgraceful, to suffer another year to commence, without having the work completed . . . or to leave even a single blank in so great an undertaking, which I consider to be an eternal monument of the talents, public spirit, and industry of my countrymen, during the present era." In the end, there were only twelve parishes where, in lieu of clerical participation, he had to dispatch his "statistical missionaries" to collect information and compile a report so as to complete the undertaking.^{lxxxvi}

No previous co-ordinators of such projects based upon printed parochial questionnaires - not Hartlib in Ireland under the Commonwealth, not Lhwyd in King William's Wales, nor Milles in Georgian Devon - had managed quite Sir John Sinclair's level of

unremitting insistence on anything less than full and comprehensive returns. Sinclair could, of course, call upon advantages that many of his predecessors had lacked. The support he received from the Kirk was not new, but his position in parliament and, from 1793, as president of the new “Board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement”, lent an official or public dimension to his endeavour. For packets of less than two ounces in weight, ministers could claim the privilege of parliamentary franking in posting their replies, while Sir John was able to keep coaxing and reminding the entirety of the clergy by virtue of being able to print his circular letters. Sinclair also had an ambition and sense of purpose wanting in many previous such exercises. This may have owed something to the fact that not since the days of the Hartlib circle and the early Royal Society had anyone embarked on an undertaking of this sort with quite his sense of public utility, as opposed merely to academic curiosity.^{lxxxvii}

The well-educated and public-spirited nature of the ‘enlightened’ Scottish clergy at the end of the eighteenth century also contrasted sharply with the calibre of person upon whom parochial queries had often been visited in the past. The lack of response that greeted the great majority of questionnaires suggests a general apathy or indifference on the part of many clergy and gentry alike. Most were apparently unable or unwilling to expend effort on something in which they could see neither private advantage nor common good. What Edward Thomas reported to Edward Lhwyd from Monmouthshire in 1697 had a universal applicability: “I beg leave to tell you my sentiments of my countrymen in general, as well clergy as laity, that they never care to be concerned over much in any business that has not (at least) some appearance either of present pleasure or future profit: so that, in short, I doubt you’ll find but little labour saved by vertue of these papers . . .”^{lxxxviii}

Many of those clergymen who bothered to respond at all did so in a minimal and taciturn way that suggests a lack either of curiosity or application. Others, who were willing enough, clearly failed to see any value in the kind of mundane local knowledge so often sought. “I received your Queres”, the rector of Hawridge told Browne Willis in the summer of 1712, “but when I began to look into them I soon perceived that the two parishes to which I belong would not afford many answers to them, and therefore accord to your desire . . .”. “I deffer’d giving any answer to you queries, hoping by enquiry to have got some account of my parish worth reading”, wrote Thomas Dawson to Willis from Wexham, “but after all, it appears so very barren, that I believe you will hardly think it deserves any notice.”^{lxxxix} Some may have had genuine and reasoned misgivings about the purpose and appropriateness of such intimate inquiry. In August 1735 Joseph Lane, the rector of Saxlingham in Norfolk, wrote to Dr Henry Briggs, rector of Holt, who was helping Francis Blomefield with his researches. “I have according to your request returned the Queries, but without such an answer as you I presume might expect from me; my reasons for which are these. First of all, that I find nothing in either of my parishes (the monument excepted) worthy to be communicated to the publick. Secondly that should there be anything relating to the manors, or customs thereof, worthy to be taken notice of, I should by no means presume to do it: not thinking it either civil or gratefull, to expose the private properties of a friend, and a gentleman, without his leave, to the publick observation of mankind. Thirdly that so particular and exact an account, of every minute circumstance, mentioned in the Queries, would (in my opinion) render the whole work too voluminous, and by no means please such of the curious readers, as would willingly be acquainted with every valuable piece of antiquity, without so great a mixture of such as is not so.”^{xc}

In extreme cases there were those clergy who displayed a gross ignorance of parishes in which sometimes they did not reside, and a positive antipathy to intrusion into their affairs. The splendid character sketches of the country parsons of North Oxfordshire penned by Rawlinson's companion, Edmund Curll, in the summer of 1718 indicate the barren soil into which so many parochial queries must have been scattered. Among the able, willing and courteous, also lurked a Rowlandsonesque cast which included Mr Headlam "a rich, stupid, asthmatical priest"; Mr Tudor of Checkendon, "rich, large, lame, lecherous and impertinent"; Tim Huxley of Rotherfield Peppard, "empty, proud, peevish, pragmatical, spleenetick and mistrustful" who "said he never wrote anything" and was "generally drunk at the Visitation"; and Dr Yates of Charlton, "an ecclesiastical loutus who has more money than manners and is much better provided for than he deserves".^{xci}

What was true of some ministers of the Church could be no less characteristic of country squires and their attitude to the bothersome questions imposed upon them unsolicited by some antiquary or natural historian. As we have seen, Machell in Cumberland and Westmorland, Johnston in Yorkshire, and William Cole on behalf of John Beaumont in Somerset, were variously exasperated by the "cold reception" which their queries had received among a gentry characterised by "supineness" and a seeming interest only in the pursuit of "destructive vulgar vices". Similarly, many of Edward Lhwyd's correspondents endorsed this unflattering picture of apathy, intellectual sterility and narrow self-interest among the leisured classes. "I have taken care to disperse your Queries", reported one of his assistants in February 1697, "tho a great many are thrown away upon incurious drones." "I find very few are inclinable to take them", concurred another, "and I doubt as few can return you any satisfactory answers." "Our country has very few gentlemen", Richard Langford reported from Benemares, "and the most part of those soe very intent upon private profit and concerns that they little regard what tends to

the public good.” Half a century later, James Theobald’s undertaking would founder because of the exclusive direction of his queries to the provincial gentlemen within the social circle of the Society of Antiquaries: his faith both in their “learning and industry” and their disposition “to promote usefull and entertaining researches of those kinds” was sadly misplaced.^{xcii}

Again, in some cases an unwillingness to help may have been born out of not merely indolence or indifference but a more positive antagonism towards enquiries regarded as intrusive and unwarranted. It long remained a joke among the gentry of Staffordshire how easily they had “humbled old Plot” when he came amongst them in the early 1680s. Some clearly feared that such questions had something to do with taxation or other fiscal assessment and were naturally suspicious. Others may have felt a not unreasonable sense of weariness at the repeated requests for information from one source or another. In September 1759 Mr Taylor of Binfield in Berkshire could point out to Edward Rowe Mores that just “a few years ago” James Theobald, who had a country seat at neighbouring White Waltham, had “collected a great many materials and made a good progress in the History and Antiquity of the parishes hereabout”, and accordingly “the gentlemen that have communicated materials to Mr Theobald will not choose to repeat their trouble”.^{xciii}

There may also have been political opinions and sectarian allegiances prejudicing the good will of some. Thus the hostile reception given to Rawlinson and Curll by a number of Oxfordshire clerics no doubt owed much to the fact that the former was a non-juror and staunch Jacobite, while the latter was a well-known Tory with a scandalous reputation. By the same token, it is possible that the obvious Royalism of Thomas Machell, the Tory leanings of Johnston, or the Jacobite activities of John Burton may

have had an influence on their ability to generate support from unsympathetic members of the county community in times of political sensitivity. Conversely, such inquiries after knowledge were most likely to elicit response from those who shared the ideological sympathies of their authors. Sibbald was an Episcopalian and many of those who offered him information were gentry and clergy of similar views. Equally, Molyneux achieved some success in Ireland by apparently encouraging a collection of Anglo-Irish Protestant gentry in and around the Dublin Philosophical Society to take responsibility for extended county descriptions. Jeremiah Milles may have benefited from his position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy at Exeter in coaxing a healthy response from the Anglican parsons of Georgian Devon. It is clear that Sir John Sinclair's informants varied in their degrees of progressivism, and in their views on particular subjects, but ultimately they shared a high degree of common purpose, united by a sense of Calvinist duty, public spirit and national pride.^{xciv}

IV

The printed questionnaires discussed here were issued by a great diversity of individuals and organisations with a wide variety of intentions and ambitions. The vigour with which they were distributed, the purpose for which they sought information, and the use to which the returns were put differed in every case. At the same time, however, each of these initiatives, consciously or not, was underpinned by a common ideological heritage. It was one that owed something to the way in which governments and churches across Renaissance Europe had utilised the new medium of print to furnish the information upon which modern state formation and imperial administration were necessarily based. And it was one that derived much from the ideas and methods of the new scientific enquiry that

was at the same time transforming the ways in which knowledge was defined and acquired. In Britain the founding father of this epistemology was Francis Bacon and his legacy was to be enduring. The Baconian conception of empirical, collaborative research into all aspects of the natural world, past and present, infuses each of these “parochial queries”, consciously or not. The emphases of their authors may have varied but there was a consistency in their quest for verifiable information from as many reliable sources as possible on “natural knowledge” of almost all kinds: history and archaeology, geography and natural history, geology and palaeontology, economic activity and vital statistics, culture and customs, civil authority and ecclesiastical government, and much more besides. The print revolution made possible the imagination and creation of a virtual community of researchers, united in common purpose by a sheet of questions in roman type. If the results were decidedly mixed, the method is a reminder of the importance of this new technology not only in satisfying the demand side of the “age of information” but also in furnishing its supply.

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ⁱ Paul Slack, “Government and Information in Seventeenth-Century England”, Past and Present, clxxxiv (2004), 33.

ⁱⁱ See, for example, Elizabeth L Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change in Early-Modern Europe, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1979); Adrian Johns, The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the

Making (Chicago and London, 1998); Robert Darnton, The Business of Enlightenment (Cambridge, Mass, 1979).

ⁱⁱⁱ The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799 Edited by Sir John Sinclair, 20 vols. (Edinburgh, 1983), i. 82-3, 88; Howard F. Cline, “The Relaciones Geográficas of the Spanish Indies, 1577-1586”, Hispanic American Historical Review, xliv (1964), 341-74; Geoffrey Parker, The Grand Strategy of Philip II (New Haven and London, 1998), 61-3; Peter Burke, A Social History of Knowledge: From Gutenberg to Diderot (Cambridge 2000), 126-7, 130.

^{iv} The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799 Edited by Sir John Sinclair, i. 83-5.

^v James E. King, Science and Rationalism in the Government of Louis XIV, 1661-1683 (Baltimore, 1949), 130-6; Burke, A Social History of Knowledge, 130, 137.

^{vi} D. V. Glass, Numbering the People: the Eighteenth-Century Population Controversy and the Development of Census and Vital Statistics in Britain (Farnborough, 1973), 12-13; Burke, A Social History of Knowledge, 138; Sir John Sinclair, Specimens of Statistical Reports (London, 1793), viii-xi.

^{vii} D. M. Palliser, The Age of Elizabeth: England under the Tudors 1547-1603 (2nd edn., London, 1992), 372-3; The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603, ed. Alan Dyer and D. M. Palliser (British Academy Records of Social and Economic History, new ser., xxxi, Oxford, 2005), xix, xxxvi-xxxvii, lxxviii-lxxix.

^{viii} The Diocesan Population Returns for 1563 and 1603, ed. Dyer and Palliser, lvii-lviii, lxvi, lxxx-lxxxii; The Compton Census of 1676: A Critical Edition, ed. Anne Whiteman (British Academy Records of Social and Economic History, new ser., x, London, 1986), xxiv-xxxii.

^{ix} Reports on the State of Certain Parishes in Scotland, made to His Majesty’s Commissioners for Plantation of Kirks, &c. in Pursuance of their Ordinance Dated April xii. MDCXXXVII (Maitland Club, xxxiv, Edinburgh, 1835); and see Ian Whitaker, “The Reports on the Parishes of Scotland, 1627”, Scottish Studies, iii (1959), 229-32.

^x David Stevenson, “Cartography and the Kirk: Aspects of the Making of the First Atlas of Scotland”, Scottish Studies, xxvi (1982), 1-12.

^{xi} F. V. Emery, “A ‘Geographical Description’ of Scotland Prior to the Statistical Accounts”, Scottish Studies, iii (1959), 1-16.

^{xii} Scottish Population Statistics including Webster’s Analysis of Population 1755, ed. James Gray Kyd (Scottish History Society, third ser., xlv, Edinburgh, 1952); and see A. J. Youngson, “Alexander Webster

and his ‘Account of the Number of People in Scotland in the Year 1755’”, Population Studies, xv (1961), 198-200; Rosalind Mitchison, “Webster Revisited: a Re-examination of the 1755 ‘Census’ of Scotland”, in T. M. Devine (ed.), Improvement and Enlightenment (Edinburgh, 1988), 62-77.

^{xiii} Rosalind Mitchison, Agricultural Sir John: The Life of Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster 1745-1835 (London, 1962), 121.

^{xiv} Articles to be Enquired of in the Generall Visitation of Edmonde Bisshope of London (London, 1554) [STC: 10248]; Iniunctions Giuen by the Most Reuerende Father in Christ, Edmonde . . . Archbishop of Yorke (London, 1571) [STC: 10375]; Interrogatories to bee Enquyred of by the Churche-Wardens and Swrone-Menne within the Doicesse of Lincolne (London, 1580) [STC: 10230.5]. For typical seventeenth-century examples, see STC: 10329.3; 10227.3; 10299.5; 10267; Wing: C4019; C4020; C4025; C4029; C4034; C4035; C4061; C4067. Examples of Articles of Enquiry Concerning Matters Ecclesiastical with blank spaces are Wing: C4009AB; C4048A; C4009AD.

^{xv} M. J. Braddick, Parliamentary Taxation in Seventeenth-Century England (Woodbridge, 1994), 172n; Tom Arkell, “Printed Instructions for Administering the Hearth Tax”, in Kevin Schurer and Tom Arkell (eds.), Surveying the People (Oxford, 1992), 38-64; Norfolk Hearth Tax Exemption Certificates 1670-1674, ed. Peter Seaman (British Record Society, cxvii, London, 2001), ii, xxxv-xxxvi; County Durham Hearth Tax Assessment Lady Day 1666, eds. Adrian Green, Elizabeth Parkinson and Margaret Spufford (British Record Society, cxix, London, 2006), 178, 216.

^{xvi} The Works of Francis Bacon, eds. James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath, 7 vols. (London, 1857-9), iv, 249-71, 293-314. For discussion, see S. A. E. Mendyk, ‘Speculum Britanniae’: Regional Study, Antiquarianism, and Science in Britain to 1700 (Toronto, 1989), 116-28.

^{xvii} Charles Webster, The Great Instauration: Science, Medicine and Reform 1626-1660 (London, 1975), 428-31; An Interrogatory Relating more particularly to the Husbandry and Naturall History of Ireland (1652), in Samuel Hartlib His Legacie (London, 1652), sig. Q4-U1.

^{xviii} Webster, The Great Instauration, 431-44.

^{xix} British Library, London [hereafter Brit. Lib.], Additional MS 72,892, fo. 1; Royal Society, London, MS 92, 58; Bodleian Library, Oxford [hereafter Bod. Lib.], MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 281-2.

^{xx} See, for example, Brit. Lib., Additional MS 72,897, fos. 44-45r, 157-8; Brit. Lib., Additional MS 72,882, fos. 94-7; Early Science in Oxford. Volume IV, ed. Gunther, 97, 114-5, 116; Early Science in Oxford. Vol. XII, ed. Gunther, 63, 140, 160; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, 281-2;), Michael Hunter, “Robert

Boyle and the Early Royal Society: a Reciprocal Exchange in the Making of Baconian Science”, *British Journal for the History of Science*, 40 (2007), 13-14. In 1684 Petty drew up, and had printed for the Dublin Philosophical Society, A Miscellaneous Catalog of Mean, Vulgar, Cheap and Simple Experiments (Dublin, 1684?) [Wing M2228B] which amounted to 63 questions on curiosities of natural history: Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1813, fos. 356-7, and see Early Science in Oxford. Vol. XII, ed. Gunther, 152-3, 156, 159-60, 205-7.

^{xxi} Brit. Lib., Additional MS. 72,899, fos. 161-2; and printed in The Petty Papers, ed. Marquis of Lansdowne, 2 vols. (London, 1927), i. 175-8. For a similar and contemporaneous scheme, “A Method of Computing the People”, by “Sir R. C.”, see Royal Society, Classified Papers, 1660-1740, vol. 17, item 19 (I am grateful to Michael Hunter for drawing this item to my attention).

^{xxii} Hunter, “Robert Boyle and the Early Royal Society”; Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, i (1666), 186-9, 315-16, 330-43; and reprinted in The Works of Robert Boyle, eds. Michael Hunter and Edward B. Davis, 14 vols. (London, 1999), v, 508-11, 527-40. In the 1670s it was said that in an effort to learn more about highly prized Damascus steel, “the Honourable Mr. Boyl hath been very careful and industrious in that inquiry; giving it in particular charge to some Travellers to Damascus to bring home an account of it”: Joseph Moxon, Mechanick Exercises, or, The Doctrine of Handy-Works (London, 1677), 56. For replies to the queries on the sea and mines, see Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, ii (1667), 525-7; Phil. Trans. of the Roy. Soc., iii (1668), 632-4, 767-71, 813-17.

^{xxiii} Robert Hooke, A General Scheme, or Idea of the Present State of Natural Philosophy, in The Posthumous Works of Robert Hooke, ed. Richard Waller (London, 1705), 21-4; Michael Hunter, “Hooke the Natural Philosopher”, in Jill Bennett, Michael Cooper, Michael Hunter and Lisa Jardine, London’s Leonardo: The Life and Work of Robert Hooke (Oxford, 2003), 120-1.

^{xxiv} Hunter, “Robert Boyle and the Early Royal Society”, 12; Phil. Trans. of the Roy. Soc., i (1666), 140-3; Phil. Trans. of the Roy. Soc., ii (1667), 415-22, 467-72, 554-5; Phil. Trans. of the Roy. Soc., iii (1668), 634-9; Royal Society, Classified Papers, vol. 19; Robert Hooke, “Preface”, in Robert Knox, An Historical Relation of the Island of Ceylon, in the East-Indies (London, 1681), sig. A2v.

^{xxv} Phil. Trans. of the Roy. Soc., i (1665), 91-44; John Houghton, A Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry & Trade, 2 vols. (London, 1681-3), i, 6-9; Royal Society, Classified Papers, Vol. 10, and Vol. 19, item 21; Reginald Lennard, “English Agriculture under Charles II: the Evidence of the Royal Society’s ‘Enquiries’”, Economic History Review, iv (1932), 23-45.

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- ^{xxvi} E. G. R. Taylor, "The Geographical Ideas of Robert Hooke", Geographical Journal, lxxxix (1937), 532.
- ^{xxvii} [John Ogilby], Queries in Order to the Description of Britannia (London? 1673?) [Wing 0180] The copy in Bod. Lib., MS Aubrey 4, fo. 243r, contains Aubrey's annotation: "My name to be putt to the Counties which I describe." Queries In Order to the Description of Britannia (London, 1673) [Wing 0180A]. The copy, Bod. Lib., MS Aubrey 4, fo. 244r, has Aubrey's note: "These Queries were considered of at severall meetings by Christopher Wren Ll.D. John Hoskyns Esq R.S.S. Mr Robert Hooke R.S.S. Mr Jo. Ogilby Mr Jo. Aubrey Mr Gregory King." On some of the relations between this group, see E. G. R. Taylor, "Robert Hooke and the Cartographical Projects of the Late Seventeenth Century (1666-1696)", Geographical Journal, cx (1937), 531-2.
- ^{xxviii} Bod. Lib., MS Aubrey 4, fos. 31r, 221; Early Science in Oxford. Volume XII. Dr Plot and the Correspondence of the Philosophical Society of Oxford, ed. R. T. Gunther (Oxford, 1939), 269; Michael Hunter, John Aubrey and the Realm of Learning (London, 1975), 71-3. The 36 chapter headings of Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire suggest the likely "heads" in his "naturall queres", which have not survived: Royal Society, London, MS 92, 26.
- ^{xxix} The Diary of Robert Hooke M.A., M.D., F.R.S. 1672-1680, eds. Henry W. Robinson and Walter Adams (London, 1935), 38, 56-7, 60, 73, 86, 130, 210.
- ^{xxx} Early Science in Oxford. Volume XII, ed. Gunther, 335-46; R. P., Quar's to be propounded to the most ingenious of each County in my Travels through England (Oxford? 1674?) [Wing P2589: copies in Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 222-3; Royal Society, Classified Papers, vol. 19, item 93].
- ^{xxxi} Brit. Lib., Additional MS 72,850, fo. 141r; Bod. Lib., MS Hearne's Diaries, 158-9; Hunter, John Aubrey and the Realm of Learning, 237-8. Aubrey's copy of Robert Plot, The Natural History of Oxfordshire (Oxford, 1677), containing his marginal notes, is Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1722.
- ^{xxxii} [Thomas Machell], That the Northern Counties which abound in Antiquities and Ancient Gentry, may no longer be bury'd in Silence Information is desir'd concerning the following Queries as they lye (Oxford? 1677?) [Wing M127B: copies in Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 226-7; Cumbria Record Office, Kendal, WD/Ry/1904]. Cf. The Works of Francis Bacon, eds. Spedding, Ellis and Heath, iv. 263.
- ^{xxxiii} The Flemings in Oxford, ed. J. R. Magrath, 3 vols. (Oxford Historical Society, xlv, lxii, lxxix, Oxford, 1904-24), i. 214-7, 221, 225-6, 229-30; and see John Rogan and Eric Birley, "Thomas Machell, the Antiquary", Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, new ser., lv (1956), 149-53. Machell later recorded spending a day "in studying wth that ingenious

gentleman & industry[i]ous gatherer of antiquities, Sr Daniel Fleming”: Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle [hereafter CROC], D&C/Machell MS 2, 436.

^{xxxiv} The Flemings in Oxford, ed. Magrath, i. 229; CROC, D&C/Machell MS 6, 720. Material from volume 2 of Machell’s notebooks relating to the Barony of Kendal has been printed in Antiquary on Horesback. The First Publication of the Collections of the Rev. Thos. Machell, Chaplain to King Charles II, towards a History of the Barony of Kendal, ed. Jane M. Ewbank (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, extra ser., xix, Kendal, 1963).

^{xxxv} Early Science in Oxford. Volume IV. The Philosophical Society, ed. R. T. Gunther (Oxford, 1925), 97, 98. “The Antiquities of Westmorland, collected by Mr Thomas Machel of Kirkby-Thore in the same county, MS” was listed in the bibliography accompanying the new edition of Camden’s Britannia published by Gibson in 1695. Nicolson had his former tutor’s manuscripts posthumously bound in six folio volumes and deposited in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle in 1711: see CROC, D&C/Machell MS 1, vii-viii. For a letter of November 1694 referring to Machell’s map of Cumberland and Westmorland, and his continuing antiquarian work in the former county, see Blake Tyson, “John Adams’ Cartographic Correspondence to Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall, Cumbria, 1676-1687”, Geographical Journal, cli (1985), 37.

^{xxxvi} R. P., Enquiries To be propounded to the most Ingenious of each County in my Travels through England and Wales, in order to their History of Nature and Arts (Oxford? 1679?) [Wing P2584: copies in Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 224-5; Royal Society, Classified Papers, vol. 19, item 94; and Brit. Lib., 599.i.24.(4), pages 1-2 only].

^{xxxvii} Early Science in Oxford. Volume XII, ed. Gunther, 2, 3, 10.

^{xxxviii} Early Science in Oxford. Volume XII, ed. Gunther, 45, 274, 285-6, and reproducing a facsimile, 275-8, of John Beaumont, A Draught of a Design For Writing the History of Nature and Arts of the County of Somerset (Oxford? 1685?) [not in Wing].

^{xxxix} Nathaniel Johnston, Enquiries for Information towards the Illustrating and Compleating the Antiquities and Natural History of York-shire (London? 1683?) [Wing J878: copies in the Brit. Lib., shelf marks 816.m.16.(44.), and L.R.305.a.8.(3.)].

^{xl} Letters of Eminent Men. Addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F.R.S., 2 vols. (London, 1832), i. 20, 39, 66, 71.

^{xli} Johnston’s surviving topographical and antiquarian notes relating to Yorkshire wapentakes are now Bod. Lib., MS Top.Yorks. c. 13-45 and 90, and d. 9-11. His accounts of Doncaster and Hatfield are in Bod.

Lib., MS Top. Yorks. c. 34, 33-125, 129-58. De la Pryme's histories of these places are Brit. Lib., Lansdowne MS 897, and Brit. Lib., Lansdowne MS 898, fos. 42-8.

^{xliii} Letters of Eminent Men. Addressed to Ralph Thoresby, i. 39, 148-9; Edward Bernard, Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae in Unum Collecti, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1697), ii. 99-102; Bod. Lib., MS Eng. Poet c. 25, fo. 80.

^{xliiii} In Parishes of about an Hundred Families, and wherein the Registry of the Births, Burials, and Marriages hath been well kept, Enquire (London? 1683?) [Wing I119D]. A copy of this broadside is in the Petty Papers, Brit. Lib., Additional MS 72,865, item 1, containing notes on the back in Petty's hand further to a more detailed breakdown of the age, status and occupational structure of a parish. Another copy is Brit. Lib., shelf mark 816.m.6.(80*), a facsimile of which is reproduced, unattributed, in Glass, Numbering the People, 52.

^{xliv} Early Science in Oxford. Vol. XII, ed. Gunther, 28; Brit. Lib., Additional MS 72,850, fo. 304r; Bod. Lib., MS Aubrey 13, fos. 103v-104r; Royal Society, London, MS 92, 196-8.

^{xlv} William Molyneux, Whereas there is an accurate Account and Description of Ireland (Dublin, 1682?) [Wing M2407: copies in Bod. Lib., MS Aubrey 4, fo. 245; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, fo. 221]. For the replies, see Trinity College Dublin, MS 883/1-2; MS 888/1-2; Royal Irish Academy, MS 12 W 22; and Royal Society, Classified Papers, vol. 19, item 92. For context, see F. V. Emery, "Irish Geography in the Seventeenth Century", Irish Geography, iii (1954-58), 268-74; K. T. Hoppen, The Common Scientist in the Seventeenth Century: a Study of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683-1708 (London, 1970), 21-2, and 200-1 where Molyneux's queries are reprinted.

^{xlvi} National Library of Scotland [hereafter NLS], Adv. MS. 33.3.16, fo. 25v; [Sir Robert Sibbald], Advertisement (Edinburgh, 1682) [Wing S3721A: the two surviving copies of this are in NLS, shelf marks 1.19(94) and S.302.b.1(21)], and printed in The Bannatyne Miscellany (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1827-55), iii. 373-5; [Sir Robert Sibbald], In Order to an exact Description (Edinburgh? 1682?) [Wing S3721: copy in NLS, shelf mark Crawford.MB.277]. Both of these broadsides are reprinted in Charles W. J. Withers, "Geography, Science and National Identity in Early Modern Scotland: The Case of Scotland and the Work of Sir Robert Sibbald (1641-1722)", Annals of Science, liii (1996), 66-69; and see also idem, Geography, Science and National Identity: Scotland since 1520 (Cambridge, 2001), 77-9.

^{xlvii} A list of the principal respondents to Sibbald has been drawn up by Withers, "Geography, Science and National Identity in Early Modern Scotland", 69-73, and idem, Geography, Science and National Identity, 256-62. These responses are now among the Advocates' Manuscripts in the National Library of Scotland:

see especially, NLS, Adv. MS. 34.2.8; NLS, Adv. MS. 33.5.15. Much of this material is printed in Geographical Collections Relating to Scotland made by Walter Macfarlane, ed. Sir Arthur Mitchell and James Toshach Clark, 3 vols. (Scottish History Society, li, lii, liii, Edinburgh, 1906-8), ii-iii. The fullest single response to Sibbald's queries was Andrew Symson, "A Large Description of Galloway" (1684), NLS, Adv. MS. 31.7.17.

^{xlviii} D. G. Moir (ed.), The Early Maps of Scotland to 1850, 2 vols. (3rd edn., Edinburgh, 1973-83), i. 65-78; Withers, Geography, Science and National Identity, 87, 96, 258, 259, 260; John Adair, Queries, In Order to a True Description; And an Account of the Natural Curiositys, and Antiquities ([Edinburgh? 1694?]) [Wing A469A: copies in NLS, shelf mark 1.4(60) and 1.19(102)]. The "Short Account" is NLS, Adv. MS. 19.3.28, fos. 35-45.

^{lix} "Dr. Plot's Enquiries concerning Husbandry in Kent" are printed in Early Science in Oxford. Volume XII, ed. Gunther, 413-15, from Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. D. 787. The fragmentary notes from his Kentish tour are Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. D. 390, fos. 85r and 95; and see Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica. No. VI. Part. II. Containing Mr Thorpe's Illustration of Several Antiquities of Kent, which have hitherto remained undescribed (London, 1783), 62-4.

^l [Robert Plot], Enquiries to be Propounded to the most Sincere and Intelligent in the Cities of London and Westminster, in order to their History of Nature, Arts, and Antiquities (Oxford? 1694?) [Wing P2584A: sole copy at Christ Church, Oxford, shelf mark Wd.2.13(5)].

^{li} William Camden, Britannia, ed. Edmund Gibson (London, 1695), 214-30, 326-40.

^{lii} Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1829, fo. 5 (Ogilby); MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 21-7 (Molyneux, Plot and Machell).

^{liii} John Morton, Certain Heads intended to be treated, of in a Natural History of Northamptonshire (London? 1700?) [not in Wing: copy in Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1816, fo. 427]. See letters of Morton to Lhwyd, MS Ashmole 1816, fos. 426r and 431v. Morton's research was eventually published as The Natural History of Northamptonshire (London, 1712).

^{liv} On Lhwyd and the Britannia, see Early Science in Oxford. Volume XVI. Life and Letters of Edward Lhwyd, ed. R. T. Gunther (Oxford, 1945), 266-7; Camden, Britannia, ed. Gibson, 583-702; F. V. Emery, "Edward Lhwyd and the 1695 Britannia", Antiquity, xxxii (1958), 179-82; idem, Edward Lhuyd F.R.S. 1660-1709 (Caerdydd, 1971), 59-73; Gwyn Walters and Frank Emery, "Edward Lhuyd, Edmond Gibson, and the Printing of Camden's Britannia, 1695", Library, fifth ser., xxxii (1977), 133-7.

^{lv} E. L., Parochial Queries In Order to A Geographical Dictionary, A Natural History. &c. of Wales (Oxford? 1696?) [Wing L1947]; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1817b, fo. 415r. Most of the returns are published in “Parochialia: Being a Summary of Answers to Parochial Queries in Order to a Geographical Dictionary, etc., of Wales issued by Edward Lhwyd”, ed. Rupert H. Morris, in Archaeologia Cambrensis (Supplement, 3 pts in 1, London, 1909-11). For discussion, see F. V. Emery, “A Map of Edward Lhuyd’s Parochial Queries in Order to a Geographical Dictionary, &c., of Wales (1696)”, Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (1958), 41-53; *idem*, “Edward Lhuyd and some of his Glamorgan Correspondents: a View of Gower in the 1690s”, Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion (1965), 59-114.

^{lvi} Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1820a, fos. 263-4 (eighteen hand-written queries concerning Ireland); Royal Irish Academy, MS 12 W 22(a); Hoppen, The Common Scientist in the Seventeenth Century, 187-90; J. L. Campbell and Derick Thomson, Edward Lhuyd in the Scottish Highlands 1699-1700 (Oxford, 1963), 4-5; The Occult Laboratory: Magic, Science and Second Sight in Late Seventeenth-Century Scotland, ed. Michael Hunter (Woodbridge, 2001), 48-9; Early Letters of Robert Wodrow 1698-1709, ed. L. W. Sharp (Scottish History of Society, third ser., xxiv, Edinburgh, 1937), 32-3, and cf. 189, 264.

^{lvii} Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. B. 323, contains at fo. 4 the printed sheet, Queries in order to a Survey of the County of Gloucester (n.p., n.d.) [not in Wing]. See Stuart Piggott, William Stukeley: an Eighteenth-Century Antiquary, 2nd edn. (London, 1985), 21; Suzanne Eward, “Parsons, Richard”, in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 60 vols. (Oxford, 2004-5).

^{lviii} David C. Douglas, English Scholars 1660-1730 (2nd edn., London, 1951), 208-21; Stephen Taylor, “Wake, William”, in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; Episcopal Visitations in Bedfordshire 1706-1720, ed. Patricia Bell (Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, lxxxi, Woodbridge, 2002), ix-x, 1-2, 3-5; Rosemary Sweet, Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain (London and New York, 2004), 51.

^{lix} Stephen Taylor, “Gibson, Edmund”, in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; Episcopal Visitations in Bedfordshire, ed. Bell, pp. xi, 103-5, 183-5. For a later eighteenth-century example, see Wiltshire Returns to the Bishop’s Visitation Queries, 1783, ed. Mary Ransome (Wiltshire Record Society, xxvii, Devizes, 1972), 17-18.

^{lx} Bod. Lib., MS Willis 35, fo. 281; MS Willis 36, fos. 247-54.

^{lxi} Browne Willis, To . . . at . . . in the County of Buckingham (n.p., n.d.) [ESTC T095776: copy in Brit. Lib., G.999.(2.)]; Bod. Lib., MS Willis 1, 649-730, quotation at p. 651; J. G. Jenkins, The Dragon of Whaddon: Being and Account of the Life and Work of Browne Willis (1682-1760) Antiquary and Historian (High Wycombe, 1953), 128-9, and the queries reprinted 240-2.

^{lxii} B. J. Enright, "Rawlinson's Proposed History of Oxfordshire", Oxoniensia, lvi (1951), 62. Willis' four replies are in Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. D. 1480, fos. 99-106. A note from Rawlinson (fo. 106v) reads: "These answers to his parochial queries relating to Buckinghamshire were given to me by Browne Willis esqr in the year 1714".

^{lxiii} Enright, "Rawlinson's Proposed History of Oxfordshire", 69-72. Copies of To the Reverend the Clergy and Gentlemen of the County of Oxford (n.p., n.d) are in Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. B. 400b, between fos. 134-5 (with Fletcher's replies added) and Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. D. 1481, fos. 30-1 (with Ayshford's replies added). Toovey's full manuscript reply on Watlington is MS Rawl. B. 400c, fos. 63-72. The Oxfordshire notes of Rawlinson and Curll (MS Rawl. B. 400b, c, e, f) are mostly reprinted in Parochial Collections . . . made by Anthony à Wood . . . and Richard Rawlinson, ed. F. N. Davis, 3 vols. (Oxfordshire Record Society, ii, iv, xi, Oxford, 1920-29), including the questionnaire and Fletcher's reply, iii. 368-72.

^{lxiv} Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. B. 389b, fos. 3a-b.

^{lxv} Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, D/X 579; Daniel Woolf, The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730 (Oxford, 2003), 114-5.

^{lxvi} Bod. Lib., MS Willis 43, Queries relating to the County of Dorset (n.p., n.d.), at fos. 224-5, and letters from Hutchins to Willis, at fos. 226-92 (quotation at fo. 290v). Other letters from Hutchins to Willis are in Bod. Lib., MS Willis 60, fos. 122-3; MS Willis 83, fos. 111-14.

^{lxvii} Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica, ed. John Nichols, 8 vols. (London, 1780-90), i. i; David Boyd Black, "Peck, Francis" in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

^{lxviii} G. A. Stephen, "Francis Blomefield's Queries in Preparation for his History of Norfolk", Norfolk Archaeology, xx (1921), 1-9 reproduces a facsimile of the questionnaire and prints the reply of the Rev. Charles Barnwell from Beeston, and Stanfield, now Norfolk Record Office, MS 10836. Another copy of Sir, Intending to publish and Essay towards a Topographical History of Norfolk . . . (n.p., n.d.) is in NRO, ACC 30/1/73; it is reprinted in The Correspondence of the Reverend Francis Blomefield (1705-52), ed. David A. Stoker (Norfolk Record Society, 55, London, 1992), 254-5. Other surviving responses are in NRO, NAS 1/1/14 (9 returns); NAS 1/1/15 Wreningham 29; NAS 1/1/1/1; NAS 1/1/2/65; NAS 1/1/4/136;

NAS 1/1/19/6. The Rev. John Russell's accounts of the parishes of Great Plumstead, Brundall (NAS 1/1/1/1) and Postwick, are printed in William J. Blake, "Parson Russell's Reply to Blomefield's Queries", Norfolk Archaeology, xxix (1946), pp. 164-80. Letter from Blomefield to Norris in The Correspondence of the Reverend Francis Blomefield, ed. Stoker, 101-2, and see letters to Blomefield, 97, 121, 226-32.

^{lxxix} Emery, "A 'Geographical Description' of Scotland Prior to the Statistical Accounts", 3; Paul Baines, "Maitland, William", in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

^{lxxx} The Antient and Present State of the County of Down. Containing a Chorographical Description, with the Natural and Civil History of the Same (Dublin, 1744), vii-viii, xiv-xviii [ESTC: T144670]; Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica, ed. Nichols, i. ii-iii.

^{lxxxi} John Burton, Monasticon Eboracense: and the Ecclesiastical History of Yorkshire (York, 1758), 425-48; Robert Davies, "A Memoir of John Burton", Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, ii (1873), 432-4.

^{lxxxii} Richard Walwyn, To . . . at . . . in the County of Hereford (n.p. n.d.). A sole copy, addressed to Dr Roberts at Ross, is in Herefordshire Record Office, B56/12 (unfoliated). See Janet Cooper, "Herefordshire", in English County Histories: A Guide, eds. C. R. J. Currie and C. P. Lewis (Stroud, 1994), 177-8. Cf. The Correspondence of Thomas Blount (1618-1679) a Recusant Antiquary, ed. Theo Bongaerts (Amsterdam, 1978), 67-8.

^{lxxxiii} The returns are bound up in Bod. Lib., MS Top. Devon b.1-2, and Milles' polished notes on the basis of them are MS Top. Devon c.8-12. On the number of Devonshire parishes, see W. G. Hoskins, Devon (London, 1954), 12n; Hoskins draws upon Milles' returns to illuminated contemporary agriculture and industry in the county, 97, 129.

^{lxxxiv} A copy of Queries Proposed to Gentlemen in the Several Parts of Great Britain. In hope of obtaining, from the Answers, a better Knowledge of its Antiquities and Natural History is in Society of Antiquaries, London, Letters and Papers, 1754-58, fo. 167, and reprinted in The Gentleman's Magazine, xxv (1755), 157-9. The responses of Chaplin and Smith are in Letters and Papers, 1754-58, fos. 187, 217. Theobald's volume of "Parochial Histories" is Society of Antiquaries MS 115, and see also his "Antiquity, Monuments, Inscriptions &c. found in Divers parts of Great Britain", in Brit. Lib., Additional MS 45,663, fos. 71-105. On this episode, see Joan Evans, A History of the Society of Antiquaries (Oxford, 1956), 123; D. G. C. Allan and J. H. Appleby, "James Theobald's Missing MS: History of the Society of Arts and his 'Chronological Register' of 'The Present Age'", Antiquaries Journal, lxxvi (1996), 209; Sweet, Antiquaries: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain, 90, 380.

^{lxxv} Sir, Having collected from several of the public offices and other repositories . . . (n.p, n.d.) [ESTC T179455]. The replies are bound in Bod. Lib. MS Gough Berks. 13, fos. 31-83, and three copies (two versions) of the queries are at fos. 108-13.

^{lxxvi} Thomas Pennant, A Tour in Scotland MDCCLXIX (Chester, 1771), 287-98 (unlike the first edition, that published in London in 1772 explicitly acknowledges that these “Queries” were “originally composed and published by order of the Society of Antiquaries”, 302); The Scot’s Magazine, xxxiv (1772), 21-3, 173-4.

^{lxxvii} On the foundation and purpose of the Dublin Society, see Toby Barnard, The Kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760 (Basingstoke, 2004), 83-4; on the questionnaire, see Sinclair’s account in The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799, i. 90-1.

^{lxxviii} George Allan, An Address and Queries to the Public, Relative to the Compiling a Complete Civil and Ecclesiastical History of the Antient and Present State of the County Palatine of Durham (Darlington, 1774) [ESTC: T117424].

^{lxxix} Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica, ed. Nichols, i. i-xiv.

^{lxxx} Elizabeth Baigent, ‘Chapple, William’, in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

^{lxxxi} Gentleman’s Magazine, lx (1790), 1178-1180; Gentleman’s Magazine, lxi (1791), 1120; Richard Polwhele, The History of Devonshire, 3 vols. (London, 1793-1806).

^{lxxxii} Archaeologia Scotica: or Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, i (1792).

^{lxxxiii} Sir John Sinclair, Queries Drawn up for the Purpose of Elucidating the Natural History and Political State of Scotland [Edinburgh, 1790] [ESTC: T046194]; The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799 Edited by Sir John Sinclair, i. 70.

^{lxxxiv} Charles Camic, Experience and Enlightenment: Socialization for Cultural Change in Eighteenth-Century Scotland (Edinburgh, 1983), ch. 6; R. D. Anderson, Scottish Education Since the Reformation (Dundee, 1997), ch. 2; The Scot’s Magazine, xxxiv (1772), 175.

^{lxxxv} The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799 Edited by Sir John Sinclair, i. x, xix-xx, 94.

^{lxxxvi} The Statistical Account of Scotland 1791-1799 Edited by Sir John Sinclair, i. 56-72.

^{lxxxvii} In his government post Sinclair followed the success of his “statistical” questionnaire with a request for information in the form of Queries proposed by the Board of Agriculture, to be answered by intelligent farmers (London, 1793), a pamphlet printed with two columns, “Queries” and “Answers”, the latter left blank for filling in.

^{lxxxviii} Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1817b, fo. 48r.

^{lxxxix} Bod. Lib., MS Willis 1, fo. 695, 723.

^{xc} NRO, NAS 1/1/14 (II); and cf. The Correspondence of the Reverend Francis Blomefield, ed. Stoker, 29, 229-30.

^{xcⁱ} Bod. Lib., MS Rawl. B. 400f, fos. 84-5, quoted in Enright, “Rawlinson’s Proposed History of Oxfordshire”, 65-7.

^{xcⁱⁱ} Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1829, fo. 51r, 59r; Bod. Lib., MS Ashmole 1817b, fo. 424r; Evans, History of the Society of Antiquaries, 123.

^{xcⁱⁱⁱ} Enright, “Rawlinson’s Proposed History of Oxfordshire”, 65n; Bod. Lib., MS Gough Berks. 13, fo. 82r.

^{xc^{iv}} Enright, “Rawlinson’s Proposed History of Oxfordshire”, 67n.