

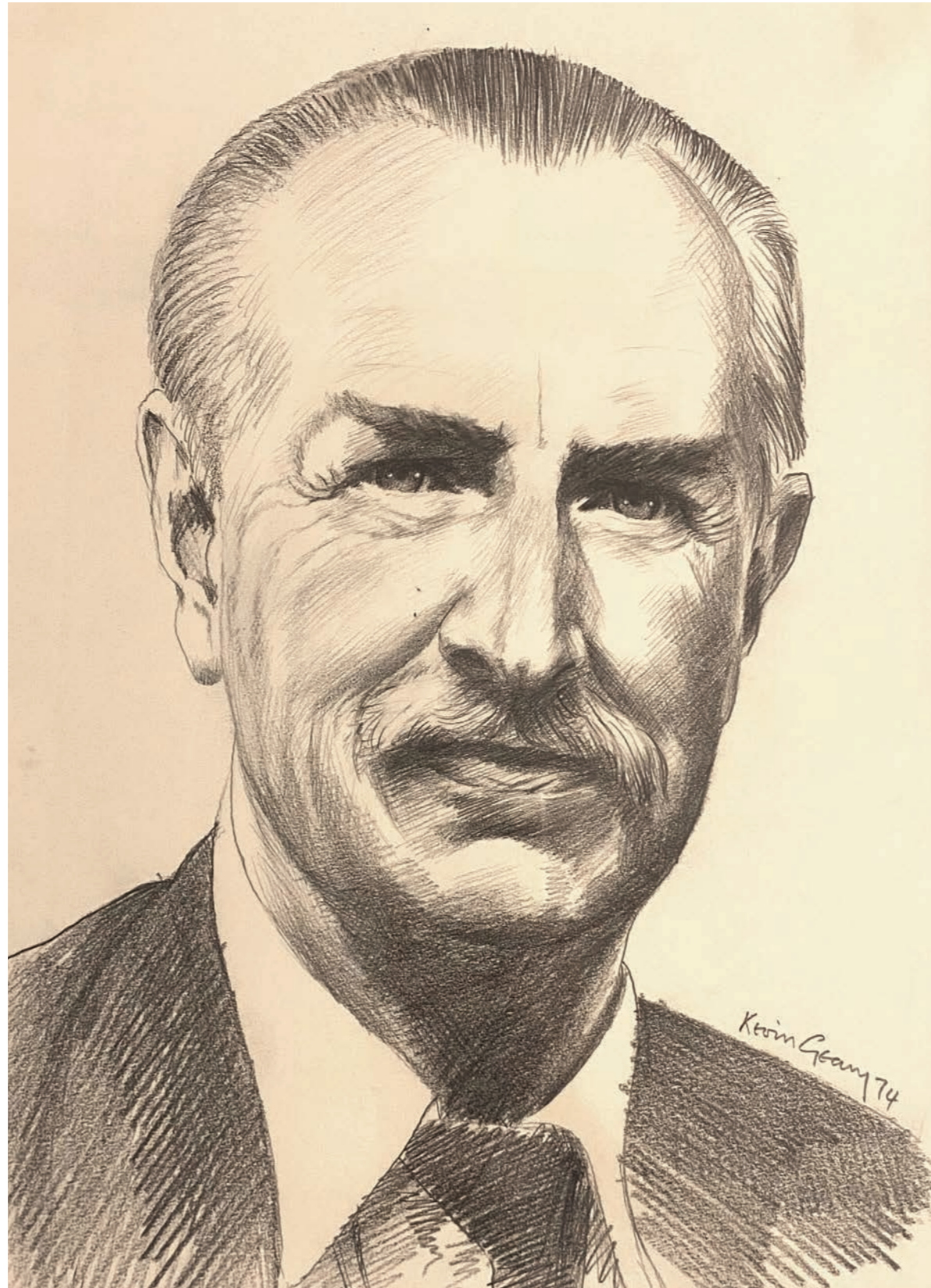
John Ellerman Foundation: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

Michael Taylor | Timothy Twining | Felix Waldmann



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*JEF Archive:
Pencil sketch of JELI
by Kevin Geary, 1974*

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Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 106, f. 3844-5:
Undated photo of
JEL.

FOREWORD

John Ellerman Foundation is an independent and values-led charitable foundation that aims to advance the wellbeing of people, society and the natural world. The main ways in which we achieve this are by funding charities for work that has national significance in the fields of the arts, social action and the environment (our funding categories), and investing and managing our endowment in such a way that balances the desire to maintain our grantmaking capacity, operate in the long-term, and address the risk that our investments are poorly aligned with our aim and values.

2021 marked the 50th anniversary of John Ellerman Foundation. When finalising our celebration plans, we once again felt all too keenly the paucity of information we possessed about the origins of our endowment, hence we issued an open call for proposals that has resulted in *John Ellerman Foundation: A Historical Review*, produced by Dr Michael Taylor, Dr Timothy Twining and Dr Felix Waldmann.

This research has provided the Foundation with the opportunity to reflect on the legacy of our organisation and consider the ways in which our past and present can be used to inform our future. It provides a robust historical overview of the history of the Foundation and its antecedent charitable trusts, and it presents clear insights into the philanthropic, business and personal inclinations of John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Baronet (Bt.), Order of the Companion of Honour (C. H.) (1862–1933), Annie Winifred (Bryher) Ellerman (1894–1983), and John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt. (1909–1973). It was the latter who set up the antecedents to the present-day John Ellerman Foundation, and whilst there have been no direct connections to him represented within our organisation for some years now, it is heartening to see that there is demonstrable evidence that aspects of our different funding categories, especially under the arts and environment, would have resonated with him personally.

In reviewing the findings, multiple considerations have been made, of which we highlight two. The first is that our founder, John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt., was intensely private and probably would have disliked this publication. We have chosen to make this a public-facing historical account because of our belief that there is legitimate interest from those working in and with John Ellerman Foundation to understand where our wealth comes from, and we are keen to model transparency and accountability on this front.

The second consideration has been that applying present day ethical standards to practices and individuals from the past is not straightforward. The research has provided us with the fullest written account the Foundation has ever possessed of the character, acumen and ambitions of John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt., C. H., Annie Winifred (Bryher) Ellerman, and John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt.. On their philanthropic endeavours, there is much to commend, even if it is caveated by the motivations and methodologies they adopted. Our founder's rationale for setting up the antecedents to what is now John

Ellerman Foundation was complex. A primary concern was to guard against the effects of estate duty for his heir and widow Lady Esther Ellerman (1910–1985) and to ensure Ellerman Lines Ltd. (from which a considerable proportion of his wealth was derived) could continue as a going concern, without estate duty risking the company being broken up. The Trusts that were originally set up, the Moorgate Trust and New Moorgate Trust, were under no obligation from our founder to prioritise grantmaking over ensuring the continued existence of Ellerman Lines Ltd., to the extent that the latter over some years reportedly did not generate a dividend for charitable disbursement.

The research also evidences that the businesses from which our wealth derived, which in brief comprised shipping, brewery, coal and oil, property and newspaper and publication interests ‘...were undoubtedly involved in activities which their modern equivalents would reject’, be that a clear indifference to the apartheid system in South Africa and Namibia, or the environmental harms caused by the family’s investments, or that the source of the family’s wealth was linked to the British Empire in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and that Sir John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt. ‘presented himself as a modern Francis Drake: a cynosure for the extension of British rule across the globe’. The research also uncovered a clear example of anti-semitism committed by John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt.’s mother, Anne Elizabeth, with the publication in 1897 of a book she wrote titled *The Prime Minister of Württemberg*. This fact was particularly surprising in light of the considerable evidence of her grandchildren’s support and respect for Jewish people and Judaism.

We fully acknowledge that the origins of our endowment have links to such practices that resulted in harms and struggles both then and now. It is our intent and belief that our present-day practices help to redress these wrongs. Our grantmaking activities are designed to support work that challenges the symptoms and root causes of systemic and structural issues, and improves politics, society, the economy and the environment in ways that enhance the wellbeing of individuals and communities across the UK and beyond. The endowment, from which our wealth continues to be derived, is invested in ways that take full account of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) issues, but we are fully aware that this practice may be rejected by future generations, and we are proactively looking for new and better ways to invest in ESG funds and beyond. We are committed to delivering our work in ways that are transparent, accountable and effective, with environmental sustainability and diversity, equity and inclusion applied across everything that we do. We know that there is more for us to do in redressing past and present harms.

In their concluding remarks, Michael Taylor, Timothy Twining and Felix Waldmann state that *John Ellerman Foundation is a charity which has had to discover its own history*. Through their work we now have a thorough and thoughtful account of our Foundation’s history, and we cannot overstate our gratitude to them for this. We are also enormously grateful to Professor Peter Mandler and Dr Allegra Fryxell for their expertise and advice on this research. Further thanks go to Dr Katharine Haydon for completing our Oral History Project, which is referenced in this publication, Rosa Deen, Chandra Finnaughty, Beth Astridge, Inez Gretton, Michael Jacobs, Timothy Martin-Jenkins, Gillian Mosley, as well

as former and present staff and Trustees for all their support in making this publication possible.

Whilst this is an impressive and comprehensive publication, our intention is to build upon it further as we consider its findings.

Peter Kyle, CBE, Chair of John Ellerman Foundation

Sufina Ahmad, MBE, Director of John Ellerman Foundation

April 2023

PREFACE

The following work was commissioned by John Ellerman Foundation in November 2021. The purpose of the commission was to provide a historical overview of the history of the Foundation, its antecedent charitable trusts, and the lives of John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt., C. H. (1862–1933), Annie Winifred (Bryher) Ellerman (1894–1983), and John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt. (1909–1973). The absence of a substantive history of the Ellerman family or a substantive study of their business interests motivated the Trustees to commission our work. In addition to our focus on the conduct of the Ellerman family businesses, we have focused on the moral and political views of the Ellerman family. This responds to the Trustees’ objective to familiarise themselves with the attitudes and conduct of the individuals and the businesses which generated the Foundation’s initial endowment.

The work is divided into four chapters. The first three chapters focus on the lives of John Ellerman, 1st Bt. (Chapter I), Bryher (Chapter II), and John Ellerman, 2nd Bt. (Chapter III). The final chapter (Chapter IV) focuses on the history of the charitable trusts — the Moorgate Trust and New Moorgate Trust — from which John Ellerman Foundation was formed, in addition to focusing on the history of the Foundation since 1992, when the Foundation acquired its current name. Our work is intended as a general historical overview; it has no pretensions to exhaustiveness. The subject of each chapter could easily merit a book length biography. Bryher, for example, is the subject of considerable scholarship by literary scholars, who have delved into matters outside the scope of our research. The businesses presided over by John Reeves Ellerman, father and son, have also received extended attention from scholars of twentieth-century industry in Britain, often devoting minute detail to matters — such as personnel changes — which we treat only briskly or incidentally. Although our work is an attempt to furnish a summary which is accessible to non-specialists, we have also provided a scholarly ‘apparatus’, in the form of endnotes, which will allow readers to scrutinise our claims. It is our hope that the apparatus can furnish the basis for any future study of the Ellerman family. (For the avoidance of doubt, it should be emphasised that readers will find a more comprehensive overview of the family’s shipping interests in specialist monographs devoted to the subject, which we cite in the endnotes.)

Our work has benefited from the research conducted by Dr Katharine Haydon on behalf of the Foundation prior to 2021. We are grateful to Dr Haydon and we have acknowledged several instances in the endnotes where we have relied on Dr Haydon’s findings. We have accumulated several other debts in the course of our research. Our greatest thanks are owed to Sufina Ahmad, MBE, Director of John Ellerman Foundation, who has shepherded this project through each of its stages. Staff past and present of the Foundation have aided our research, and we owe particular thanks to Rian Trim and Lauren Williamson. Our research has also benefited from the expert guidance of Dr Allegra Fryxell and Professor Peter

Mandler. Finally, we are grateful to many other individuals who responded to our inquiries or whose own inquiries shaped our work. In particular, we wish to thank Rosa Deen, Inez Gretton, Michael Jacobs, Timothy Martin-Jenkins, Gillian Mosley, and Peter Kyle, CBE.

Dr Michael Taylor

Dr Timothy Twining

Dr Felix Waldmann

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

- The endnotes and the body of work adopt the following abbreviations:
 - AC — Census and life records digitised by Ancestry.com.
 - Bryher — Annie Winifred Ellerman (1894–1983).
 - Bryher Papers — Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Bryher Papers, GEN MSS 97.
 - References to the Bryher Papers adopt the form: b. (box) and f. (folder).
 - DBB* — *Dictionary of Business Biography: A Biographical Dictionary of Business Leaders Active in Britain in the Period 1860–1980*, ed. David J. Jeremy (London, 1984–6).
 - References in the form JEI *DBB* and JEII *DBB* refer to the entries for these individuals in *DBB*.
 - HA — Bryher, *The Heart to Artemis* (London, 1963).
 - This imprint of Bryher’s memoir differs substantively from Bryher, *The Heart to Artemis* (New York, 1962). HA refers restrictedly to the edition of 1963 unless otherwise noted.
 - JEI — John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt., C. H. (1862–1933).
 - JEII — John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt. (1909–1973).
 - JEF — John Ellerman Foundation Archives, Aria House, 23 Craven Street, London, WC2N 5NS.
 - KH — Dr Katharine Haydon.
 - ODNB* — *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew (Oxford, 2004).
 - References in the form JEI *ODNB*, Bryher *ODNB*, and JEII *ODNB* refer to the entries for these individuals in *ODNB*.
- Letters from JEII to Piet Beukes, which we cite extensively in Chapter III, are drawn from an archive currently preserved at JEF; the archive is intended for the UK Philanthropy Archive, University of Kent. The letters are principally in Afrikaans. Our quotations from the letters rely on translations provided by Rosa Deen and Chandra Finaughty, except where otherwise noted.
- We have endeavoured to provide life dates in parentheses for every individual mentioned in the body of the text. Where only one life date is available, we supply it with the indication b. (born) and d. (died). We have used fl. (floruit), a term denoting a date or period during which a person was known to have been alive or active, only in exceptional circumstances.
- The use of the term ‘owned’ or ‘controlled’ in reference to JEI’s or JEII’s financial interest in certain entities should be understood to refer to de facto ownership or control as well as de jure ownership or control. In practice, JEI and JEII often owned or controlled entities through the structures of a trust, which would require circumlocutions to explain in every relevant instance.
- We have used parenthetical internal cross references in the form (I.1, II.2, ...), which refers to Chapter I, Section 1, Chapter II, Section 2, and so on.
- The word ‘extant’ denotes ‘known by the authors to exist’.
- We have adopted the form ‘Hannah Glover’, ‘Bryher’, and ‘Esther Ellerman’ to refer to these individuals. We use this style to refer to these individuals before and after they acquired different married names and before and after they acquired the pre-nominal title ‘Lady’, by dint of their marriage to a baronet. After her second marriage, Esther Ellerman preferred the style ‘The Hon. Mrs George Borwick’; however, we continue to use ‘Esther Ellerman’ to describe her during this period.
- We use the style ‘John Ellerman Foundation’, omitting the definite article. When the New Moorgate Trust was re-named in 1992, the style adopted by the Trustees included a definite article: ‘The John Ellerman Foundation’. The Foundation has subsequently eschewed the definite article, and we have observed this preference throughout the work.

SIR JOHN REEVES ELLERMAN, 1ST BT., C. H. (1862–1933)

When John Reeves Ellerman died in July 1933, *The Daily Telegraph* published the following curriculum vitae:

At various periods of his life Sir John Ellerman owned or controlled the largest private shipping interests in the world; more than 200 acres of the most valuable real estate in London; large brewery interests; newspapers and periodicals; and several [...] trust companies. Starting business life as a chartered accountant in the City, he added one interest to another until his fortune was reckoned in tens of millions.¹

In the judgement of Ellerman's obituarists, he was the wealthiest man ever to have lived in Britain. Indeed, according to Professor W. D. Rubinstein, 'Ellerman has many serious claims to being regarded as the greatest entrepreneur in the whole history of British capitalism'.² Yet Ellerman has received only limited attention from historians.³ The principal published sources on Ellerman's life are entries in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) and *Dictionary of Business Biography* (1984–6), both by Professor Rubinstein;⁴ James Taylor's *Ellermans: A Wealth of Shipping* (1976), a study of Ellerman's business interests drawing on Taylor's personal acquaintance with members of the Ellerman companies;⁵ a richly detailed MLitt thesis of 2003 by Peter Richard McLeave;⁶ and a short study of Ellerman Lines Ltd., Ellerman's principal shipping firm, by Ian Collard.⁷ The following chapter summarises the essential details of Ellerman's life.

1 Archive

There are inevitably limitations to our findings caused by archival loss. Three examples are indicative of the challenge posed: Ellerman's correspondence with James Mackay (1852–1932), 1st Earl of Inchcape was destroyed by fire in 1937; the business archive of Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd. was destroyed by bombing in Liverpool during the Second World War; and the archive of J. W. Cameron Ltd., the brewery in which Ellerman held a substantial interest, cannot be located, notwithstanding a sighting of the material in the early 1990s.⁸ The most significant loss, however, is Ellerman's private papers, including incoming private correspondence; these papers are not extant, presumably because they were destroyed by family members. A related loss is Ellerman's personal financial records, such as bank account passbooks and any documentation pertaining to the investment trusts of which he was a settlor or beneficiary; these materials are also not extant, presumably because they were destroyed on Ellerman's death or after the trusts were dissolved.

Nonetheless, a significant body of relevant materials is extant. We have benefited from the careful preservation of company archival records in The Hull History Centre,⁹ the

University of Glasgow,¹⁰ and National Museums Liverpool,¹¹ as well as smaller collections preserved in the British Library, the National Archives, Kew, the Parliamentary Archives, the National Maritime Museum,¹² the Royal Geographical Society, Gray's Inn, the Library of Congress,¹³ and the Zentralbibliothek Zurich. These archival materials have assisted enormously in reconstructing Ellerman's business activities. However, it is important to emphasise the extent of the materials under discussion. The business archives in Hull, Glasgow, and Liverpool include many thousands of documents, covering dozens of linear metres, often chronicling matters which lie outside the scope of our study, such as personnel files and administrative trivia.

As with many aspects of the Ellerman family's history, the most valuable personal records were preserved by Ellerman's daughter, Bryher, whom we discuss in the next chapter; her archive is now held at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. In addition to manuscript records, we have made use of a substantial volume of historical documentation about Ellerman's life, including published memoirs, contemporary reportage in newspapers and periodicals, family memoirs, and photographs. The account of Ellerman below is nonetheless fragmentary. Many aspects of his life — his personal attitudes, his friendships, his relationship with his son — remain inaccessible or recoverable only obliquely. Moreover, many of the transactions which generated his fortune are impossible to reconstruct, owing to the loss or simply the absence *ab initio* of records detailing them. As such, the account below relies, in parts, on conjecture. However, the vast majority of its claims are substantiated.

2 1862–1886

John Reeves Ellerman was born in Brough, near Hull on 15 May 1862. JEI, as we will refer to him, to distinguish him from his son John Reeves Ellerman II (JEII), was the son of Johannes Hermann Ellerman (1819–1871) and his wife Anne Elizabeth Reeves (1824–1909). In 1935, Bryher commissioned a genealogist to investigate her paternal ancestry. Bryher suspected that her father's family was Jewish. However, the basis for this suspicion was speculative and ultimately unfounded. In the 1930s, Bryher was motivated by a philanthropic concern for many Jewish individuals persecuted by the Nazi regime and its European allies, and she could reasonably be described as a philo-semitic. In contrast, as we note further below, Anne Elizabeth Reeves was vocally anti-semitic and there is no evidence that any member of the Ellerman family considered themselves to be Jewish.

The genealogist commissioned by Bryher established the association of the Ellerman family with Hitzacker in Lower Saxony, a predominantly Lutheran town on the river Elbe, eight kilometres north of Dannenberg.¹⁴ Hitzacker is where the genealogist had traced an eighteenth-century ancestor of JEI, Johannes-Jürgen Ellermann (fl. 1726), whom Bryher would describe in her memoir *The Heart to Artemis* (1962) as an 'ex-dragon'.¹⁵ Information about JEI's German ancestors is limited. JEI's grandfather, Johannes Christoph Ellermann was born in Hitzacker on 21 January 1794. Johannes Christoph was a miller and labourer, who had become a citizen of Hamburg on 20 November 1835, where he died shortly after, on 22 December 1838.

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 152, f. 5144–5:
Genealogist report,
commissioned by
Bryher in 1935.

Johann Christoph Ellermann, miller, later laborer, was born in Kühren, in parish of Hitzacker on the 21st January, 1794. He died aged forty four, hospital in Hamburg, on December 22nd, 1838. He became a citizen of Hamburg on the 20th November, 1835.
(His father was Jurgen Heinrich Ellermann, his mother Anna Elisabeth, nee Behrens.)
Johann Christoph Ellermann married on the 4th May, 1819, Rebecca Carolina Wehnke, daughter of the church elder Jacob Wehnke and of Anna Catharina, nee Odemann, who was born 29th February, 1796 at Reitbrock, and died at St Georg, as the widow Ellermann, 8th June, 1853.

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They had six children, three sons and three daughters. These are: -

- 1) Johann Hermann, illegitimate, born 5th February 1819, christened 21st February, at St Jacobi.
- 2) Malwine Johanne, born 31st July, 1821, St Georg.
- 3) Lisette, born 15th January, 1823, at St Georg, (father still miller)
- 4) Heinrich Ludewig Friedrich, born 27th August 1825, St Jacobi.
(Father Potter .)
- 5) Hermann Hinrich, born 26th February, 1829, at Sr Catherine,
(Father laborer.)
- 6) Gesa Catharina Emilie, born 1st November, 1834, St Catherine.
(Father, laborer, St Anne.)

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Johann Christoph Ellermann owned part of an island in the Elbe which was submerged during a dreadful storm and they escaped to Hamburg where his wife had relatives and property. (This does not link on with his having died in hospital described as laborer.)

His son, ~~Karaxmax~~ Heinrich Johann Hermann, born 1819, died 1871, came to England to a cousin of his mother's, a Mr Von Roy, who practically adopted him. They lived in Hull where he became a corn merchant and Hanoverian consul. He married Anne Elizabeth Reeves, died

There were three children. J.R.E. 15th May 1862- 16th July 1933.
(married H.C.
S.W.E. 2-9-1894.
J.R.E. 21-12- 1909.)
Ida Annie, 1855. married J.F. Butlin.
Emily Mary 7th June 1958-1940. Married
George Todd.

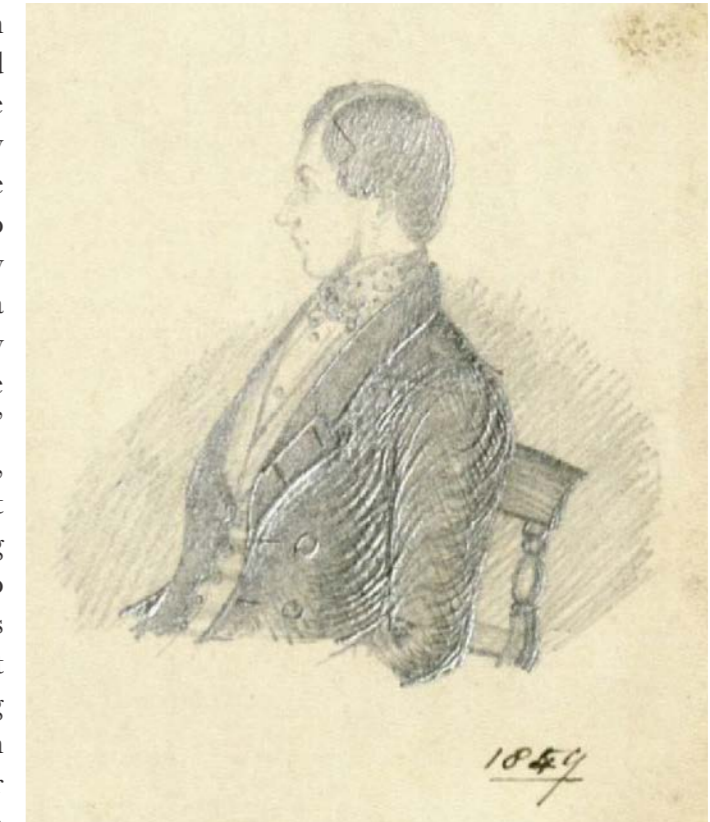
Johannes Christoph had married Rebecca Carolina, née Wehnke (d. 1853), the daughter of a church elder, Jacob Wehnke, and Anna Catharina, née Odemann, from Reitbrook in Hamburg. The couple reportedly owned part of an island on the Elbe, which was damaged during a flood. The event prompted the couple to move to Hamburg, where Rebecca Carolina's relatives could offer assistance. It was in Hamburg that the couple had their six children, including Johannes Hermann.

Johannes Hermann was born on 5 February 1819, and he was baptised in St James's Church (Hauptkirche St. Jacobi) in Hamburg. His early life has otherwise proved impossible to reconstruct. He emigrated to England in circa 1842,¹⁶ reportedly under the supervision of Rebecca Carolina's cousin, Frederick von Roy (fl. 1826), who resided in Hull.¹⁷ He evidently deprecated the second 'n' in his surname and used 'Ellerman', but he declined to Anglicise his first name to 'John', notwithstanding JEI's later use of 'John' to refer to Johannes in 1897.¹⁸ In the Census of 1851, he is identified as living at 159 Coltman Street, Hull, practising the profession of a 'merchant'.¹⁹ In 1858, he is identified as a shipbroker in a trade directory, running his firm from High Street, Hull.²⁰ In the Census of 1861, he is described as a 'corn merchant'.²¹ The only substantive extant source chronicling Johannes Hermann's business activities in Hull is his deposition to a bankruptcy commissioner, recorded in a law report in 1860. The case pertained to the bankruptcy of Johannes Hermann's bank, to which he was a debtor. In 1865, a legal textbook summarised the report:

*Ellerman paid [his] Hull bank a commission on the amount of the acceptances and they paid Price and Co. a fixed annual sum for transacting their London business. When a bill was accepted by Price and Co., the Hull bank debited Ellerman with the amount, and they charged him interest from the time the bill was due. The Hull bank became bankrupt, and Price and Co. paid all bills accepted by them which were due after the bankruptcy; and it was held that the assignees of the Hull bank, and not Price and Co., were entitled to recover from Ellerman the amount of such bills.*²²

As Johannes Hermann noted in his evidence: 'I am a merchant at Hull, and have been so for eighteen years past [sc. 1842–1860]. I kept a banking account with the bankrupts, which I opened about 1845'.²³

In 1862, Johannes Hermann was appointed as Consul to the Kingdom of Hanover.²⁴ Johannes Hermann's appointment as Consul may have been facilitated by a familial relationship with Abraham Frederick Daniel Ellerman (1775–1832), Consul to the Kingdom of Hanover in Antwerp. Abraham's connection to Johannes Hermann is difficult to establish, but it is evident that both families had an association with Hamburg and Hull. A 1915



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 151, f. 5107:
A sketch of 1849
reportedly depicting
Johannes Christoph
Ellermann

biographical notice for Abraham and his eccentric son, Charles Frederick Ellerman (d. 1864) — a novelist, a correspondent of Dickens, a bankrupt, and an inventor of a deodorising liquid — notes that Abraham was:

a native of Altona, the son of Abraham Ellerman and his wife Fanny Egen, who was of Irish extraction. He was educated at a school near Hull, whence he was, at age 16, received into the mercantile house of Parish & Co. of Hamburg, then at the zenith of its commercial greatness. There he remained until 1806, when he selected Heligoland (then in the possession of Denmark, to be captured in 1807 by the British) as a safe intermediary for commercial traffic between Great Britain and the continent of Europe, at that time rendered difficult by the Napoleonic blockade. Persuaded and supported by an influential circle of friends (included amongst whom was Gustavus Adolphus Vasa IV, King of Sweden), he established himself as a merchant on that island, and very shortly developed a large and prosperous business, principally with Hull and Hamburg [...] At the conclusion of peace in 1814, Abraham Frederick Daniel Ellerman transferred his residence and place of business to Antwerp, and in May 1817, was appointed Hanoverian Consul at that port (becoming Consul-General 24 Aug., 1826), and in September, 1820, Consul for the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg Schwerin. [...] Charles Frederick Ellerman [...] became head of the mercantile house of A. Ellerman et Cie. of Antwerp and Rotterdam, in which he had been working under his father since the age of 15; and also Hanoverian Consul and Consul for the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburgh Schwerin, acquiring, besides, the lucrative office of Lloyd's Agent at Antwerp. He succeeded for some years in giving satisfaction and conciliating the goodwill of his father's friends and business connexions, but after a time his musical talents, which were of a high order, and his taste for singing and the operatic stage, led him into the intimacy of actors and actresses, which caused him to neglect his affairs and to dissipate his resources on objects outside his business [...] with the result that in December, 1837, he was obliged to surrender the active management of the Antwerp mercantile house[.]²⁵

Abraham Ellerman's connection to Johann Hermann is conjectural. However, the coincidence in their movements between Hamburg and Hull, and their service as Consuls to the Kingdom of Hanover, is suggestive. In addition to his role as Consul, Johannes Hermann served as Secretary to the Council of the Hull German Lutheran Church after its foundation in 1848.²⁶

Anne Elizabeth Rees was English. She was born in Hull on 11 March 1824 to Timothy Reeves (1793–1879), a solicitor, and his wife, Betsey, née Mills or Hill (d. 1836). Timothy Reeves was articled as an attorney and established a legal practice in Parliament Street in Hull. He married Betsey at Holy Trinity Church in August 1823, and resided with her in Neptune Street, Hull, and subsequently in English Street. After Betsey's death, Timothy resided in Lister Street, Hull, according to the 1871 Census, which described him as a 'retired solicitor'.²⁷ According to the 1873 electoral register, Timothy was residing at St. James's Terrace, Paddington. In probate calendars dated 1879, he is identified as residing at Portsdown Road, Paddington, in addition to Lister Street, Hull. Timothy's children with Betsey included Anne Elizabeth, Mary, and Stafford (1826–1909), who attended Trinity College, Cambridge, where he matriculated in Michaelmas 1849. Stafford later lived in

the United States, owning a number of slave plantations prior to the Civil War,²⁸ before ultimately relocating to Cheltenham, where he resided with his wife and ten children.²⁹

In October 1855, Johannes Hermann married Anne Elizabeth Reeves at St. Pancras Church in London.³⁰ Johannes Hermann and Anne Elizabeth had three children: JEI; Ida Annie (1856–1959), who would marry John Francis Butlin, a Birmingham-based solicitor who was also her cousin (the son of Anne Elizabeth's sister, Mary); and Emily Mary (1858–1940), who would marry George Todd (b. 1844), a former Snell Exhibitioner at Balliol College, Oxford, later First Assistant Secretary to the Scottish Department of Education.³¹ The Census return of 1861 records that Johannes Hermann and Anne Elizabeth normally lived at 100 Anlaby Road, Hull, with two servants, as well as Emily Mary, Ida Annie, and Johannes Hermann's nephew from Hamburg, Hermann Ellerman.³² In January 1868, Johannes Hermann dissolved his partnership with a certain Walter Reynolds of Hull.³³ The Census return of 1871 describes Johannes Hermann as 'a corn merchant out of employment' and an 'imbecile'.³⁴ A court document of 1871 further notes that Johannes Hermann was suffering from a 'softening of the brain', presumably in reference to a mental deterioration that preceded his death in the same year. It is clear from the Census return of 1871 that Anne and Johannes Hermann were then living at 5 Wilton Terrace, Hornsea as lodgers, while JEI

Tale, Bryher Papers, b. 70, f. 2692: A letter from JEI to his sister Emily Mary Ellerman, 3 May 1870.

and his sisters resided with their mother's widowed sister, Mary Butlin, at 67 Francis Road in Edgbaston.³⁵

JEI was only nine years of age when Johannes Hermann died.³⁶ Anne Elizabeth subsequently moved the family to Caen in France. The motive for her decision is unknown. In *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher discusses her father's time in Caen, presumably drawing from the recollections that JEI had conveyed to her directly. JEI would reportedly 'never speak of Germany' and he appears not to have spoken, or read in, German. However, his time in Caen equipped him with French, and he reportedly became a lifelong Francophile. Bryher believed that JEI's time in Caen was 'the happiest [...] of his life'. JEI would later confide his 'dream' to Bryher 'eventually to retire from business and live in France'.³⁷

The children returned to England before 1876. JEI resided with Mary Butlin in Edgbaston, and he was sent by the family to King Edward School in Birmingham, a school attended in a similar period by A. E. Housman (1859–1936) and, later, J. R. R. Tolkien (1892–1973).³⁸ In adulthood, JEI would reportedly observe to Bryher that attending a 'public school' would have impeded his progress in the business world.³⁹ 'The younger one starts', he observed, 'the better'.⁴⁰ However, it is important to stress that JEI was from a comparatively privileged background. The Reeves family, in particular, were wealthy: Timothy Reeves left an estate valued at approximately £60,000 on his death in 1879;⁴¹ Mary Butlin's profession, as recorded in the Census of 1871, was 'managing trust funds'.⁴²

A disagreement at the age of 14, apparently over 'smoking in the drawing-room', prompted JEI to leave Butlin's home.⁴³ JEI finished his schooling and articled himself to a chartered accountant, William Smedley (1851–1934), of Smedley and Corder at 57 Colmore Row, Birmingham. Smedley was at one point chairman of British Mutoscope and Biograph, 'the largest film company in England during the Victorian period'; a co-founder of Neostyle/Roneo Ltd., a manufacturer of a precursor to the mimeograph; and a 'founding figure' behind the modern study of English Renaissance marginalia, owing to his significant collection of material relating to the life and writings of Francis Bacon (1561–1626).⁴⁴

Bryher describes Smedley as a 'Victorian eccentric': 'He was convinced that Bacon had written Shakespeare's plays and showed me the first Elizabethan book that I ever handled, a Latin grammar whose owner had scrawled pictures of his schoolboy comrades in puffed sleeves and ruffs over the pages'.⁴⁵ Bryher herself would become a collector of Elizabethan books in later life, as we will see (II.5). In the early 1920s, Bryher's first husband Robert Menzies McAlmon (1896–1956) would report that Smedley, 'nearing eighty', had visited the Ellermans for dinner, and continued to impress upon the guests his theory that 'Shakespeare was Bacon'.⁴⁶

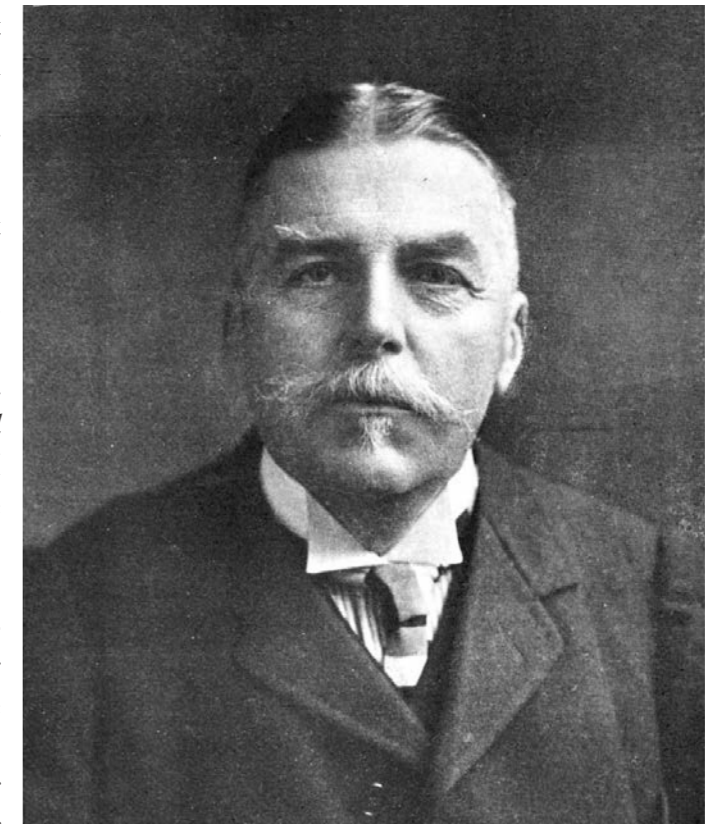
JEI received a legacy of £1,500 in 1879 from Timothy Reeves. JEI's obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* in 1933 would describe the legacy as a 'small fortune',⁴⁷ but there is no evidence that JEI received more than £1,500, notwithstanding a recent claim that the amount was £14,000.⁴⁸ According to Bryher, JEI lent part of the legacy to Smedley 'on condition that he [sc. JEI] could come to the office an hour later in the mornings (in those days they often opened at seven thirty) and have four months of holiday a year'.⁴⁹ Smedley, 'who happened

to want to finance a new project at the time', upheld the bargain 'faithfully'.⁵⁰

JEI took these periods of extended leave to engage in mountaineering. Bryher notes that JEI made his first ascent on the Italian side of Monte Rosa: 'he was carried away by an avalanche, he outwalked a well-known guide for a bet'.⁵¹ A report in *The Alpine Journal* of November 1882 records JEI traversing the Schnidejoch: 'The party was involved in an avalanche caused by a falling stone on the Macugnaga glacier about half-way down to the rocks, and but for the second guide holding up the other two, who were carried away, all would certainly have lost their lives'.⁵² In May 1883, *The Alpine Journal* recorded JEI's separate ascent of a couloir near Macugnaga, and printed JEI's short account of the expedition.⁵³

In 1881, JEI was working as an account clerk and living in a boarding house in Edgbaston, according to his Census return for that year.⁵⁴ Four letters now in Zurich,⁵⁵ addressed by JEI to William Augustus Brevoort Coolidge (1850–1926), the mountaineer and historian, show that JEI had remained in Birmingham until 1882, where his letters to Coolidge are dated. When JEI passed his chartered accountancy examinations in 1883 'with the highest possible marks',⁵⁶ he relocated to London and joined Quilter, Ball and Co. as a clerk, an accountancy firm co-managed by Sir Cuthbert Quilter, 1st Bt. (1841–1911), located at 5 Moorgate Street. The firm employed a number of individuals who would later find prominence in the City: the founders of Coopers and Lybrand, the antecedent of PricewaterhouseCoopers, William Cooper (1826–71) and his brothers; and John Ball, the founder of Ball, Baker and Co.⁵⁷ In March 1883, the trade publication, *The Accountant*, reported that JEI was instrumental in establishing the Chartered Accountant Students' Society in the same month.⁵⁸ In June 1883, JEI was elected an Associate of the Institute of Accountants.⁵⁹ Shortly before his election, he delivered a lecture to the Institute on 'The Companies Acts, 1862–80', exploring:

1. The formation of companies and membership therein.
2. Administration of companies.
3. The rights and liabilities of members.
4. The dissolution and winding-up of companies.⁶⁰



Public domain: Sir Cuthbert Quilter, 1st Bt.

The lecture — which was a minutely detailed exposition on these themes — was printed in full in *The Accountant* in small-point font over five double-columned pages.

JEI's activities between 1883 and 1885 are difficult to reconstruct. On 10 May 1884, JEI attended the Third Annual Meeting of the Institute of Accountants, where the minutes record his voicing of 'scarcely audible' complaints, the 'chief of which appeared to be that the examinations were conducted in a room too small for the purpose, that some of the papers were collected too soon, and that some of the students were allowed time beyond the hour fixed in the regulations. He also drew attention to an error of 6d. in the calculation of 10 per cent. for depreciation of furniture'.⁶¹ The minutes record '*Laughter*' in response to the latter observation, presumably reflecting JEI's intention. During the same meeting, he proposed 'that it is in the interest of the Institute that casual vacancies occurring in the Council, shall not, in general, be filled up, save by the action of the members assembled at an annual or other meeting'. The motion 'fell through'.⁶²

In 1886, JEI travelled to India 'to try some peak in the Everest region'. According to Bryher, '[t]he party was trapped on a ledge near the Tibetan border and his [sc. JEI's] toes were frostbitten. He did not lose them but it stopped further high-altitude climbs'.⁶³ A sketchbook preserved by Bryher features a number of pencil drawings, apparently by JEI, including a depiction of the pier at Clacton on Sea, dated August 1887, an undated sketch

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 151, f. 5108:
An undated sketch
of Bellagio and a
sketch of Clacton on
Sea, August 1887,
reportedly by JEI.



of Bellagio, Italy, and an undated sketch of a 'hut in India'.⁶⁴ JEI's application to join the Alpine Club was reportedly rejected in 1883. An historian of the club, T. S. Blakeney, remarkably observes of the episode that '[J]ittle seems to be known of Ellerman' — a testament to JEI's disinclination publicly to practise or discuss mountaineering after 1886.⁶⁵

In circa 1885–6, Quilter reportedly offered to make JEI a partner in Quilter, Ball and Co. However, JEI declined the offer. Instead, he started his own firm: J. R. Ellerman and Co., which he established in partnership with Charles Eves (d. 1936), later Sir Charles Eves, another chartered accountant. In April 1886, *The Railway Times* reported that JEI had 'commenced business' at 10 Moorgate Street, beginning his long

association with the area.⁶⁶ By 1891, he was operating from 12 Moorgate Street, which would remain the headquarters of his business activities until circa 1922, when offices at 21 Moorgate Street were constructed for this purpose.⁶⁷

3 1886–1900

Information about JEI's activities from circa 1886–1890 relies principally on the newspaper reports in which his firm is listed as an auditor or subscriber to shares, or the reportage of business directories, where JEI is listed as a director of a firm. In July 1886, J. R. Ellerman and Co. was listed as a subscriber to shares in Ball's Patent Dredger Company.⁶⁸ In June 1887, the firm was listed as the auditor of Humber and Company Ltd., a bicycle manufacturer.⁶⁹ In 1888, JEI was personally listed as the agent in London of the London and Orange Free State Exploration Company Ltd., a company which had acquired diamond mines in Koffiefontein.⁷⁰ In the same year, J. R. Ellerman and Co. was listed as the auditor of the Electrical Automatic Delivery-Box Company Ltd.⁷¹ It was at roughly this time that JEI became acquainted with Henry Osborne O'Hagan (1853–1930), a 'professional company promoter' and the controlling shareholder of the City of London Contract Corporation.⁷² According to David Kynaston, O'Hagan was responsible for the 'invention and popularisation of underwriting for industrial issues, which meant that, as the vendor would not suffer if the public failed to respond to the issue of shares, he was thereby encouraged to go public'. Kynaston notes that this outsourcing by O'Hagan of underwriting 'on a commission basis' was particularly important before 1900, 'when the Companies Acts still precluded a company from issuing its shares at a discount or itself paying a commission to anyone for taking up its shares'.⁷³ This approach was often used in lieu of merchant banks, which were reluctant to engage in small flotations.

O'Hagan promoted several companies: 'a mass of English breweries, various American breweries, the Cardiff timber merchants John Bland and Co., the Chicago Junction Railways and Stockyards, the Chicago Packing and Provision Co., the entertainment complex Ronacher's of Vienna, and the Havana cigar business of Henry Clay and Bock Ltd.'⁷⁴ In her history of foreign investment in the United States, Mira Wilkins observes that the City of London Contract Corporation procured 'high' fees for its services,⁷⁵ which could involve (*inter alia*) ensuring 'that a company just floated would declare an impressive first dividend (out of the proceeds of the sale of stocks or bonds)'. As Wilkins writes, the first dividend 'verified' the 'genuineness' of the company, 'and gave the promoter plausibility in his next promotion. More important, it gave the promoter the opportunity to feed his own shares into the market. Then no second dividend would ever be forthcoming!'⁷⁶

JEI first met O'Hagan when the latter was engaged in the listing of Hull Brewery. According to O'Hagan's published memoir, the sale was jeopardised when O'Hagan failed to deliver a £20,000 cheque as a deposit, having neglected to attend a scheduled meeting with the Brewery's representative, who stormed away before O'Hagan had realised the error. JEI was sent with O'Hagan's brother to Hull to deliver the deposit in cash, kept safely in the latter's boots. The deal was rescued.⁷⁷ In June 1890, evidently with O'Hagan's collaboration,

JEI registered the Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust. O'Hagan later claimed to have controlled four investment trusts with JEI by 1891, but there is no substantiating evidence for the recollection.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, it was O'Hagan who was the key to JEI's signal accomplishment in the 1890s: the acquisition of Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.

3.1 *Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.*

In January 1892, Frederick Leyland (1831–1892) died unexpectedly. Leyland, now perhaps best known as an art connoisseur and patron of the pre-Raphaelites, was the owner of Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd., a major shipping concern, which had built up a fleet of vessels trading from Liverpool to Boston and the Mediterranean.⁷⁹ Leyland's son was reportedly uninterested in managing the firm, and agreed to offer it for sale. An eager buyer was Christopher Furness (1852–1912), later the 1st Baron Furness, who had begun to acquire ships for a family provision business in circa 1877, branching out directly into shipping with the creation of Furness, Withy and Co. in 1891. Furness hoped to purchase Leyland and Co. Ltd. because its Liverpool-Boston route 'complemented his existing London-Boston service and because Leyland and Co. Ltd. could provide support in the form of agencies and trading connections in Liverpool for a projected line of steamers operating between Liverpool and Virginia'.⁸⁰ A fall in the value of shipping assets from a high in 1889–90 allowed Furness to offer a sum for Leyland and Co. Ltd. approximately half of his estimation of what Frederick Leyland had paid for its assets. Furness approached Ellerman and O'Hagan to raise funds for the purchase, together with Walter Glynn of W. Glynn and Co., a shipping firm that ran services from Liverpool and the Mediterranean. Furness intended the syndicate to purchase Leyland and Co. Ltd., which they would convert to a public company, capitalised at £800,000.⁸¹

The syndicate was successful in its purchase; it retained the ordinary capital (£200,000) for itself and members of Leyland's family who opted to convert their holdings to deferred ordinary shares, and it offered seven percent cumulative preference shares (£250,000) and five percent debentures (£350,000) to the public, secured by mortgages on the ships.⁸² The retention of the ordinary shares ensured that the syndicate would control Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd., as the shares conferred voting rights above the other classes of shares: one ordinary share had the voting power of five preference shares.⁸³

The purchase 'startled the

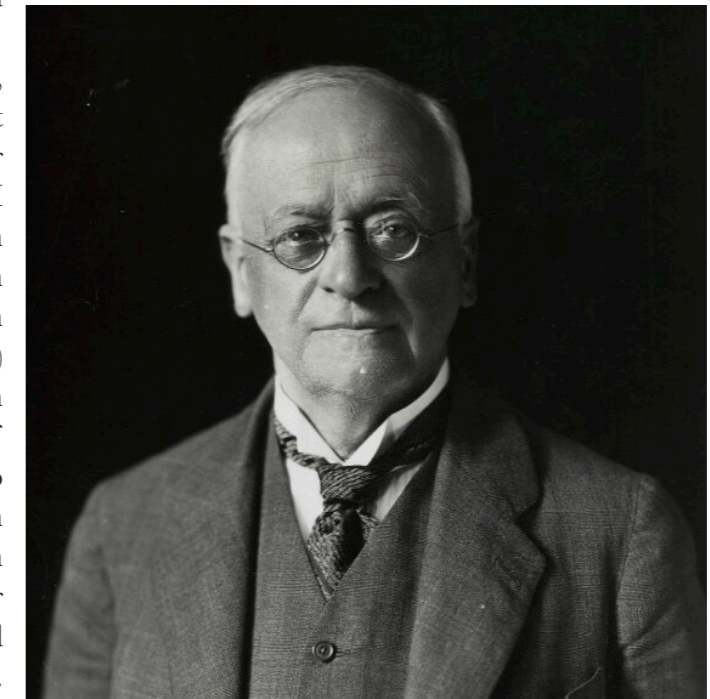
British shipping community'⁸⁴ and attracted considerable critical commentary in the press. One difficulty was the disjunction between the value of the assets and the value of the float: 'How', asked the shipping periodical *Fairplay*, 'can the planned capitalisation of £800,000 be justified?' As the anonymous author observed: £350,000 at five percent debentures was secured against the value of the ships by registered mortgages, when the ships had a realisable value of only £250,000; the firm needed simply to service the mortgages, but it had preserved only £30,000 in working capital during an industry downturn; the underwriting fees were reportedly fifteen percent, which could approximate fifty percent of the realisable value of the ships.

Furness himself would resign within a year of the flotation, leaving JEI in charge as managing director.⁸⁵ In a published memoir, O'Hagan would attribute Furness's departure to a clash of personalities with JEI: 'two Napoleons could not exist'.⁸⁶ For his part, JEI managed the company deftly. According to O'Hagan, '[t]he company [...] got all the advantages of Ellerman's exceptional abilities; he took to shipping like a duck takes to water, threw his whole energies into the business, agreed with the view of Liverpool management that large cargo-ships were the thing of the future, expanded his ideas, and launched out on a big shipbuilding programme'.⁸⁷

In May 1896, JEI dissolved J. R. Ellerman and Co. and his partnership with Eves, who would subsequently perform the auditing work for JEI's other commercial interests.⁸⁸ On 13 May 1897, JEI was admitted as a member of Gray's Inn, with references from Stuart Cunningham Macaskie (1853–1903), later KC, who claimed to have known JEI for ten years, and Henry Edward Duke (1855–1939), later 1st Baron Merrivale, who claimed to have known JEI for five years.⁸⁹ JEI's admission should not be confused with an intention to read for the Bar; instead, admission was often used as a method to socialise within the Inns of Court.

Far from retraining as a barrister, JEI was focused on his role at Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd. For the provision of legal guidance, JEI began to rely on William Graham (1862–1938), the solicitor, whose firm Nicholson, Graham and Graham (later Nicholson, Graham and Jones) would be intimately associated with JEI and JEI's interests for most of the twentieth century. In addition to providing a connection to William Graham, the Leyland transaction had introduced JEI to Miles Walker Mattinson, KC (1854–1944),⁹⁰ and Valentine Prinsep, RA (1838–1904).

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Christopher Furness,
1st Baron Furness.



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Portrait Gallery: Sir
Miles Mattinson

Public domain:
Valentine Prinsep.



Prinsep was Frederick Leyland's son-in-law, and later described by Bryher as JEI's 'greatest friend'.⁹¹ Mattinson was a practising barrister, a Conservative MP for Liverpool Walton (1888–1892), and chairman of the Finance Committee of the House of Commons (1894–1922). Both Mattinson and Prinsep would be instrumental in JEI's later businesses, and Prinsep's son, Thoby (d. 1935), would be a significant presence in JEI's life. For his part, Mattinson was Treasurer of Gray's Inn and co-author of a legal monograph with Macaskie.⁹² Mattinson himself counter-signed JEI's application for membership of Gray's, which presumably explains the connection.

3.2 *Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd. and International Mercantile Marine*

Under JEI's management, the Leyland fleet grew to include routes from Liverpool to New York, London to St. Lawrence and Boston, and Antwerp to St. Lawrence. By 1900, the firm could boast an average annual dividend of approximately 10 percent and a special reserve fund of £285,000.⁹³ The firm had also expanded by acquisitions. In November 1896, Leyland launched a joint venture with the Wilson and Furness Lines, with a capital of £350,000. The joint line would run a passenger and cargo service between London and New York. JEI's Debenture Investment Securities Trust were trustees of £200,000 of 4.5 percent debenture stock.

The firm purchased West India and Pacific Steamship Company in 1900. The latter, which was founded in 1863 in Liverpool, ran nineteen vessels predominantly to the Caribbean, Mexico, and Colombia. The transaction created Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd., which comprised the original Leyland entity, the West India Pacific Steamship Company, and a majority shareholding in the Wilson-Furness-Leyland Line.⁹⁴ The incorporation did not significantly alter the share structure: ordinary shares were again restricted to existing ordinary shareholders, principally the Directors or the relatives of Leyland who had not parted with their interest to the syndicate in 1892. McLeave estimates that the cumulative value of the three entities was £1,853,000.⁹⁵

In May 1901, JEI would sell his 71,000 ordinary shares of Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd. to J. P. Morgan, Snr. (1837–1913) for £14 10s 0d per share, or approximately £1.2 million. J. P. Morgan was then engaged in establishing a shipping conglomerate, International

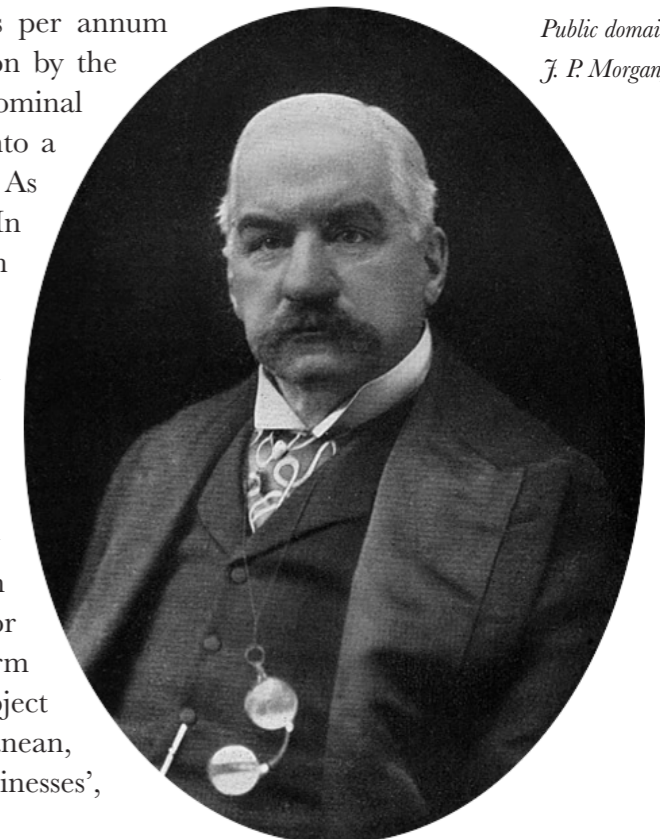
Mercantile Marine. The price Morgan paid for all of the ordinary shares in Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd. was £3,501,000. According to Taylor, 'most of the companies' which Morgan acquired 'took their purchase price in shares and other securities', but JEI 'insisted on cash, and immediate cash at that'.⁹⁶ In a letter to the *Journal of Commerce* of 1 May 1901, the first letter ever published under his own name, JEI explained the arrangement in detail:

With regard to Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd., I have to inform you that I have entered into a provisional contract with J. S. Morgan and Co. and J. P. Morgan and Co., for the sale of my entire holding, viz: - 71,000 of the ordinary shares in this company at £14.10s.0d. per share, and I have also secured the option to each shareholder who elects on or before 26th May 1901 to dispose of his shares on the terms of £14.10s.0d. per share. [...] All the principal ordinary shareholders, representing a great majority of the ordinary shares, have intimated to me that they will avail themselves of this proposition and the effect will be that the purchasers will become the owners of practically all the ordinary shares at a cost, if all such shares are acquired, of more than £1,750,000.⁹⁷

JEI intended to retain his £180,000 of preference shares, which Morgan had declined to purchase, and he offered to purchase the remaining preference shares at par plus accrued interest.

As an illustration of the profit to the parties who had acquired ordinary shares in the original flotation: six new ordinary shares were to be exchanged for one original ordinary share, which effectively constituted a six-fold return, without including the returns generated by dividends in the interim.⁹⁸ (Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd. had generated approximately 10 percent in dividends per annum for its deferred ordinary shares since its acquisition by the syndicate.⁹⁹) Ellerman had taken a company with nominal capital of £800,000 in 1892 and shepherded it into a company with nominal capital of £2,800,000. As McLeave asks, 'Whence came the added value?' In part, the increase stemmed from the acquisition of the West India Pacific Steamship Company, which was 'grossly undervalued'. But other factors were significant. For example, JEI constructed new tonnage and oversaw the retrofitting of modern engines to the ageing Leyland fleet.¹⁰⁰

The agreement with Morgan stipulated that JEI was to 'enter into a contract with the company not directly or indirectly to engage in the North Atlantic trade, either with the United Kingdom or the Continent, except Antwerp-Montreal, for a term of fourteen years'. JEI agreed to the stipulation subject to the 'company agreeing to sell to me the Mediterranean, Portugal, Montreal and Antwerp fleets and the businesses', which we discuss further below (I.4.3).¹⁰¹



Public domain:
J. P. Morgan, Snr.

In May 1901, JEI wrote the first of the four published newspaper articles that he would author in his lifetime, under his own name, three of which appeared in *The Daily Mail*. The article, ‘How We Are Killing Our Shipping Trade’, was sub-titled ‘The Moral of the Pierpont Morgan Deal’.¹⁰² The focus was principally on the government’s ‘indifference’ to protectionist counter-measures which could, if properly effected, benefit Britain’s shipping trade:

The Government proceeds in its present fiscal policy, allowing other nations by restrictive and prohibitive tariffs to exclude the goods and commerce of our country, without attempting in any way by counter duties on the imported products of such country to modify such tariffs or assist the merchant or manufacturer, the consequence being that our trade is shut out from such countries.

JEI complained of the prospect of subsidies for US shipping unmatched by Britain. Yet the article did not provide an explicit rationale for the sale of Leyland to Morgan, except by implication. In a circular to Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd. shareholders, JEI was more direct in attributing the sale to the proposed introduction of subsidies to US shipping by the federal government, in addition to his belief that the North Atlantic trade would inevitably become dominated by US interests.¹⁰³ However, these ostensible reasons should not hide the obvious pecuniary advantages of the sale to JEI.

This conclusion to the Morgan acquisition was the capstone to a transaction which greatly augmented JEI’s wealth, and ‘set a pattern which marked his career in shipping for the next quarter century’.¹⁰⁴ As Professor Rubinstein has noted, Ellerman’s subsequent method:

was to purchase control of old-established shipping firms which, though still possessing a perfectly sound fleet and trading network, and much business goodwill, had entered into a period of entrepreneurial decline [...] These firms dealt almost exclusively in merchant shipping rather than passenger transport. As his capital and wealth grew, Ellerman bought the entire capitals of these companies. Having secured them, he applied to them his unique financial and entrepreneurial skills. [...] Ellerman’s method was thus the very opposite of that of the ordinary “asset stripper”, for his aim was at all times to revitalise these lines and reorganise them as modern, profitable enterprises.¹⁰⁵

3.3 Anne Elizabeth Reeves and Anti-Semitism

The Leyland years also coincided with two important episodes. The first related to JEI’s mother, Anne Elizabeth Reeves. In 1897, writing under the pseudonym ‘Eller’, Anne Elizabeth published a novel, *The Prime Minister of Württemberg*, and a separate collection of short fiction, *Ingatherings*. The novels were issued by William Andrews and Co. of the ‘Hull Press’, a publisher based in London. *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* is a work of patent anti-semitism. *Ingatherings* includes a story with suggestively anti-semitic imagery.¹⁰⁶

The Prime Minister of Württemberg was immediately recognised in one of its only notices as a work concerned with how the titular character’s ‘indulgence and foolishly fond treatment of his Cabinet Minister and Finance Director’ had ‘placed his subjects at the mercy of a crafty and

designing man’.¹⁰⁷ The name of this ‘crafty and designing man’ in Eller’s story is ‘the Jew Siece’ and the story derives from *Jud Süß*, a novel of 1827 by Wilhelm Hauff (1802–1827). *Jud Süß* is a fictionalised chronicle of the life of Joseph Süß Oppenheimer (d. 1738), a financier and ‘court Jew’ to Duke Karl Alexander of Württemberg (1684–1737), who was executed after the Duke’s death. Hauff’s novel is anti-semitic, and it inspired the vicious anti-semitic film *Jud Süß*, produced by the Nazi regime in 1940.¹⁰⁸ *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* is also filled with anti-semitic tropes, which are intended to degrade the Jewish character at its centre. A characteristic passage reads: ‘our Prime Minister Siece with other Jews, his personal friends, and turn-coat Catholics who have been converted to Judaism, wield in reality the sceptre of government’.¹⁰⁹

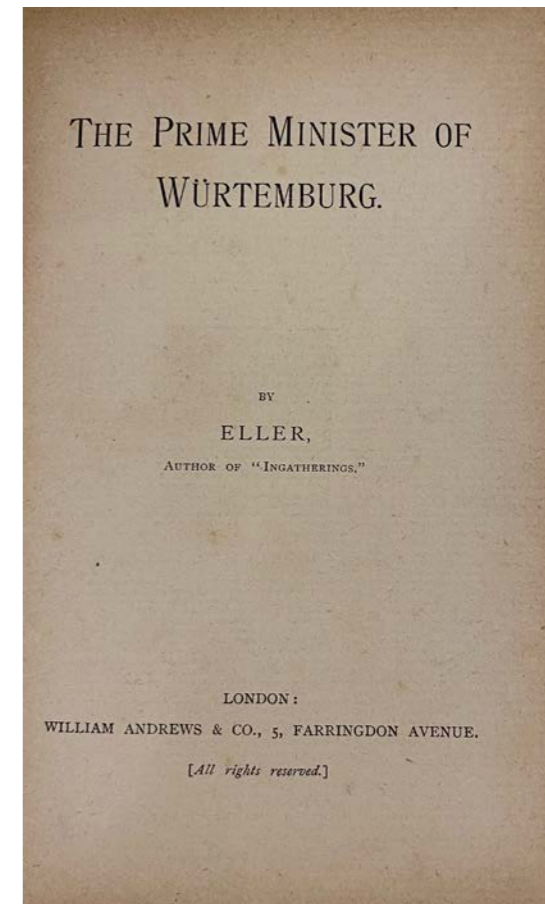
In an article for *The Daily Telegraph* of 19 July 1933, an anonymous reporter observed that JEI’s ‘very few intimate friends knew that his mother was a woman of great imagination’:

Under the pen-name of Eller she wrote “The Prime Minister of Württemberg” [sic] (differentiating it from Württemberg), almost applicable to the present day. Her son preferred her essays and verses contained in “Ingatherings”, issued in the previous year (when he was 37 and beginning to command success), because of two poems on the evils of ambition. And in one of his mother’s prose character studies reference was made to him [sc. JEI] in the words: “His virtues were frequently put to the test through the variety of his speculations and the hazardous nature of the enormous profits therefrom.”

Both books — *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* and *Ingatherings*, which were Anne Elizabeth’s only known publications — are rare. COPAC, the British-Irish Union Catalogue, lists only four copies of each book, in total.



Tale, Bryher Papers, b. 106, f. 3839: Anne Elizabeth Reeves, undated but after 1876.



*Authors’ collection: Title page of [Anne Elizabeth Ellerman], *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* (London, 1897).*

JEF Archive:
Undated photo of
Anne Elizabeth
Reeves.



Anne Elizabeth's motivation for writing either work is unknown. One may infer that she was influenced by the Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906), when the spectre of Jewish conspiracy attracted frenzied attention in Europe. Interestingly, JEI, Bryher, and JEII never refer in any extant document to *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* or *Ingatherings*; however, Bryher demonstrably owned a copy of *Ingatherings*,¹¹⁰ and the recollection in *The Daily Telegraph* above suggests that JEI was aware of the publications, and evidently impressed on his circle that they were publications worth reading. However, this is strictly a surmise. Can we conclude that JEI was an anti-semitic on the basis of his mother's pseudonymous publications? JEI's son would propose marriage to an

observant Jewish woman, Esther de Sola, in JEI's lifetime, and there is no evidence that JEI objected to the match on the basis of his prospective daughter-in-law's Judaism. Indeed, JEI attended the wedding of Esther de Sola's sister Jessica Elvira de Sola (1904–94), at the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, London in July 1932. Among other Jewish acquaintances, JEI employed a firm of stockbrokers managed by a Jewish proprietor, Moss Samuel Myers (1864–1944).¹¹¹

More unusually, many contemporaries believed that JEI was Jewish. In 1920, H. A. Gwynne (1865–1950), editor of *The Morning Post*, lamented that *The Times* had declined to co-publish the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the notorious anti-semitic forgery, on account of the editor of *The Times*, Wickham Steed (1871–1956), facing 'a barred and bolted door in front of him in the shape of Ellerman – the biggest shareholder in the Times except Northcliffe [sc. Alfred Harmsworth (1865–1922), 1st Viscount Northcliffe]. He is a Jew and a very active one'.¹¹² In 1921, Alfred Douglas (1870–1945), the journalist and lover of Oscar Wilde, identified Ellerman as a Jew in his anti-semitic pamphlet *Plain Speech* (1921). Perhaps most notably, in 1918, the Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus, a German organisation founded in 1890 to combat anti-semitism, had identified 'Sir John Ellermann' as a victim of anti-semitism in the British press.¹¹³ Cecil Roth (1899–1970), the leading historian of British Jewry and an acquaintance of the de Sola family, knew better of the mistaken association. In his history of the Sassoon dynasty, published

in 1941, Roth observed that Ellerman, a 'Gentile', illustrated 'how completely Gentiles have outpaced Jews in what is regarded as the latter's specialty of money-making'.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, the belief persisted. In circa 1950, JEI's rival, the press baron Max Aitken (1879–1964), Lord Beaverbrook ridiculed JEI as a 'short stout little Jew'.¹¹⁵

The source of this belief in JEI's Jewish ancestry is difficult to identify, unless Bryher herself was exclusively responsible for disseminating it, as we discuss below (II.4). JEI did not discourage the belief in any extant document. Can we conclude that JEI was untroubled by this association with Judaism? The use of a pseudonym, 'Eller', by Anne Elizabeth could intimate a disinclination widely to publicise the family's antipathy to Jews. As JEI's obituarist noted in *The Daily Telegraph*, JEI 'preferred her essays and verses' to *The Prime Minister of Württemberg*. If Gwynne's claim is correct, JEI was personally opposed to the publication of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in *The Times*.

Nonetheless, many aspects of this episode are difficult to explain. 'Eller' is hardly an indecipherable pseudonym, and it cannot have inhibited contemporaries from identifying the author's connection with the Ellermans of Hull; indeed, Anne Elizabeth presented a copy *ex dono auctoris*, with an inscription in her own name, to the art critic Albert Charles Robinson Carter (1864–1957).¹¹⁶ Furthermore, Gwynne was wholly incorrect in his statement that JEI was an 'active' Jew, which must cast doubt over his reportage of JEI's opposition to publishing the *Protocols*. In 1920, Steed published an editorial about the *Protocols* in which he tendentiously suggested that they were authentic, and there is no extant evidence that JEI criticised Steed's decision.¹¹⁷ Moreover, there is no extant evidence that JEI denounced Anne Elizabeth's two books, and there is every possibility that he facilitated their publication with William Andrews. In her entry for JEI in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (1949), reportedly drawing on 'private information', Louise Morgan observed that Anne Elizabeth was 'the most powerful influence' in JEI's life.¹¹⁸ JEI was undoubtedly close to his mother. They share the same tomb in Putney Vale, where JEI's epitaph — inscribed beneath Anne Elizabeth's — reads 'Son of the Above', with only limited further information about JEI himself.¹¹⁹

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Beaverbrook.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 106, f. 3841–3:
Hannah Glover,
undated photos.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 151, f. 5113:
Declaration of
marriage between
JEI and Hannah
Glover, October
1909.

At Edinburgh the eighteenth day of October in the year One thousand nine hundred and nine in presence of James Falconer, Esquire, Member of Parliament, One of the Magistrates, Justice of the Peace for the County of the City of Edinburgh, James Falconer, Hairweaver, Writer, to the Signet Edinburgh, Do solemnly and sincerely Declare that Sir John Reeves Ellerman, Baronet of One South Shields Street, London and Two Lakes Drive, Eastbourne called and saw me at Fifty Two Castle Street, Edinburgh during the afternoon of Wednesday the twenty second day of September in the year One thousand nine hundred and nine; that upon that day and each morning upon every day thereafter including Sundays up to and including the fourteenth day of October in the year One thousand nine hundred and nine I saw and conversed with the said Sir John Reeves Ellerman; that during all that period he lived at the Caledonian Station Hotel, Edinburgh with the exception of the night of the thirteenth day of October in the year One thousand nine hundred and nine when he lived at the Central Station Hotel, Glasgow and that the said meetings all took place in Edinburgh with the exception of the meeting on the morning of the fourteenth day of October One thousand nine hundred and nine which took place in Glasgow, and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of an Act made and passed in the fifth and sixth years of the reign of his late Majesty King William the Fourth entitled "An Act to amend an Act of the present Session of Parliament entitled "An Act for the more effectual abolition of Oaths and Affirmations taken and made in various Departments of the State and to substitute Declarations in lieu thereof, and for the more entire suppression of oaths," and for the more entire suppression of oaths," and to make other provisions for the abolition of unnecessary Oaths

M. Macintyre
James Falconer

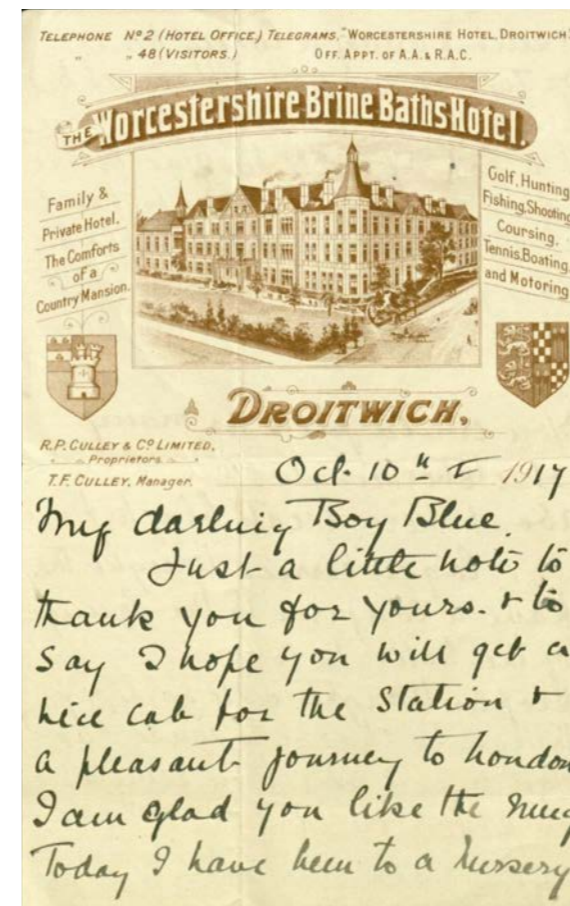
3.4 Hannah Glover

In a way similar to the ‘Eller’ episode, JEI’s early acquaintance with Hannah Glover (1866–1939), later his wife and widow, is difficult to reconstruct satisfactorily. JEI did not marry Glover prior to the birth of Bryher, their first child, in 1894. Indeed, Bryher’s birth certificate does not identify her father. Bryher’s illegitimacy at birth was reflected in contemporary summaries of the baronetage and peerage, where JEI, after receiving a baronetcy, was credited only with a son. Contemporary reports of Bryher’s first marriage in New York, discussed below (II.3), disbelieved her *soi disant* association with JEI, and concluded that Bryher was an imposter, who had falsely claimed to be related to the magnate.

JEI’s secrecy around his relationship with Glover is difficult to explain, but it is often and reasonably attributed by conjecture to JEI’s discomfort at Glover’s social status. Glover’s background is obscure. It appears that Glover was baptised in February 1866 in Fillongley, Warwickshire. Her father, George Glover, was born in 1843, and he was reportedly an agricultural labourer; her mother, Ann, was a

servant.¹²⁰ In the Census of 1881, Hannah was evidently described as an ‘indoor servant’, living in the home of a certain Joseph Shepherd of Coleshill, Warwickshire.¹²¹ It is not known when JEI met Glover, but they were evidently cohabiting by April 1891, when the Census reports that they were residing at Bernard Street, Russell Square; the entry records their names as ‘John and Annie Allerman [sic]’, who live ‘by independent means’.¹²² In October 1909, JEI would marry Glover in Scotland, making use of an ‘irregular marriage’ under Scottish law. The process was known as marriage *per verba de praesenti*, or ‘marriage through an agreement as to a present or immediately valid marriage’. By living together in Scotland for twenty-one days in succession — JEI and Glover had decamped to the Caledonian Station Hotel in Edinburgh — the couple would be legally regarded as married by adopting the following formula: ‘I the said Sir John Reeves Ellerman do hereby declare that the said Hannah Glover is my wife and accept her as such and I the said Hannah Glover do hereby declare that the said Sir John Reeves Ellerman is my husband and accept him as such’.¹²³

The marriage was witnessed by JEI’s brother in law, John Francis Butlin and James Falconer, WS (1856–1931) and it occurred only two months before the birth in December 1909 of JEII, who would not have succeeded to JEI’s baronetcy if his parents were unmarried at his birth. (*Burke’s Peerage and Baronetage* would later list the date of JEI’s marriage as October 1908,



I sent Daddy a lovely bunch or two of grapes I have asked him to save some for you & a lot of rubs to give Nurse a few as I know she is fond of them. We waited while the boy picked the rubs & saw the grapes cut for it is a huge nursery & full of luscious fruit. You could pick as many blackberries as you wish for about here. Great black fruit like logan berries tonight. They have a conjurer in the lounge of the Hotel. He is going to read Peoples thoughts, & all sorts of funny things. No charge is made. But you must give him something in silver. Much love write me again soon. From Mother
Thousands of kisses

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 70, f. 2697:
Letter from Hannah
Glover to JEI,
October 1917.

Public domain:
Headstones of JEI,
Anne Elizabeth
Reeves, and Lady
Hannah Ellerman.



is silently omitted from the 1963 imprint — published in London by Collins. The two imprints are not presented as successive editions, but are ostensibly identical, although published in different years. A sentence which precedes the obliterated passage is also omitted in the 1963 imprint. The sentence refers to Bryher discovering only later in life that her parents were married in 1909: ‘My father and mother were married in that year although I did not know this until I was twenty-four’.¹²⁶ The basis for these expurgations is perplexing. But it was presumably Bryher’s fitful sensitivity — even after her parents’ death — to the promulgation of details about their marriage.

As Susan McCabe, the Bryher scholar, has noted: ‘Like his taste in business, Sir John kept his lover’s past under wraps. [...] Even in death, her plinth at Putney Vale Cemetery bears no year or place of birth, only the name Lady Hannah Ellerman, widow to Sir John, while a large mound honors John’s mother, whose epitaph bears at least her timeline’.¹²⁷ JEI predeceased Glover, and the choice of her epitaph presumably rested with Glover herself or her two children, but one cannot deny the effacement of her background in the headstone conformed with JEI’s desire, prior to 1909, to suppress public knowledge of their relationship.

Glover — who was partly deaf, owing to the side-effects of scarlet fever — was apparently trained as a seamstress. According to Bryher, Glover helped to stitch a wedding gown for Princess Mary of Teck during her wedding to the future George V in 1893. Bryher observed that Glover ‘could have been a famous dressmaker’: ‘I think she would have enjoyed having such an establishment’. But her ‘whole life’, Bryher conceded, ‘was devoted to my father’.¹²⁸

a year before its occurrence, presumably to obfuscate the coincidence of the marriage with JEI’s birth.¹²⁴) JEI’s subsequent relationship with Glover was undoubtedly close, according to the credible, extant sources which discuss it: Bryher’s published memoirs, the letters of her circle, and the memoirs of her two husbands, Robert Menzies McAlmon and Kenneth Macpherson (1902–1971), which we discuss extensively below (II.4, II.7). According to McAlmon, Glover observed of JEI: ‘He keeps me in a glass case but I keep him human’.¹²⁵

Bryher herself would observe that her parents were ‘hardly separated for a day during the nearly fifty years that they were together. They were always passionately in love and it was a truer marriage from the first than most I have seen, before or since’. This passage, although present in the 1962 imprint of Bryher’s memoir *The Heart to Artemis* — published in New York by Harcourt, Brace —

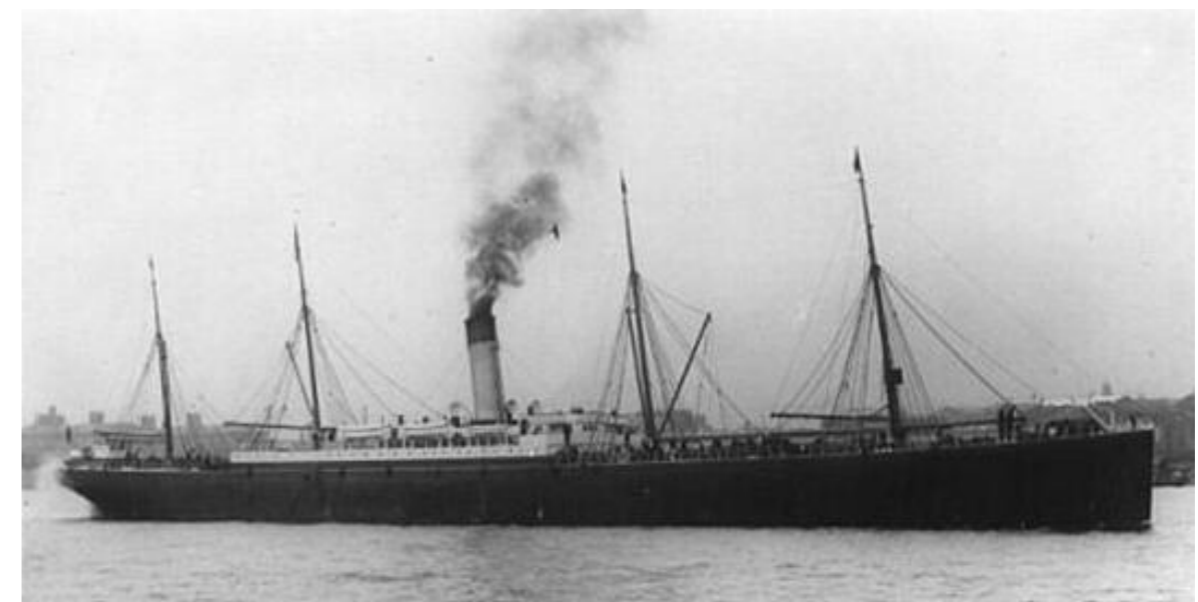
4 1900–1914

1900 marked the first reference to JEI in a major newspaper: on 3 January, *The Daily Telegraph* reported that JEI, ‘of Liverpool, the Chairman of the Leyland Line’, had ‘offered to carry 100 Volunteers free of cost to South Africa in the *Armenian*’.¹²⁹ The *Armenian* was a Leyland cargo liner which was fitted for the transportation of horses, and would later be used as a prison ship for Boer prisoners of war, including in their enforced transportation to Bermuda and India.¹³⁰ By 30 January 1900, *The Daily Telegraph* would report that Ellerman had covered the expense of £1,700 for the passage of volunteers to fight in South Africa.¹³¹

Bryher reports that her parents ‘were not pacifists’, but ‘both disliked war and would not have discussed it in my presence’.¹³² In 1900, when visiting the Paris Exhibition, JEI ushered Bryher out of the hall exhibiting Krupp guns: ‘it [is] wrong’, he told her, ‘to spend money and labour upon tools of war’.¹³³ JEI had profited from shipping during the Spanish American War of 1898,¹³⁴ and he was supportive of the conduct of Britain in the Boer War (1899–1902). In 1903, *The Daily Telegraph* reported that Edward VII had presented special medals for the service of certain businesses, including JEI’s businesses, in the ‘conveyance of troops’ to South Africa. In November 1905, this support to the British military was ostensibly responsible for the offer to JEI of a baronetcy, which he accepted.¹³⁵ He commissioned a coat of arms in the same year, incorporating a crest featuring an eagle and an anchor, and the motto ‘Loyale jusqu’à la mort’.¹³⁶

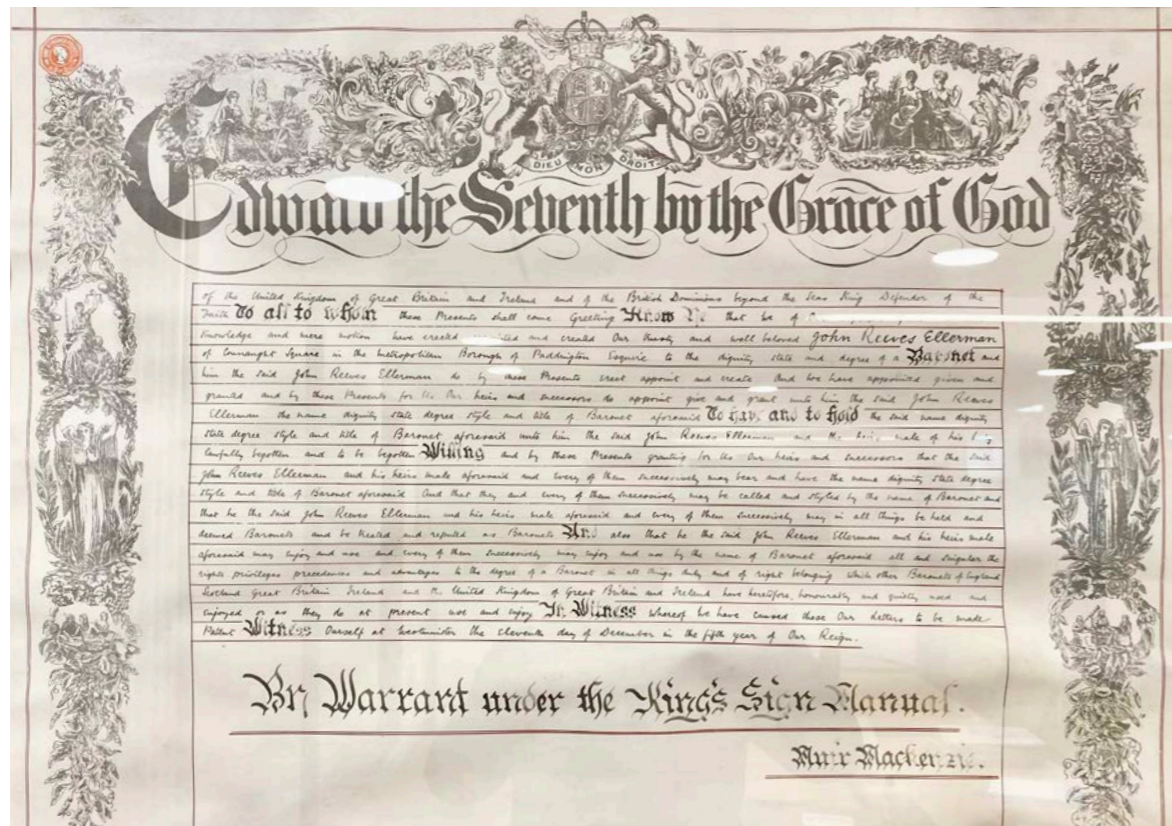
4.1 Investment Trusts

Although, as we will see, shipping became the central focus of JEI’s business interests after 1900, he remained ‘a financier at heart’.¹³⁷ In this respect it is important to appreciate the mechanics of the investment trust, JEI’s principal vehicle of investment prior to 1900. A comparable modern example of the investment trust is a ‘closed-end fund’: a publicly-traded fund that issues shares once via an initial public offering to raise capital for its investments,



Public domain:
Leyland Line,
SS Armenian.

JEF Archive:
Warrant of JEF's
baronetcy, 1905.



but subsequently closes the fund to new investors. The sale of shares of the investment trust notionally has no effect on the assets in which the investment trust has invested. The investment trust can borrow funds, characteristically in the form of publicly traded ‘debentures’, which promise consistent returns to their investors, but which do not confer a right to participate in the profits generated from the loaned capital. This form of leverage permits the managers of investment trusts to make use of borrowed funds to invest, that is, funds greater than the amount invested in the initial public offering. More importantly, perhaps, investment trusts in JEF’s early career were susceptible of tighter control by the use of shareholder voting classes.

JEF could thus promote the initial public offering of an investment trust; procure funds from outside investors; control the trust through his retention of voting shares, which typically constituted only a small proportion of the share and loan capital of the trust; borrow additional funds for the trust; and issue non-voting debentures to the lenders. As a result, JEF could earn money from four sources: dividends as a shareholder; interest, if he had purchased debentures; director’s fees, if he exercised a directorship of an asset in which the trust had an investment; and management fees for his administration of the trust.

Finally, it is important to recall that JEF operated in an era when the regulatory controls which apply to present day conflicts of interest — insider trading, for example — were virtually non-existent. JEF could personally invest in a company in his own right, prior to directing the capital of an investment trust to the same company, producing a significant return on his private investment by engineering demand for the shares he privately owned.

4.2 Breweries

A clear focus of JEF’s use of investment trusts prior to 1900 was breweries. JEF would typically raise capital for existing breweries via the underwriting mechanisms refined by O’Hagan. The principal expenses were machinery and the acquisition or management of licenced premises. The typical share issue of the established breweries — which, by 1900, commanded quoted assets of £200 million on an exchange devoted restrictedly to breweries — consisted of (i) ordinary shares, which conferred control over the company, (ii) preference shares, which had priority for dividends but no voting rights except where dividends were concerned, and (iii) debentures, which were redeemable at a fixed rate, with higher coupon rates, and first lien on tangible assets, which, in the case of breweries, often included considerable real property.¹³⁸ Investment trusts were usually restricted to invest in debentures, and acted as ‘debenture trustees’, who held possession of the collateral of the company, ‘and had the power to realise the assets if debenture interest payments were not met’.¹³⁹ In comparison with government securities (consols), breweries were attractive to investment trusts, as capital-intensive industries with an elastic consumer base which was expanding circa 1900 as real wages increased: between 1891 and 1899, for example, consols generated a return on investment of approximately 3 percent per annum, where JEF’s Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd., acting as a debenture trustee, generated approximately 5–7 percent in dividends per annum for its deferred ordinary shares.

Between 1886 and 1890, JEF served as an auditor to as many as seventeen breweries; audit fees reportedly ran from seventy-five to one hundred guineas a year, generating as much as £1,500 per annum.¹⁴⁰ However, JEF quickly eschewed auditing for the more lucrative practice of raising capital through investment trusts, typically in debentures. McLeave provides a case study of a flotation. Edinburgh United Breweries was floated by JEF with the help of Henry Panmure Gordon (1837–1902) in 1889. One hundred percent of the nominal capital (£250,000) was paid up in the float, where a comparable float, King Line Ltd., floated in 1893 by the shipping magnate Owen Philipps (1863–1937), 1st Baron Kylsant, had a nominal capital of £50,000 of which only £20,430 was paid up. Prior to the Companies’ Act (1900), incorporations did not require independent auditors. Shareholders took the risk that they would be liable to liquidators for unpaid capital. JEF ‘did not believe in “uncalled-capital”’: he would not pay dividends to a shareholder in the absence of paid-up capital and he did not allow more than twelve months to elapse for shares to remain unpaid. (As Brendan Bracken (1901–58), 1st Viscount Bracken, would later recall of a conversation with JEF: ‘Ellerman said to me he had never known a business fail through having too much money, but he knew lots of good businesses that had gone broke for lack of it’.¹⁴¹) According to McLeave, JEF ‘increased protection for [...] Debenture Holders’ by the use of sinking funds, ‘which required regular instalments to build up capital in order to retire the dated debentures at maturity’. This concern for the long-term prospects of the floated company distinguished JEF from promoters who used the floated company as a vehicle for self-enrichment at the expense of shareholders.¹⁴²

Nonetheless, JEF’s activities were not without their critics. In March 1895, *The Economist*

reported that JEI's record as a promoter was 'far less unsatisfactory than that of many other promoting agencies, mainly because of the success of Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd., but it is scarcely of a kind to induce investors to show any great anxiety to entrust their capital to Mr Ellerman and those who are associated with him for the constitution of another trust company'.¹⁴³ The report was prompted by the publication of a prospectus for the Debenture Securities Investment Company in the same month. The report is worth quoting at length:

The prospectus has been issued within the past few days of a company with the above title [sc. Debenture Securities Investment Company], proposing to raise £400,000 for the purpose of investing in first mortgage and other debentures. [...] When most of the trust companies, which have had such a woeful record, were formed, the prices of securities generally were at a very high level, so that the companies purchased disadvantageously. Now, however, market values have, as a rule, fallen to a very different range, and it should not be very difficult to make a judicious selection of securities yielding a fairly safe return, and with improving prospects. But investors, before embarking in [sic] such an enterprise, should study carefully the antecedents of those who invite their co-operation, so as to ascertain whether their past records entitle them to be regarded as capable and prudent guides. In the case before us, the company is formed under the auspices of Messrs J. R. Ellerman and Co. J. R. Ellerman is set down as chairman, and the offices of the company are also Messrs Ellerman's offices. The same firm has played a prominent part in company promotion in the past, and in the following table we contrast the nominal values of shares or stock in some of the existing Ellerman companies with the present market values, where it is possible to obtain them:

	SHARE OR STOCK	PRESENT MARKET VALUE
<i>American Breweries and General Securities Trust</i>	100	95
<i>Do. 6 per cent. preferred</i>	100	95
<i>Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust</i>	5	4
<i>Frederick Leyland and Co. ordinary</i>	10	7 ³ / ₄
<i>Do. 7 per cent. preference</i>	10	10 ³ / ₄
<i>Do. 5 per cent. debentures</i>	100	109 ¹ / ₂
<i>G. H. Hammond ordinary</i>	10	1 ¹ / ₂
<i>Do. 8 per cent. preference</i>	10	4 ¹ / ₂
<i>Indianapolis Breweries ordinary</i>	10	2 ³ / ₄
<i>Do. 8 per cent. preference</i>	10	6 ¹ / ₂
<i>London General Investment Trust preference</i>	7	... [sc. not available]
<i>Do. deferred</i>	7	... [sc. not available]
<i>United Discount and Securities Co. ordinary</i>	7	4
<i>Do. preferred</i>	10	9

It is estimated that by 1899, JEI had invested in twenty-four different breweries; by 1902, he had raised this number to thirty-six, principally through the Brewery and Commercial Trust. By 1918, JEI was registered as a shareholder of seventy breweries, including several in the United States: Chicago Brewers and Maltings, Milwaukee and Chicago Brewery, City of Baltimore United Brewery, Indianapolis Brewers, St. Louis Breweries, Hammond and Company, Springfield Brewery, and F. W. Cook Brewery, Evansville.¹⁴⁴ In Britain, his main interests were Hoare and Co. Ltd., the Hartlepool Brewery, which owned the Red Lion Brewery, the current site of Waterloo Station, and J. W. Cameron and Co. Ltd.



Public domain: *The Red Lion Brewery, Lambeth.*

JEI's involvement in breweries was the prompt for his second and third published editorials in *The Daily Mail*, in March 1907 and March 1908. Both editorials were written in response to prospective Licensing Bills, which the Liberal Government, elected in 1906, had intended to pass to placate a significant temperance lobby. The impetus for the bill stemmed partly from familiar moral and religious concerns, and partly from concerns from industrialists that inebriation among the workforce was hampering productivity. A separate impetus, as Herbert Asquith (1852–1928) noted in Parliament, was to allow the state 'recovery of [...] complete and unfettered control over this monopoly', that is, the licencing of public houses, 90 percent of which were controlled by breweries.¹⁴⁵ The measures contemplated included removing a right to the renewal of licences which pre-1869 breweries had possessed, as well as the requirement for new public houses to pay a significant fee for the monopoly value conferred by the licences. In his first editorial, JEI slammed the 'mere hint' of the proposals as having 'seriously depreciated all classes of brewery investments'.¹⁴⁶ One concern was the state's pretension to withdraw and re-grant licences by discretion, which breweries had argued would amount to a confiscation of property. As JEI wrote: 'If the State has in any instance made a bad bargain it should abide by it, and should, if it abrogates the same, grant compensation. That is the principle which has hitherto prevailed in this country. It is the principle which dominates the legislation of every civilised community'.¹⁴⁷ 'Capital', JEI added, 'is a shy bird, and, if unduly oppressed, it has a knack of seeking employment in other countries where the capitalist is more fairly treated, to the benefit of the country where it is employed'.¹⁴⁸ In reference to the temperance movement, JEI observed in conclusion that '[t]he natural growth of education in the country and the desire for more open-air life which is pervading the community has resulted in a marked decrease per head in the consumption of beer and spirits, and this tendency, if left alone, should of itself materially improve the temperance habits of the people, without any violent action such as is rumoured'.¹⁴⁹

The Government's insistent attempts to pass the Bill prompted JEI's second editorial, twelve months later, entitled 'Why Capital is Going Abroad'. The editorial sounded the same warning about the Government's confiscation of property:

*The proposals of the Government are nothing less than absolute confiscation, not instigated for the benefit of temperance, whatever the profession may be, but for the future aggrandisement of the revenue; and it behoves all capitalists, however small, of whatever description or politics, to bestir themselves in their protests against the confiscation suggested.*¹⁵⁰

Among other claims, JEI observed that the effect of the proposed Licensing Bill on the share register of the 'large London brewery of which I am chairman' would be particularly disadvantageous to female investors: 'I see from the register of the company that more than one-third of the entire number of share and debenture holders consists of women, and this helpless class of the community are to be victims of Mr. Asquith's scheme of public plunder'.¹⁵¹

The Licensing Bill was ultimately withdrawn. JEI continued to invest in breweries, and remained a significant holder of shares in breweries at his death. Yet he did not again intervene with a published editorial in any newspaper until 1922, in response to a proposed capital levy by a Labour electoral manifesto (I.6). In that case, as we will see, JEI again warned about the dangers posed to capital and industry by the effects of taxation.

4.3 *Ellerman Lines Ltd*

The success of the Leyland transaction was principally owed to JEI's shrewdness, but he had enjoyed considerable strokes of good fortune: the Spanish American War and Boer War generated demand for 'tramp tonnage', or shipping which trades on a spot market in lieu of a fixed schedule. Moreover, Morgan bought during an inflection in freight prices.

However, it is important to note that JEI was also a buyer of shipping interests. The non-compete clause in the Morgan transaction barred JEI from participating in the Atlantic trade for fourteen years, on the condition that he could acquire the Mediterranean and Antwerp lines for Frederick Leyland and Co. (1900) Ltd. for £320,000. The agreement was subject to shareholder approval, but the weighting of ordinary share voting rights ensured that JEI could carry the vote easily.¹⁵²

The acquisition of the Mediterranean and Antwerp lines for £320,000 was comfortably within JEI's means, and within his competence. JEI owned 71,000 of the 120,000 ordinary shares issued and 3,600 of the 28,300 preference shares. At par, the value of these shares was £710,000 and £180,000 respectively. This marked the beginning of a rapid series of acquisitions. As *The Financial Times* would observe in December 1901, in response to the frequent reportage of JEI's buying spree, '[t]here seems to be no stopping Mr. Ellerman'.¹⁵³

This frenetic activity had begun a decade earlier. Between 1890 and 1900, JEI amassed as many as eleven distinct directorships, reflecting the extent of his involvement in flotations and investment trusts. The following list of JEI's directorships captures his prolific activity during these years:

1890

London General Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.

1891

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.
London General Investment Trust Ltd.

1893

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.
London General Investment Trust Ltd.
G.H. Hammond and Co. Ltd.
Mercantile and Debenture Agency Co. Ltd.
Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.
Indianapolis Breweries Ltd.

1895

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.
London General Investment Trust Ltd.
G.H. Hammond and Co. Ltd.
Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.
Indianapolis Breweries Ltd.

1896–97

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.
London General Investment Trust Ltd.
G.H. Hammond and Co. Ltd.
Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.
Indianapolis Breweries Ltd.
American Breweries and General Securities Trust
Debentures Securities Investment Co. Ltd.
J.W. Cameron and Co. Ltd.

1899

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
United Discount and Securities Co. Ltd.
London General Investment Trust Ltd.

G.H. Hammond and Co. Ltd.
 Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.
 Indianapolis Breweries Ltd.
 American Breweries and General Securities Trust
 Debentures Securities Investment Co. Ltd.
 J.W. Cameron and Co. Ltd.
 Wilson and Furness-Leyland Line Ltd.
 Milwaukee and Chicago Breweries Ltd.

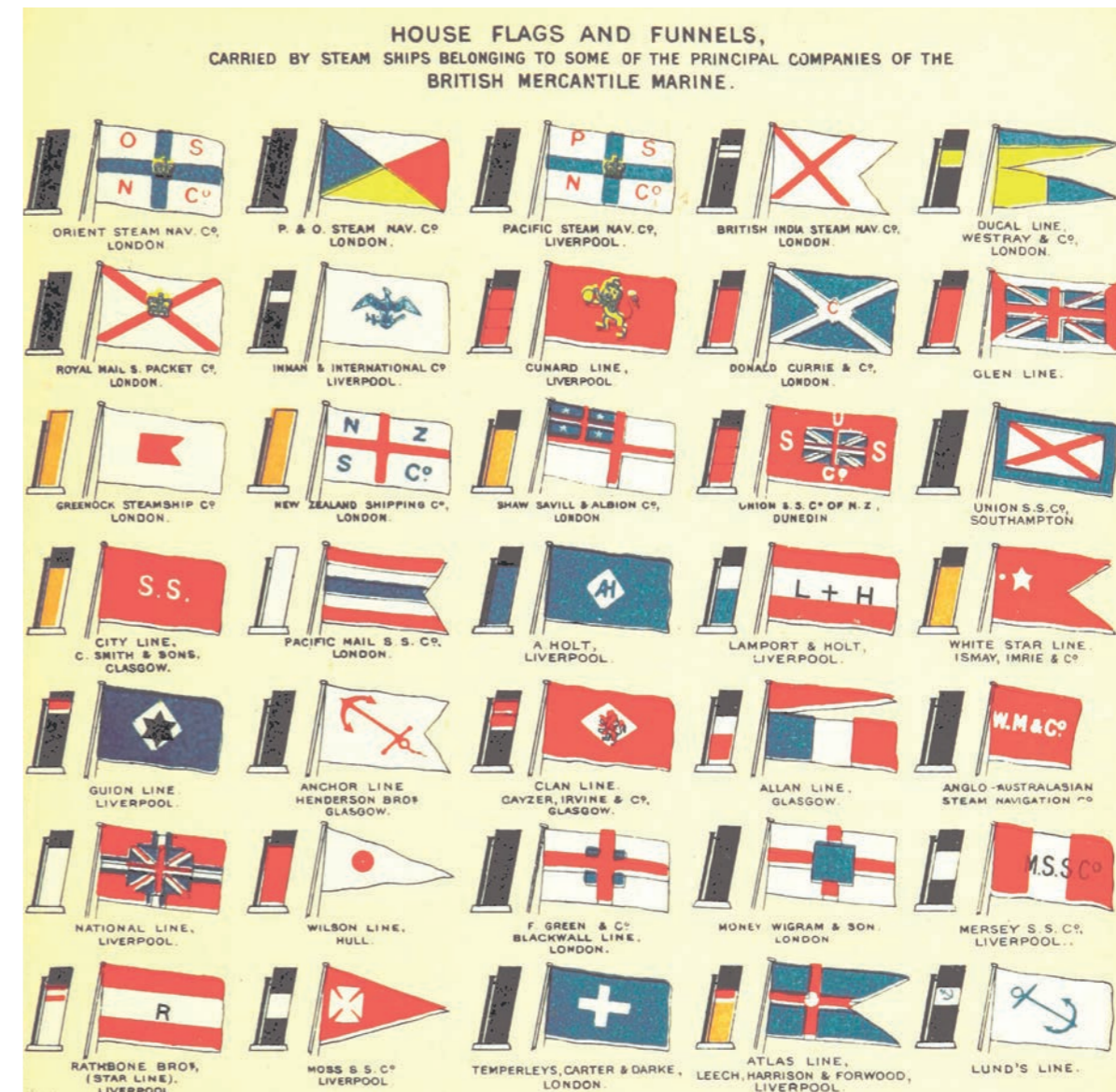
1901

Brewery and Commercial Investment Trust Ltd.
 United Discount and Securities Co Ltd.
 London General Investment Trust Ltd.
 G.H. Hammond and Co. Ltd.
 Frederick Leyland (1900) Ltd.
 American Breweries and General Securities Trust
 Debentures Securities Investment Co. Ltd.
 J. W. Cameron and Co. Ltd.
 Wilson and Furness-Leyland Line Ltd.
 Milwaukee and Chicago Breweries Ltd.¹⁵⁴

As the list above indicates, JEI was the director of six companies by 1893; by 1901, he was the director of ten companies, serving as chairman to five.¹⁵⁵

In May 1901, JEI purchased Papayanni Steamship Co. Ltd. for £136,350. The firm had been established in 1844 by Greek immigrant brothers in Liverpool, and incorporated as Papayanni Steamship Co. Ltd. in 1897, with the founding family remaining in control: Michael Papayanni, the son of the founder Georges Papayanni, and Basilio Papayanni (d. 1897), Georges's brother, who died in the same year. By 1901, the share ownership was spread across multiple members of the family, who were reluctant to engage in the capital investment necessary to keep their fleet competitive. Papayanni ran eight ships, *Agia Sophia*, *Adalia*, *Anatolia*, *Ararat*, *Britannia*, *Laconia*, *Plantain* and *Roumelia*, with a significant presence in the Mediterranean trade, which JEI intended to enfold into his new line of former Leyland vessels. In 1906, Papayanni Steamship Co. Ltd. became Ellerman & Papayanni Lines Ltd.

In August 1901, JEI acquired City Line of Glasgow, reportedly for £1 million. City Line was owned by the sons of George Smith, its founder, and was formerly known as George Smith and Sons. The firm, which was founded in 1840, ran ships to India, Valparaiso, Australia, New Zealand, the West Indies, New York, and Glasgow; after 1848, it adopted the use of *City* as a prefix for its vessels and in 1892, George Smith and Sons became City Line Ltd. One of its principal routes, partly responsible for its virtual control of the tea trade in Scotland, was a fortnightly cargo and passenger service to Calcutta from Liverpool and Glasgow, and a monthly cargo and passenger service to



Public domain:
 House flags and funnels carried by steam ships belonging to some of the principal companies of the British Mercantile Marine, 1894.

Bombay and Karachi.¹⁵⁶ By 1900, City Line was 'highly geared with short-term debentures of £300,000 and over 50 percent of the nominal capital subscribed'.¹⁵⁷ With the death of the principal shareholder in 1899, the division of the shares by inheritance made its acquisition by JEI preferable to the complexities of co-ordination by the new array of major shareholders for necessary capital expenditure. With its acquisition by JEI, the firm became known as Ellerman City Line Ltd.

In 1901, JEI also acquired Hall Line Ltd. of Liverpool, reportedly for £400,000, independent of the cost of redeeming debentures. The firm, which was co-founded by Robert Alexander, had been in operation since circa 1864, for a time as Robert and Young Ltd., Robert Alexander and Co. Ltd., and (from 1874) Sun Shipping Co. Ltd., before changing its name to Hall Line Ltd. in 1899. The firm had run a passenger service to Karachi and Bombay,

which it ultimately sold to P&O in 1899, but focussed principally on cargo, particularly to India, Australia, and the west coast of the United States. The mechanism of acquiring Hall Line Ltd. illustrates JEI's creative use of leverage and the issuing of shares: he borrowed £100,000 from the North and South Wales Bank and arranged an overdraft of £80,000, secured the loan and overdraft against 10,000 preference and 9,000 ordinary £10 shares in Hall Line Ltd., deposited with the bank, with half of the shares redeemable by JEI when the loan was satisfied.¹⁵⁸

In 1901, JEI acquired Westcott and Laurence for approximately £84,000. The firm was established in 1867 as Westcott and Houseden. From 1871, as Westcott and Laurence it maintained routes to Malta, Alexandria, Odessa, and Athens, as well as Istanbul, ports on the Black Sea, and ports on the Danube. Finally, to these investments JEI added a significant shareholding in Shaw, Savill and Albion in 1902, a firm focussing particularly on the Australian and New Zealand trade.

By October 1901, JEI had built the seventh largest fleet in the United Kingdom, which he organised initially in June 1901 under the name London, Liverpool and Ocean Steamship Co. Ltd., and from December 1901 as Ellerman Lines Ltd. As McLeave has noted, JEI's description in *The Directory of Directors* reflected the shifting orientation of his interests. From 1888 to 1890, he was listed as 'J. R. Ellerman and Company, Accountants'. From 1892, he was listed only as 'J. R. Ellerman, Gentleman'. From 1902, he was listed as 'J. R. Ellerman, Shipowner'.¹⁵⁹ Nonetheless, it was clear that JEI viewed Ellerman Lines Ltd. principally as a holding company. In June 1902, at the first Annual General Meeting of the firm, JEI announced that 'there was no intention to invest the bulk of the [firm's] capital in shipping'. Instead, 'the greater part' of the capital would be directed to 'stock exchange stocks and shares'.¹⁶⁰

At the date of its incorporation, London, Liverpool and Ocean Steamship Co. Ltd (LLOS) had a nominal capital of £1,300,000. JEI was joined by Mattinson and Val Prinsep as Directors, in addition to Frederick George Burt (d. 1948). The Minute Book of LLOS reveals JEI's inclinations as an owner: he sought immediately to retire debenture debt from the acquired firms, arranging overdrafts for the firm and banking facilities for discounting its bills.¹⁶¹ In addition, he directed company funds to investment trusts of which he was a manager and directly in breweries in which he had an interest. In September 1901, for example, LLOS loaned £40,000 to the brewer J. H. Cameron and Co. Ltd. In December 1901, the Board of LLOS *cum* Ellerman Lines Ltd. issued 16,990 ordinary shares of £10 and 100 management shares of £1, the latter conferring ten percent pro rata of the net profits of the firm in any year when a six percent dividend per annum had been issued to ordinary shareholders. JEI purchased the entire ordinary share issue. By April 1902 Ellerman personally owned 18,547 preference and 27,043 ordinary shares of Ellerman Lines Ltd., which were worth £455,900 at par. In addition, JEI owned Leyland preference shares valued at £1,400,000. Between 1902 and 1913, JEI would acquire 18 percent or 26,519 of the 147,000 shares of Ellerman Lines Ltd. issued in 1902.¹⁶²

The shipping interests amalgamated into Ellerman Lines Ltd. included five different fleets with a diverse array of ships, running cargo and passengers widely, save temporarily

for the North Atlantic. (Indeed, JEI's exclusion from the North Atlantic trade had turned out to be propitious. J. P. Morgan's faith in the provision of federal subsidies for shipping was misplaced. Between 1902 and 1909, Leyland, as a component of International Mercantile Marine, had not paid an ordinary dividend, and had not paid a dividend to preference shareholders since the end of May 1903.¹⁶³)

The administrative structure of the firms which JEI acquired was often left undisturbed, except the personnel were now answerable to JEI, Mattinson, Burt, and Prinsep from their office at Moorgate. As McLeave has observed of the two major entities operating under the Ellerman Lines Ltd. umbrella, City Line and Hall Line, their similarities when purchased allowed 'the same kind of internal organization'. The Directors of City and Hall Line were personally appointed by JEI, with one previous director appointed General Manager. For Westcott and Laurence, JEI retained the previous directors entirely.¹⁶⁴ A particularly important General Manager, operating out of City Line's offices in Glasgow, was William Service Workman (d. 1937), formerly a partner of George Smith and Sons, whose continued employment by Ellerman Lines Ltd. was a condition of the sale of City Line Ltd.¹⁶⁵ Workman and JEI maintained a nearly daily correspondence pertaining to the firm between 1911 and 1932, revealing 'the depth of Ellerman's involvement with the ships, and the extent to which Workman was consulted about new buildings, crew wages, coal sources and conferences'.¹⁶⁶ A similar correspondence, later maintained between JEI and Oswald Sanderson (1863–1926), Managing Director of Ellerman's Wilson Line Ltd., reveals JEI's minute attention to business concerns throughout the 1910s and early 1920s, ranging from planning and coordinating shipping routes, the design and maintenance of the ships, relations between management and labour, and tax issues, often at the rate of a letter per day.¹⁶⁷

These and other letters from JEI to his General Managers and managers reveal the extent to which he kept the sub-entities of Ellerman Lines Ltd. in a form of tension, regarding the fuel or other expenditure which they were maintaining on an ostensibly independent footing from their sister entities. As McLeave notes of JEI's exactitude, 'Ellerman's remarks about coal consumption and passage times leave no room for doubt about his competence as a ship-manager — querying the cost of coaling his yacht *Semiramis* for a Mediterranean cruise he reminded Workman that Ellerman was not a charity'.¹⁶⁸ Although General Managers would handle correspondence from agents in overseas ports, questions relating to freight rates or competition between lines were as a rule transmitted to JEI directly.

This differentiation among the sub-entities necessitated a meticulous accounting of the expenses incurred by one entity on behalf of another. Indeed, standardisation was evidently resisted; for example, uniformity of wages for the officers and crew of the sub-entities' vessels was not introduced until 1912, after a complaint from Hall Line about the loss of crew to external companies offering better remuneration.¹⁶⁹

In 1907, JEI was elected President of the British Chamber of Shipping. In the following year, he acquired Bucknall Steamship Lines Ltd. The latter was in significant financial distress, caused partly by a campaign of overbuilding and a downturn in its principal market, South

Africa, with the end of the Boer War. JEI lent the firm £180,000 and orchestrated a takeover by a characteristic piece of financial engineering: he assigned himself 1,000 management shares of £1 each; by company resolution and court order, he reduced the firm's 85,000 ordinary shares from £10 to 5s per share and consolidated every eight ordinary shares into one £2 'second' preference share and reduced in value the original preference shares from £10 to £2. The effect was to make the capital of the firm consist of 1,000 management shares and 51,165 preference shares. JEI effectively acquired control of Bucknall's fleet, which was valued at £690,000, by a propitiously-timed loan. The firm provided JEI with a direct share in the South African trade, which it had serviced with regular passenger and cargo routes since 1892. JEI had broken into the South African trade prior to 1908; with Harrison Lines, he had succeeded in breaking the monopoly of Cayzer, Irvine and Co., the Clan Line, during and shortly after the Boer War.¹⁷⁰ But the acquisition of Bucknall Steamship Lines Ltd. provided JEI with a firm foothold in Southern Africa, which would prove an enduring association during his and his son's lifetime.

4.4 Coal and Oil

In 1899, JEI began purchasing interests in collieries, which he would later use to bunker his vessels, in addition to shipping to overseas depots. In the only study of JEI's coal interests, Walford Johnson has noted that JEI acquired control of Kent Freehold and Minerals Ltd. by 1914. The company was formed in 1912, and had as one of its directors Arthur Woolley-Hart (1859–1941).¹⁷¹ JEI had loaned the firm £20,000 in 1913 and ultimately acquired the company in its entirety in 1922–23.¹⁷² Woolley-Hart was initially responsible for JEI's investment in the firm, as JEI was separately the largest shareholder of the Glasshoughton and Castleford Collieries Ltd. in Yorkshire, of which Woolley-Hart was a managing director. By 1922, JEI owned 7.5 percent of the equity in the Chislet Colliery Ltd. in Kent.¹⁷³ He held a 'substantial shareholding' in John Brown and Company, a steep and shipbuilding firm in Sheffield, which was closely associated with the Sheepbridge-Staveley group of coal and iron companies, and which owned a number of collieries in Yorkshire.¹⁷⁴ In addition to these considerable investments in collieries, JEI was involved in oil production, again principally for the bunkering of his vessels. In 1911, he was involved in the creation of the Persian Railway Syndicate, together with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.¹⁷⁵ In 1914, he was party to unsuccessful negotiations to establish an Imperial Tanker Company. In 1919, he collaborated with Inchcape and Sir Owen Philipps to create the British Oil Bunkering Company, although he remained wary of the transition to oil from coal.¹⁷⁶

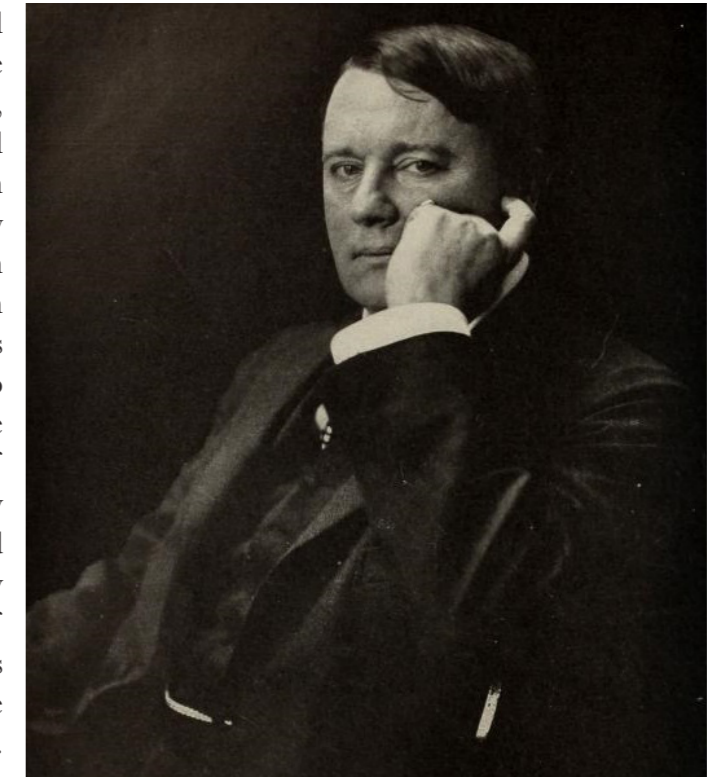
4.5 Newspapers and Periodicals

During this period, JEI began to invest in newspapers and periodicals. In 1904, JEI became the largest shareholder in *The Financial Times*, in close association with its chairman Francis Matthew Bridgewater (d. 1915),¹⁷⁷ until selling his interest in 1919 to William Berry (1879–1954), 1st Viscount Camrose and Gomer Berry (1883–1968), 1st Viscount Kemsley.¹⁷⁸ According to David Kynaston, JEI 'does not seem to have interfered with the board before the war, nor

attempted to influence editorial policy'.¹⁷⁹ In 1908, he became the third largest shareholder in *The Times*, with a 20 percent stake.¹⁸⁰ The official history of *The Times*, published in 1952, records that Ellerman saw *The Times* 'to be nothing more than an opportunity of making a cash profit'.¹⁸¹ Yet this caricatures JEI's conduct: JEI's manuscript letters to Lord Northcliffe, preserved in the British Library, give a clearer sense of his interest, which was undoubtedly motivated by profit, but embraced other concerns. In a letter of 23 July 1911 to Northcliffe, JEI wrote of his disappointment that the results of his investment in *The Times* 'have not been up to our expectations'. JEI relayed his belief that 'expenses are unduly heavy', and he asked Northcliffe to send 'some statement which would show what the expenses are at present per week as compared with three years ago'.¹⁸² JEI also asked for a tour of the printing works, which Northcliffe pledged to conduct personally.¹⁸³ In a letter of 13 February 1911, JEI suggested editorial changes: 'chatty articles from time to time, on various subjects, would largely improve that readableness [sic] of the *Times*'.¹⁸⁴ In a letter of 9 December 1911, JEI rejected the suggestion, apparently advanced by Northcliffe, to include American bond quotations in the paper, partly on the basis of its effects on 'space' or *mise en page*: 'after considering the matter during the night I am of opinion that it will not prove to the advantage of *The Times*'.¹⁸⁵ In a letter of 5 March 1918, JEI requested the paper's Shipping Correspondent give attention to JEI's judgement that shipbuilders should be permitted to build their own form of vessel, 'suitable for their own trades', instead of having the government build ships according to its own preferences, 'as private enterprise has proved in the past more capable of expediting work than the State Departments'.¹⁸⁶ For his part, Northcliffe would later describe JEI as 'one of the very best business brains in the world'.¹⁸⁷

5 1914–1918

Throughout the period 1900–1909, Bryher describes her youth spent on trips abroad, ferried by Ellerman Lines vessels to locations throughout Europe and North Africa. Bryher would recall one day finding JEI's application for a passport. 'In answer to a question: "Do you often travel abroad?" he had replied "As much as possible, it broadens the intelligence"'.¹⁸⁸ As we have noted, JEI had travelled to the Himalayas in the 1880s, and he ventured to New



Public domain:
Alfred Harmsworth,
1st Viscount
Northcliffe.

Public domain:
Clement Shorter.



York in 1894.¹⁸⁹ However, during the First World War, the family was static in comparison to the varied peregrinations of Bryher's youth (II.2 below).

5.1 *The First World War*

At the outbreak of the war, JEI attended meetings of the War Cabinet to discuss merchant shipping. These meetings were attended by other magnates, including Sir Norman Hill (1863–1944) and Lord Inchcape, the chairman of Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O). In December 1929, Lord Inchcape would reportedly observe to an Annual General Meeting of P&O that he remembered 'discussing the future position at the outbreak of the War with my friend Sir John Ellerman. He said the War would put the country back for forty years. I trust he was unduly pessimistic. I hope most sincerely that we shall soon get back to where we were'.¹⁹⁰

The extant record of JEI's attendance at a War Cabinet meeting in July 1917 notes that 'Sir John Ellerman [...] pointed out the desirability, before the winter months came along, of only concentrating on the Atlantic trade such vessels as, by their construction and speed, were suitable to withstand the heavy weather that prevailed. Further, he was of opinion that if such were not done the convoy system, owing to the unequal speeds of the various ships forming the convoys, must break down'. This intervention typified JEI's concern throughout the war with aspects of government policy. In 1917, Christopher Addison (1869–1951), 1st Viscount Addison, then the Minister of Munitions, recorded a meeting with JEI, orchestrated by Clement Shorter (1857–1926), editor of *The Sphere*:

*I had lunch with Sir John Ellerman and Clement Shorter at the former's house. Clement Shorter was anxious that I should meet Ellerman and I was interested to hear what he had to say about Overseas Trade. He was, however, much more concerned with his complaints and indignation against the Shipbuilding authorities. They were not very substantial, and I thought him disappointing and petty for being so big and successful a man.*¹⁹¹

This recollection was not wholly fair to JEI; for example, he devoted energy to philanthropic giving during the war, as we note below (I.7). However, it is true that JEI was prepared to lobby forcefully for his interests, or matters that he perceived to be within the national interest. On 25 August 1917, he addressed a letter to the Prime Minister David Lloyd George (1863–1945) to propose that shipments of ammunition and other war materiel could be directed to its destination without first passing through a port in Britain. The objective was to reduce the exposure of ships to the danger of torpedoing. As the letter noted:

*[M]y suggestion is to the fullest extent practicable, all the food, munitions, stores, &c. required in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Salonica, should be sent from India, Canada, or Australia via the Cape, to Port Said for Egypt and Mesopotamia, and in the case of Salonica by a ferry service from Port Said. That these steamers should carry a portion of their cargo to South Africa, and that the holds so discharged should be filled up with coal for Port Said, thus materially reducing the quantity of Coal now leaving this country for Port Said. [...] I should even carry this a stage further, and have the Hospital arrangements at suitable points in South Africa and not let the Hospital ships go through the danger zone, and similarly (but of course this is not a shipping matter) it appears to me that wherever possible the replenishing of drafts should go by the same route from Canada or Australia.*¹⁹²

One of JEI's more prominent views during the War, discussed in Parliament, was the claim 'that the whole output of shipping in Britain since the beginning of the war was not enough to replace the losses by marine causes alone'.¹⁹³ This was a particular concern for Ellerman Lines Ltd.: by the end of the War, JEI's firms would lose 50 ships, separately from the 49 ships lost by the firm he would acquire in 1916, Wilson's Line.¹⁹⁴

Ellerman Lines Ltd. had placed its ships at the disposal of the government from the first months of the war. In August 1914, *The City of Edinburgh*, *The City of Benares*, *The City of Lucknow*, and *The City of Glasgow* were commissioned as troop transports. JEI became a major purchaser of government war bonds during the conflict, which *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* actively tracked. On 2 February 1917, *The Times* reported that Ellerman Lines purchased £2,050,000 of bonds. On 23 May 1918, *The Times* reported that JEI 'who recently invested £1,000,000 in National War Bonds [in March 1918], has notified his intention of investing in the same security the whole of his dividend on his holding of War Loan Stock, stating that he considers it in the national interest to do so'. On 7 October 1918, JEI committed to spending an additional £500,000. On 28 June 1919, JEI 'and his associated companies' committed to spending £1,500,000 as a subscriber to the so-called 'Victory Loan' bond issue.

This contribution to the war effort did not inhibit suspicion of JEI's sympathies in sectors of the press. JEI was exposed to anti-German criticism, which intersected with a suspicion of his and other magnates' involvement in war profiteering. In a highly critical pamphlet, *Solidarity Amongst the Shipowners* (1918), Walton Newbold (1888–1943), a member of the British Socialist Party, later a Communist Party MP, described JEI in acidly ironic terms as a 'super-patriot', whose 'British antecedents are entirely above suspicion'. JEI's father 'Johann Hermann Ellermann', Newbold wrote, retaining the German *n*, '[...] came from Hamburg

The National Maritime Museum, Karlskrona: Ellerman Lines, City of London.



to Hull, and made his pile in the timber trade'. 'Like Sir Alfred Moritz Mond', referring to the Anglo-Jewish industrialist (1868–1930), whose father had emigrated from Germany, 'he [sc. JEI] is "all British"'.¹⁹⁵ The criticism was not unanswered. On 2 August 1918, *The Daily Chronicle* — a title not particularly friendly to JEI, as we note below (I.6.3) — mocked calls for the internment of individuals with purported German heritage:

*Are we, in defiance of the sane and considered counsel of these courageous upholders of our boasted heritage of freedom and fair play, to tolerate the liberty of such sons of Germans as Sir Sidney Low [(1857–1932)] and Sir John Ellerman, who owns more shipping tonnage than the whole mercantile marine of France and Italy? And of Prince Louis of Battenberg, albeit he is the Marquis of Milford Haven [...].*¹⁹⁶

5.2 The Wilson Line

In August 1914, submarine attacks and mines effectively froze the market in chartering and insurance underwriting. By October 1914, shipping firms based in neutral powers attempted to seize market share, but opportunities opened for British shipping a re-channelling of demand to routes unaffected from wartime closures: JEI was admitted to the conference of shipping in the Far East and the Rangoon-British ('Homeward') conference. The constriction of supply from Eastern to Western Europe also opened up

opportunities for cargo shipping across greater distances. The necessity of procuring supplies from further abroad and the requisitioning of cargo ships — reportedly twenty-five percent of British tonnage by 1915 — had the effect of inflating the cost of shipping.¹⁹⁷

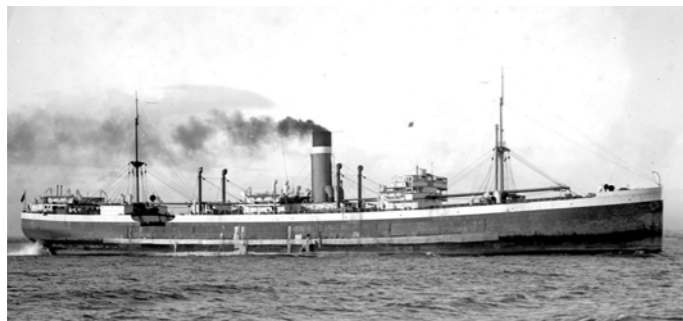
*Between 1915 and 1918, Ellerman Lines Ltd. declared approximately £5 million of dividends on ordinary shares. In September 1916 alone, the firm declared a final dividend on deferred ordinary shares of £950,000.*¹⁹⁸ *McLeave conjectures that the firm generated approximately £10 million in gross earnings during the war; £3 million was owned in duty on excess profits. JEI himself earned considerable sums, which he endeavoured to shield from taxation in Britain by the use of personal bank accounts in the United States: £325,000 was transferred to such an account from Australia in November 1917.*¹⁹⁹ *In part, JEI's success was owed to the commissioning of new tonnage prior to the outbreak of war, with contracts insulated against the effects of spiralling inflation. The limitations on Ellerman Lines Ltd. were not trivial: fifty vessels were lost to enemy action and internment; twelve vessels were lost by accidents at sea; four vessels were requisitioned as armed merchant cruisers; and twelve vessels were requisitioned as transport ships, hospital ships, and troop ships. However, the firm succeeded in constructing thirty new ships during the war itself, many on the basis of these pre-war contracts.*²⁰⁰

War profits allowed JEI to engage in a suite of acquisitions. In June 1916, JEI acquired the Watson Steamship Co., with Cunard, which served Marseilles and Italy from Manchester. In November of the same year, JEI acquired Thomas Wilson Sons and Co. Ltd. of Hull

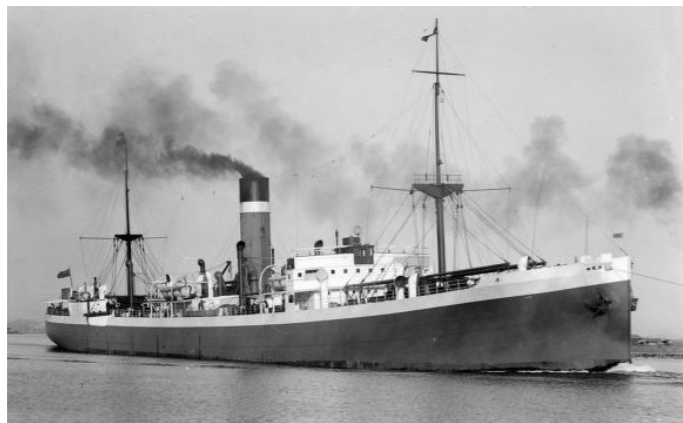
Lloyd's Heritage Foundation: Ellerman Lines, City of Lyons.



Lloyd's Heritage Foundation: Ellerman Lines, City of Pittsburgh.



Lloyd's Heritage Foundation: Ellerman Lines, City of Brisbane.



Public domain: Ellerman Lines, City of Perth.



Public domain: Ellerman Lines, City of Paris.



JEF Archive: Ellerman's Wilson Line Poster.

for £4.1 million: £3.6 million in cash and £500,000 in debentures, with 49 percent of the firm acquired for Ellerman Lines Ltd. and 51 percent for JEI personally. The firm, founded in 1822 and renamed Ellerman's Wilson Line Ltd. in 1917, had focused particularly on the Swedish and Baltic trade, but had expanded rapidly to become the world's largest private shipping firm by the beginning of the twentieth century. The sale was brought about with celerity and some secrecy, orchestrated partly by Charles Wilson (1875–1924), 2nd Baron Nunburnholme, and ultimately secured by the desire of the shareholders to exit the business which, faced with high wartime costs, had not found a better suitor than JEI.²⁰¹ By the acquisition, JEI acquired sixty five ships and 300,000 dwt, in addition to Earle's Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. of Hull, which JEI would combine with the firm of Ramage and Ferguson Ltd. in Leith and by co-ordination with other ship-owners, a newly constructed shipyard, the Egis, on the River Tees.

5.3 Rice

In 1915, JEI branched out into a new venture: he acquired the lease via the Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property of rice mills requisitioned by the British colonial administration in Burma. The mills in Rangoon, Akyab, Bassein, and Moulmein were operated by Diekmann Brothers, a German firm. The control of shipping lines from Rangoon to Britain placed Ellerman Lines in an especially advantageous position to acquire the lease of the requisitioned mills. The firm was known from its foundation as Ellerman Rice Mills Burma Ltd.²⁰² JEI separately acquired a controlling share in Arracan Co. Ltd., another firm in Burma engaged in rice milling and export, established in 1885, which was also owned by Diekmann Brothers. The coincidental death of John Halliday (d. 1915), chairman of Arracan Co., in March 1915, led to JEI's appointment as chairman.²⁰³ In March 1920, Ellerman Rice Mills Burma Ltd. and Arracan Co. Ltd. were merged into Ellerman's Rice and Trading Co. Ltd., effected by the sale of Ellerman Rice Mills Burma Ltd. to Arracan Co. Ltd. The latter was then sold to Ellerman Lines Ltd., and continued to operate until the 1950s.²⁰⁴

JEI's familiarity with the conditions of labour in the rice mills is difficult to establish. Burmese mining at this time was characterised by a 'litany of problems [...] including crime, disease, and a high likelihood of being involved in an often-fatal workplace accident'.²⁰⁵ There is only limited evidence of the provision of better workplace protections to the workers in rice milling, and a high probability that the racialised hierarchies of employees characteristic of mining existed in some form in the rice milling sector. A report in 1924 by the British colonial administration found a high incidence of rice farming tenants becoming indebted to their rentier landlords, from whom mills purchased rice, through the practice of advances of cash loans secured against their wages, which were typically only paid at harvest: 'it was common for a labourer's wages to be exhausted in this way before the harvest was reached'.²⁰⁶ Wages paid in cash in advance 'were paid at a discounted rate and [...] it was commonly held that the employer was in a position to force harsh terms on his labourers'.²⁰⁷ By 1924, it was found that the condition of the labourer had 'deteriorated': '[l]abourers were now, in the early 1920s, given less latitude in the event of illness, with

wages more liable to be cut for every day of absence'.²⁰⁸

Apart from its probable connivance at these forms of exploitation, Ellerman's Rice and Trading Co. Ltd. formed part of the so-called 'Bullinger Pool': a combination of four British milling and export firms in Burma which effectively constituted a cartel for the sale of rice, when rice represented the 'true currency' of Burma, 'as the source of livelihood for the majority and the form of payment for rent, loans, and wages'.²⁰⁹ In the 1930s, the Bullinger Pool was accused of deflating price controls.²¹⁰ One of its methods for 'overpowering smaller competitors' was to purchase rice at a relatively high price and sell at prices too low for local millers to compete.²¹¹ As one historian has noted regarding the operations of the Pool:

*As a result [of the Pool's cartel agreement to purchase rice at deflated prices] the majority of Burmese farmers became little more than indentured laborers while the enormous profits from the Burmese rice industry went directly into the pockets of British or Indian shareholders.*²¹²

The Burmese campaigner for independence from British colonial rule, U Ottama (1879–1939), engaged in protests against the operations of the Pool in the 1930s.²¹³ As a report noted in 1931, '[the rebellion] springs partly from the distress of the peasantry owing to the slump in the price of rice, a distress intensified by the operations of the Bullinger rice pool'.²¹⁴ Notwithstanding his minute attention to detail in other matters, JEI's concern with these issues is unknown.

6 1919–1933

The end of the First World War marked the beginning of the final fifteen years of JEI's life. In 1921, he was awarded the Companion of Honour,²¹⁵ together with John Clifford (1836–1923), the Baptist minister, who spoke with him at length on the day of the ceremony.²¹⁶ His public standing was now solidly established. In 1917, for example, Hamil Grant, the Anglo-American journalist described JEI's acquisition of wealth as the product of a series of 'Napoleonic master-strokes and combinations'.²¹⁷ JEI became an object of solicitation for funds and support for varied causes. In February 1921, for example, Arthur Robert Hinks (1873–1945) asked JEI to help facilitate the British Mount Everest reconnaissance expedition, due to depart for the Himalayas later in the year.²¹⁸ By 1923, he was actively solicited as a political donor: in March 1923, George Younger (1851–1929), 1st Viscount Younger informed Andrew Bonar Law (1858–1923) that JEI was outraged to learn that money he had provided for the Conservative party had been redirected by Horace Farquhar (1844–1923), 1st Earl Farquhar to the 'Lloyd George Fund', a party fund under Lloyd George's direct control.²¹⁹ For his part, Lloyd George was inclined to look favourably on Ellerman as the epitome of capitalist success. As George Allardice Riddell (1865–1934), 1st Baron Riddell noted in March 1920:

*I notice that Lloyd George is steadily veering over to the Tory point of view. He constantly refers to the great services rendered by captains of industry and defends the propriety of the large share of profit they take. He says one Leverhulme or Ellerman is worth more in the world than say 10,000 sea captains or 20,000 engine drivers and should be remunerated accordingly.*²²⁰

In 1922, JEI engaged in the unusual practice of writing an editorial under his own name in a periodical; he had abstained from doing so since 1908, when he published his third and last editorial in *The Daily Mail*. The prompt for his intervention was the general election of November 1922, which was won by the Conservative party. Labour's election campaign had involved a pledge to impose a levy on personal financial capital: a graduated tax on individual assets in excess of £5,000.²²¹ An individual with more than £1 million would be levied at 60 percent of their capital. The purpose of the levy was to settle Britain's war debt.

JEI's editorial in *The Sphere* denounced the proposal and provided the clearest extant insight into his judgement of the justification and incidence of taxation, particularly 'death duties'. For this reason, the editorial is worth quoting in its entirety:

The Capital Levy

A large cause of the present unemployment is the high taxation and reluctance of capital to be employed in reproductive work, partly owing to the Commission which was appointed by Mr. Chamberlain discussing the possibility of a capital levy, the mere suspicion of which caused a restriction of new capital being employed.

The Labour party have as one of the items of their manifesto a capital levy. Such a capital levy would be disastrous to the country, and would cause a vast increase of unemployment, and might even possibly destroy that personal initiative that has done so much to bring the British nation to its present position as a reproductive and manufacturing Power.

The expenditure of capital on reproductive works is, to use a simile, like throwing a stone into a pond. Immediately ripples of water arise, going in larger and larger circles. So the expenditure of capital on reproductive works increases the employment, the fund from which wages are earned, and again, when these wages are paid to labour they are again spent by labour among the various shopkeepers and in other ways, so that the expenditure of this capital leads to an ever-increasing number of people or circles which enjoy the fruit of its expenditure.

This capital is provided by thrift, savings, self-denial, and hard work by the bulk of the people, the incentive of which is inherent to each to leave a competency for his widow and family after his death or a competency for his own old age. Most large fortunes of to-day have been so made in the lifetime of the individual.

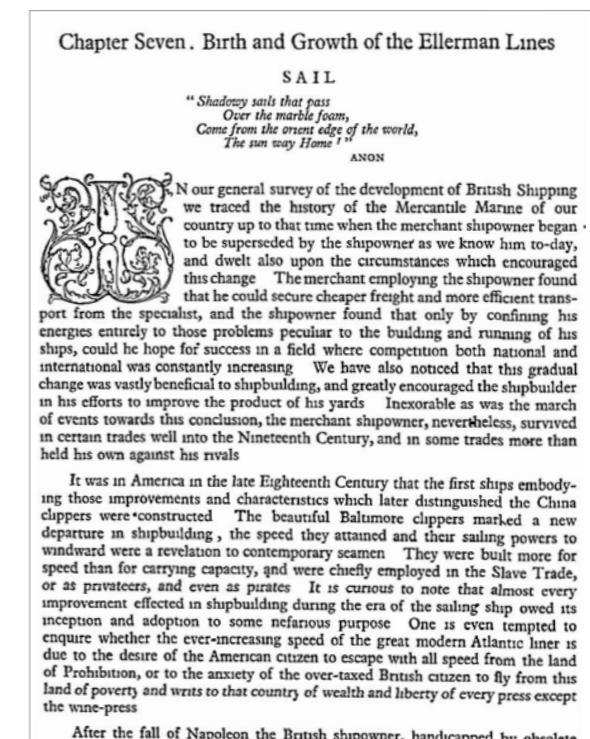
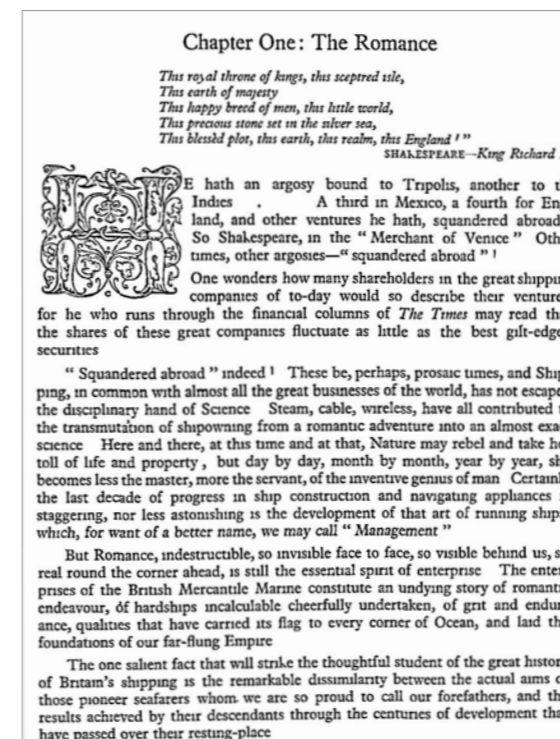
A capital levy would destroy all confidence as to the future, and would tend to make each individual spend all they had without accumulating or providing in any way for the capital requirements for the future. There would be no certainty, if such levy [sic] was possible, that a later Government might not impose another levy. It would tend to increase taxation, not decrease it, as much capital would be destroyed in the process, and the State cannot have the capital and still receive the tax on the income of such capital, while a horde of professional valuers would be employed. It would incidentally depreciate the value of securities, raise the rate of interest, as everybody would be sellers at the same time, and tend to be disastrous in its effects on all forms of capital invested in this country and on foreign exchanges. There is a form of capital levy practically in existence to-day, which is the levy which arises on the death of an individual by death duties, and this in large estates already amounts to 40 per cent. of the capital.²²²

This was an uncharacteristic public intervention from JEI, which he did not repeat again in his lifetime. The only significant exception was his role in the publication of a history of British shipping, which was issued by Ellerman Lines Ltd. in 1924: *The Development of British Shipping Throughout the Ages*. The volume was nominally a celebration of the British Empire:

The day may come when the Englishman may cease to turn his eyes seaward, when none will be found to set forth upon his journeys, when the elected leaders of the nation forget the lessons of our great past and neglect the noble, though sometimes temporarily unprofitable, imperial policy of our forefathers for the petty problems of contending party politics.²²³

The volume commenced with the genesis of British imperial exploration prior to the Renaissance, before discussing the 'chartered companies' of the seventeenth century, the 'merchant shipowner and the growth of the colonial empire' in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, culminating in the entrance of JEI to the scene: 'through his connection with [Frederick Leyland and Co. Ltd.], Sir John Ellerman first became interested in the shipping industry, and, by thus retaining from the sale this portion of the fleet, founded the Lines which to-day so honourably bear his name'.²²⁴

It is difficult to overstate the connection between JEI's wealth and British imperialism; indeed, the slow demise of Ellerman Lines Ltd. after JEI's death was a predictable effect of the decline of the British Empire, as we will see below (IV.3.2). JEI's interests in South Africa, India, and the Gulf were undoubtedly a by-product of British rule in those areas, but they were also an essential instrument in the imposition of British rule. *The Development of British Shipping Throughout the Ages* revelled in this fact.



Public domain:
Extracts from *The Development of British Shipping Throughout the Ages* (1924).

Public domain:
Slains Castle.



6.1 Property

Notwithstanding his commitment to shipping, in the period from 1916, JEI began to diversify his asset base by purchasing extensive tracts of real estate, particularly in central London. In July 1916 and May 1919, he purchased Slains Castle, the Cruden Estate, the Longhaven Estate and the barony of Slains, across 7,200 acres from Charles Gore Hay (1852–1927), 20th Earl of Erroll.²²⁵ In March 1920, he purchased a portion of the Covent Garden Estate, including the Drury

Lane Theatre, from Herbrand Arthur Russell (1858–1940), 11th Duke of Bedford.²²⁶ In 1925, he purchased 21 acres of central London, ‘extending northwards from Oxford Street to Euston Road and eastwards from Oxford Street to Wells Street, including Great Portland Street’,²²⁷ from Thomas Evelyn Scott-Ellis (1880–1946), 8th Baron Howard de Walden, reportedly for £3 million. In March 1929, JEI purchased ‘nearly 14 acres of the Cadogan and Hans Place estate, Chelsea’.²²⁸ The estate, extending northwards from King’s Road had ‘nearly 2½ miles of street frontage, and comprise[d] some 600 separate hereditaments’.²²⁹ In January 1930, JEI purchased the Kensington Estate of approximately 82 acres from the Iveagh Trust, on behalf of Edward Guinness (1847–1927), 1st Earl of Iveagh, reportedly for £650,000. As *The Times* reported:

Originally, according to an old map delineating the large landownerships of London, the Kensington Estate formed a complete rectangle, enclosed on the north-west by Kensington-road; extending to Richmond-road, a continuation of Old Brompton-road, on the south-east; and bounded westwards by the West London Junction Railway, from a point not far from Addison-Road Station to West Brompton Station; and eastwards by a line drawn north-eastwards of the whole length of Earl’s Court-road. The chief intersecting roads shown in this map were Pembroke-road, West Cromwell-road, and Trebovir-road. The property belonged to Lord Kensington until the beginning of the present century, when it was sold [...] for £565,000 to the later Lord Iveagh. The income, derived from freehold ground-rents, was then about £18,000 a year, secured on a rack rental of fully £170,000 a year from some 1,500 hereditaments.²³⁰

These were only the most extensive of JEI’s holdings. In 1930, for example, JEI purchased ‘an improved ground rent on Leonard Court, a modern block of flats in Kensington’ for approximately £70,000, which he gave to JEII ‘for his twenty-first birthday present’.²³¹ JEI eventually sold off portions of his property holdings. In 1922, apparently without ever having visited the location,²³² JEI offered the Slains-Longhaven estate for sale.²³³ In January 1933, he sold the Iveagh Estate to Metropolitan Ground Rents Ltd., reportedly for £900,000.²³⁴

6.2 Further Investments in Newspapers and Periodicals

After the First World War, JEI’s other investments in newspapers and periodicals grew further. JEI acquired significant holdings in Associated Newspapers, another Northcliffe interest, which controlled *The Daily Mail* and *The Evening News*, and he held a stake in London Express Newspapers, which controlled *The Daily Express*. JEI also acquired an interest in *The Sphere* and *Tatler*, which he had reportedly purchased from William Hugh Spottiswoode (1864–1915), and he was a major stakeholder in *The Mirror*. In 1919, he acquired a third of the issued share capital of The Illustrated London News Ltd. and Sketch Ltd. from the family of Herbert Ingram (1811–1860), the founder of the title, reportedly for £150,000.²³⁵

After Northcliffe’s death in 1922, JEI would begin to disinvest from newspapers and periodicals. In September 1926, JEII sold his controlling interest in The Illustrated London News Ltd. and Sketch Ltd., as well as entirely selling *The Sphere*, *Tatler*, *Eve*, *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, *The Drapers’ Record*, *Men’s Wear*, *The Graphic*, and *The Bystander* for £3,480,887 16s 2d.²³⁶ In 1922, JEI sold his interest in *The Times* to John Walter of the Walter family, a descendant of the founder of *The Times*, John Walter (1738–1812), and John Jacob Astor (1886–1971), 1st Baron Astor.²³⁷ Northcliffe’s brother, Viscount Rothermere, recalled in July 1933 to the journalist Tom Clarke (1884–1957) that JEI ‘had wanted to get *The Times* when Northcliffe died, so that he [sc. JEI] could go about the world as its owner.

So Rothermere said to him, “If you want *The Times*, buy it — you can have it if you are prepared to pay.” Rothermere himself had hoped to buy the title from Northcliffe’s heirs, having ‘gone up to £1,400,000 “as far as I [sc. Rothermere] would go.”’ Astor ‘went higher, and Ellerman would not overbid him’.²³⁸ After Northcliffe’s death, Rothermere purchased JEI’s interest in London Express Newspapers: Rothermere acquired the interest with Lord Beaverbrook, handing Beaverbrook control of *The Daily Express*, ultimately to the detriment of JEII (III.4, III.5.3 below).²³⁹

It is clear that JEI’s self-conception as a proprietor was ostensibly as an investor removed from editorial matters.²⁴⁰ In a letter of 17 November 1919, for example, JEI apologised to Northcliffe for an article that had appeared in *Tatler*, a title which JEI owned, and which had evidently printed an item offensive to Northcliffe or his connections: ‘I may say that Graham [sc. William Graham (d. 1943)] at once got into communication



Public domain:
The Sphere.

with the Editor and is taking steps to deal with the matter as strongly as possible. As you are quite aware, whilst being a large shareholder, I do not in any way deal with the management of the paper'.²⁴¹ The perception of JEI's editorial detachment was not widely shared. Several contemporary sources viewed JEI as an *éminence grise*. In the periodical, *The Communist*, an article of October 1922 observed that 'Ellerman Shipping interests' had 'a big hold in the great Northcliffe Press': 'When, therefore, these "disinterested organs of public opinion" write up on the decline in trade union membership or other matters concerning Labour, you can take it for granted there is a fly in the ointment. The fly in this case is the conspiracy to discredit and weaken Labour organisation and leave the working class an open prey to the greedy grasping Gradgrinds of modern industry'.²⁴²

6.3 Privacy and Publicity

It is often claimed that JEI's interest in the press was motivated by a desire to preserve his own privacy. In a précis of its own history, published in 1969, *The Financial Times* observed that JEI's 'morbid passion for secrecy' encouraged him to develop a 'taste for newspapers': 'Perhaps he found it was the best way of keeping his name out of them'.²⁴³ Subsequent studies of JEI have noted that '[o]ne of his strongest characteristics was his complete dislike of any form of publicity for himself'.²⁴⁴ JEI's relationship with Hannah Glover and the circumstances of their marriage suggest that JEI was concerned to avoid the attention typically brought by considerable wealth. Shortly after JEI's death, *The Daily Express* noted that 'intrusions of personal privacy incensed him'.²⁴⁵ This phrase appears to have derived from the published response of a company secretary at Moorgate, when *The Daily Mail* inquired in July 1933 into JEI's funeral arrangements: 'Sir John disliked publicity intensely', the secretary responded, 'and the family are maintaining an absolute silence now because of that'.²⁴⁶ In its obituary for JEI, *The Daily Mail* made a point of JEI's 'silence': 'He led no public life. He had hardly ever been photographed'; 'this man, owning colossal wealth and controlling far-flung enterprises, was almost unknown to the public'.²⁴⁷

Yet one should not exaggerate JEI's desire for privacy, which affected JEII far more acutely, as we will see (III.4). JEI gave his own surname to his shipping interests, as well as his initials (JRE) to the house flag of Ellerman and Bucknall, Ellerman and Papayanni, and Ellerman Lines.²⁴⁸ JEI also published articles under his full name in *The Daily Mail*. As we note below (I.7), JEI frequently made gifts and subscriptions to charities in his own name and allowed a

hospital to be named after him during the First World War, in recognition of his benefactions. These are not choices one would associate with an individual intensely desirous of privacy.

Moreover, JEI was not an obscure figure in his lifetime. As W. D. Rubinstein has observed, 'Ellerman's wealth was already a household fact to the man-in-the-street' by 1919.²⁴⁹ Indeed, JEI's private life was periodically chronicled in the press, even by *The Times*. On 11 June 1913, for example, *The Times* reported that JEI had chartered the steam yacht *Semiramis* for a pleasure

House flag and pennant used by Ellerman Lines.



cruise; on 11 March 1922, *The Times* reported that JEI had returned to England 'from a tour for the benefit of his health', in the company of 'Lady Ellerman and his son'.²⁵⁰ JEI did not complain of these reports to Northcliffe in any extant letter, and their appearance in *The Times* would presumably not have occurred if JEI had registered an objection.

Furthermore, JEI was by no means reclusive. He frequently attended industry and society gatherings, and occasionally delivered public speeches.²⁵¹ JEI's name appeared regularly in *The Times* as a guest at a public lunch or dinner, or as a subscriber to a season of theatre: on 14 March 1907, as President of the Chamber of Shipping, he attended a lunch at Mansion House; on 14 June of the same year, he attended dinner at Trinity House; on 9 June 1909, he attended lunch at Sutton Place, with Lord Northcliffe, and other delegates of the Imperial Press Conference;²⁵² on 12 April 1910, he attended lunch at Mansion House, with three hundred other guests; on 23 March 1912, he served as steward to the 49th anniversary dinner of the Newspaper Press Fund; on 20 January 1913, he was listed as a subscriber to the Beecham Opera Company; on 17 August 1918, he attended a lunch in Printing House Square;²⁵³ on 22 June 1920, he dined at Mansion House;²⁵⁴ on 28 June 1928, he attended a reception at the Austrian Legation, London; on 17 April 1929, he attended dinner at the Mayfair Hotel 'in honour of the delegates to the International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea'. *The Daily Telegraph* provided similar reports of JEI's public socialising: JEI at a dinner of the Worshipful Company of Horners on 25 January 1912, JEI present at a soiree at the Royal Academy on 5 July 1923. The claim that JEI 'rarely if ever' would attend a 'public banquet, make a speech, or accept invitations from any but his few intimate friends, [...] [or] attend a public conference' — as advanced by Louise Morgan — is difficult to square with this evidence. Morgan more credibly recites, impliedly on the authority of JEI's acquaintances, JEI's preferred mode of entertaining 'business friends': 'His great delight was to bring business friends to a lunch which he had planned down to the minutest detail in conference with his chef'.²⁵⁵

In the reports above, JEI was only one of a number of other guests, whose names were printed alongside his own. Reports that focused only on JEI became more frequent from 1930, particularly in *The Telegraph*: JEI and Hannah Glover in Harrogate on 6 August 1930, JEI and Glover in Cannes on 10 February 1931, JEI and Glover at the Princes' Hotel, Hove on 31 August 1931, JEI and Glover arriving in Paris from Lausanne on 13 June 1932.²⁵⁶ This type of report was presumably what JEI guarded against, since it made a point of tracking his presence designedly, not incidentally. It is perhaps worth noting that JEI was concerned that JEII would fall victim to kidnapping in circa 1920–25, according to an oblique recollection by JEII and Robert McAlmon, discussed below (III.2). Nonetheless, it bears repeating that JEI was not intensely concerned with privacy. If anything, JEI was sociable and inclined to self-promotion.²⁵⁷

Finally, JEI did not police the publication of articles about his business interests in *The Times* or any other title. One instance of JEI's exposure to published scrutiny was provided in February 1916, when the shipping magnate Walter Runciman (1870–1949), 1st Viscount Runciman complained in a letter to *The Times* on the paper's misreporting about his firm:

*Permit us to ask you one question: you persist in taking our firm, for obvious reasons, for purposes of illustration and you make mistakes; why don't you illustrate your views from the fleet of Sir John Ellerman, who is one of your proprietors, and no doubt more accessible to you than we are.*²⁵⁸

The publication of Runciman's letter is testament to the preparedness of an Ellerman title to acknowledge JEI's role as one of its proprietors, and to expose him to criticism, if only by insinuation. It should also correct the misconception that JEI's 'position in Fleet Street' was 'largely invisible'.²⁵⁹

However, it is important to acknowledge that *The Times* or any other title he owned did not publish a single instance of direct criticism of JEI in his lifetime. Acting as a proprietor of the paper, and others, shielded JEI from published criticism, and it is improbable that JEI would not have anticipated this benefit. As *The Daily Chronicle* observed on 30 April 1917, in 'one of the few press attacks against Ellerman published during the war',²⁶⁰ *The Times* had 'ignored him [sc. JEI] as a war shipping profiteer, although it published cruelly unjust attacks on Sir Walter Runciman'. 'That', the paper wryly noted, 'was simply an accidental coincidence'.

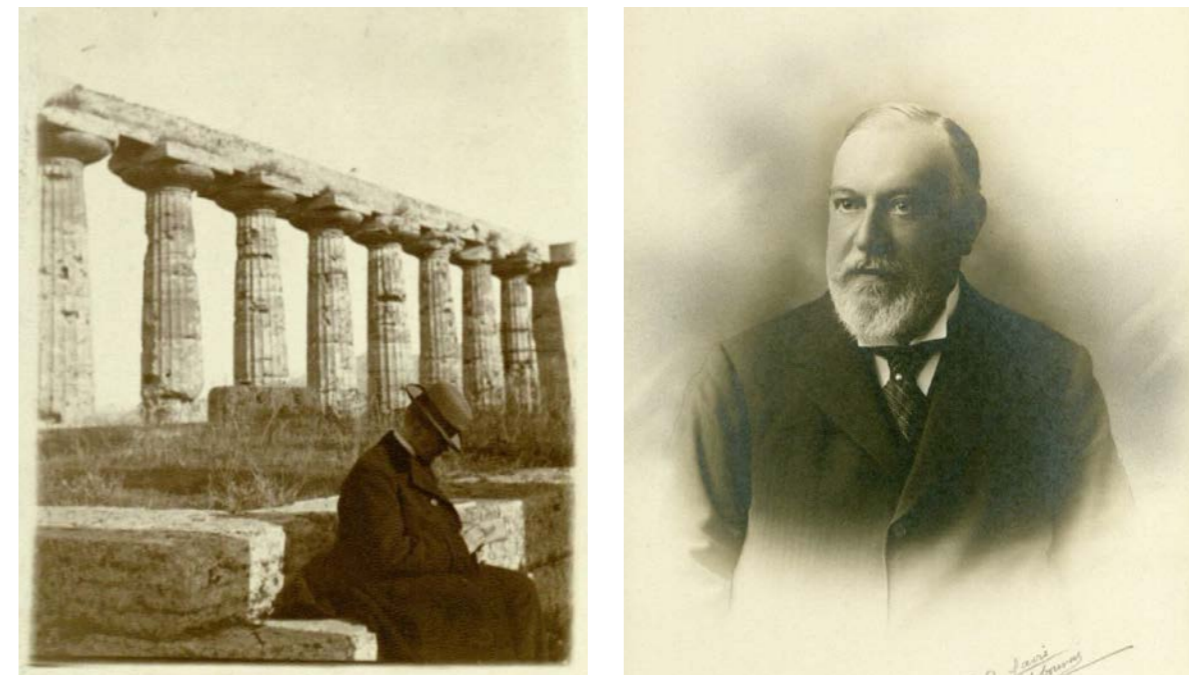
6.4 Personal Life

None of this is to deny that JEI was *guarded* about his privacy. He did not give interviews, and he appears to have preferred the refuge of family life and his office at Moorgate to public gatherings. While also owning a home in Bayswater in the earlier 1890s, in 1898, JEI purchased a home in Worthing, on Queen's Road, where he would spend weekends. Weekdays were for London — 'a mysterious place where he must never be disturbed called "the office"', as Bryher recalled.²⁶¹ The Census of 1901 refers to JEI residing in Worthing with his daughter and two servants, although — as with their return for the Census of 1891 — the family's surname is misreported as 'Ellison', presumably by design.²⁶² In 1903, JEI purchased a home at 2 Dukes Drive in Eastbourne, near where he would later send Bryher and JEII to school, as we note below (II.2, III.2); in addition, he owned 4 Connaught Square,

Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 106, f. 3844–5: Undated photos of JEI.



Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 106, f. 3844–5: Undated photos of JEI.



Paddington.²⁶³ In 1909, JEI acquired the family's principal residence in London at 1 South Audley Street, Mayfair, a home designed by Frederick Pepys Cockerell (1833–1878) and decorated with friezes by Frederic Leighton (1830–96),²⁶⁴ which adjoined Chesterfield House, from circa 1922 to 1932 a home to Princess Mary (1897–1965), the daughter of George V, and her husband Henry Lascelles (1882–1947), 6th Earl of Harewood, and later the home of JEI's wife's sister, Jessica Elvira de Sola (then known as Lady Mellor).²⁶⁵ In the 1911 Census, the residence housed eleven servants, including a nursemaid, a housekeeper, three housemaids, a kitchen maid, a scullery maid, a butler, and two footmen.²⁶⁶

Robert Freidus ©,
<https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/homes/56.html>:
 1 South Audley Street



In his published memoir, *Being Geniuses Together*, Robert Menzies McAlmon would discuss his impressions of 1 South Audley Street in the later 1920s:

*The rooms, halls, and staircase walls were lined with French paintings of the photographically sentimental and academic kind at their most banal. I recall no picture by any painter of whom I had ever heard. [...] In the dining room were cow-pasture and woodland scenes; in the library was a glistening white statue of a high-bosomed young girl lifting eager lips to a cluster of grapes. There was also a painting of geese on the village downs.*²⁶⁷

This judgement of McAlmon about JEI's conservative artistic taste is in tension with other evidence, including the evidence provided by McAlmon himself of JEI's considerate support of Wyndham Lewis's practice as an artist. After

meeting Lewis in 1923, JEI 'said he would speak to some of his editors in the City, and that if Mr. Lewis was willing he might do sketches of celebrities or society people'. Lewis obliged with 'some twelve drawings', 'two or three of which appeared' in print, before the run was suspended when complaints arrived from subscribers, objecting to the drawings as 'modern art'.²⁶⁸ For his part, Lewis would later write, in print, of his disdain for JEI's taste:

*I went in his [sc. McAlmon's] company to the black-bearded Sir John Ellerman's, a glimpse of the household of the richest of the rich. This shipping magnate seemed a very nervous man: for all the herds of Highland Castle browsing above his staircases, no placidity was discernible in the atmosphere of that interior.*²⁶⁹

Robert Freidus ©,
<https://victorianweb.org/art/architecture/homes/56.html>:
 Detail of frieze at
 1 South Audley Street



In September 1917, *The Daily Express* reported that JEI's hobby was 'collecting pictures': 'as a man of to-day he prefers the pictures of to-day. "I believe in encouraging the men and women who are painting now," he says. "The Corots [sic], Van Dyks [sic], and Rembrandts can take care of themselves."' In July 1933, an obituarist for *The Daily Express* noted that JEI's office was 'decorated like an art gallery, with a collection of first-class modern paintings.' "You look surprised", JEI reportedly observed: "well I spend two-thirds of my life here, so I try to make it beautiful"²⁷⁰

In a eulogy for JEI, written by Bryher for a memorial service on 21 July 1933, she observed 'how often my father refused to buy old pictures, because he said it was the living artist who needed something to continue his work'.²⁷¹ In 1908, JEI was listed as the owner of a painting by Arthur Chaplin (1869–1935), exhibited in the Franco-British Exhibition.²⁷² He was also known to have purchased a painting by Joseph Edward Southall (1861–1944) from the Société Nationale des Beaux-Art in Paris.²⁷³ In 1975, Sotheby's conducted a posthumous sale of the art collection of JEI, which listed several paintings that in all probability originated with JEI's collection: the sale included items by Louis Aston Knight (1873–1948) and Luigi Loir (1845–1916).²⁷⁴ For her part, Louise Morgan described JEI's taste in paintings as 'the conventional Royal Academy type', which appears to be a fair characterisation of the style he preferred.²⁷⁵

A proportion of JEI's will trust reserved money for the Royal Academy, stipulating that one fifth of the fund was to be used for buying 'British and Colonial pictures and statuary' and the remaining four fifths for buying 'contemporary foreign pictures'. He commissioned Sir Samuel Luke Fildes, RA (1843–1927) to paint his portrait in 1922,²⁷⁶ together with a portrait of Bryher, as we note below (II.7). JEI was also evidently interested in antiquities and literary artefacts. In 1914, he gifted the British Museum a limestone gate-socket depicting Gudea, a ruler of Mesopotamia in circa 2080 BCE.²⁷⁷ In May 1916, he purchased a copy of Shelley's *The Cenci* (1819), which had formerly belonged to Dickens.²⁷⁸ According to Morgan, 1 South Audley Street 'overflowed with mosaics, tapestries, carvings, furniture, and a medley of objects, some of them works of art and others without value, which had caught his fancy in the markets and bazaars of Europe and Africa'.²⁷⁹

Nonetheless, JEI was not an aesthete to the degree exhibited by Bryher. His principal preoccupation, including in private, was evidently business. During the First World War, JEI and Bryher visited the poet and campaigner Alice Meynell (1847–1922) at her estate in Greatham, Sussex. Meynell recorded that their conversation was focused strictly on 'war finance'.²⁸⁰ Published impressions of JEI's character from his acquaintances are rare. Sidney Theodore Felstead (1888–1965), the journalist, described JEI in 1946 as a 'strangely impassive man'.²⁸¹ More outlandishly, in a character portrait published in 1922, the journalist T. H. S. Escott (1844–1924) described JEI as '[a] Yorkshireman as essentially characteristic of his county': 'Sir John Ellerman; could not conceivably have been produced by any county except Yorkshire, or have inhaled from boy-hood any other air than the breezes wafted due north from the Humber'.²⁸² These were impressions left by an individual who had a limited familiarity with JEI. A more credible published recollection, provided by Bryher's acquaintance Richard Aldington (1892–

1962) in an article for *The Atlantic* of 1940, recalls JEI's solicitude for Aldington's prospects as a literary journalist. On a visit to London in 1918, Aldington received 'an invitation to dine' with Bryher and JEI, in what would be his first meeting with the latter:

[O]ver the port he made me a speech, and wound up offering to lend me fifty pounds. I told Sir John I didn't want money, but regular literary work, and lamented my ill luck at failing to get any response from the Times. Sir John watched me very attentively as I talked, and then said tranquilly that he would give me a letter to the editor of the Times, whom he knew, and another to his friend, Clement Shorter, editor of the Sphere. [...] I posted the two letters with covering letters of my own. The replies came back with incredible speed. [...] I saw Clement Shorter first, and I could hardly believe my ears when after a few minutes' conversation he commissioned six articles at a figure three times higher than I had ever been paid before.²⁸³

Notwithstanding the warmth recorded by Aldington, it is evident that JEI had antagonists and personal antipathies. In the 1890s, he reportedly had a 'major row' with Douglas Gordon McRae (1861–1901), the proprietor and editor of *The Financial Times*, who 'hated Ellerman like poison', according to O'Hagan.²⁸⁴ Competitors in business, including Sir Charles Cayzer, 1st Bt. (1843–1916) and Sir James Knott, 1st Bt. (1855–1934), would recall their tense interactions with JEI, where their interests clashed in a transaction.²⁸⁵ JEI himself was inclined to bear a grudge. McAlmon records a conversation between JEI and Bryher, regarding one of JEI's bested rivals:

One night during a cheerful dinner some man's name was mentioned and a bright expression flashed over Sir John's face and his eyes suddenly lit up. He turned to Bryher. "Dolly, that man once did something against me. I waited fifteen years, but he had to leave England. Now I will let him return".²⁸⁶

It is a remarkable vicissitude of archival transmission that the most substantive recollections of JEI's character are provided by his daughter's two ex-husbands. Bryher's second husband, Kenneth Macpherson, documented his impressions of JEI in an unpublished manuscript. 'For the life of me I cannot describe the man', Macpherson would observe: 'His eyes, ice-blue like hers [sc. Bryher's] were (unlike hers) prominent and so secret and undivulging you could have been staring at, not into, the eyes of a statue', '[h]e was portly in a contained way [...] [f]ine hands, often laced across his middle when he sat', '[h]is beard was so neat it could have been applied with spirit-gum', '[s]oft spoken, never discourteous'.²⁸⁷ McAlmon and Macpherson were not impartial witnesses; there is a tendentious quality to their recollections, but they are not obviously confected.

Bryher's judgement differed from McAlmon's and Macpherson's, as we will see (II.9 below), although she was candid in her assessment of JEI's 'detachment'. In one of her more sustained accounts of his character, published in *The Heart to Artemis*, she wrote:

I was always more interested in money, I think, than my father. He was a mathematician and his interests were in abstractions. I have seldom known anyone more remote from the things of this world [...] I believe now that my father could have become a religious leader as easily as a financier, he had such an extraordinary inner detachment.²⁸⁸

Ross McKibbin has noted that JEI was 'never by birth, education, cultivation, nor inclination [...] actually a member of the upper class'.²⁸⁹ This may accurately reflect JEI's birth and educational background; but in cultivation and inclination, JEI's tastes were not obviously distinguishable from the 'upper class'.²⁹⁰ It is quite unfair to assert, with Professor Rubinstein, that JEI was 'as vulgar and ignorant a *nouveau-riche* as has ever lived'.²⁹¹ Harold Perkin has referred to JEI's disinclination to pursue higher honours than a baronetcy, or conspicuous exhibitions of his wealth: 'Ellerman [...] could no doubt have bought his way into "society" many times over, but preferred private avarice to public display'.²⁹² It is true that JEI was considered to be unusually acquisitive. The American financial journalist Clarence W. Barron (1855–1928) recorded of JEI that he 'accumulates and never spends'.²⁹³ However, one should not exaggerate JEI's parsimony. Ellerman's penchant for display simply took a form distinguishable from the profligacy of spendthrift magnates with whom he was unfavourably compared.²⁹⁴

In October 1930, *Business News* published an extended profile of JEI by Milton Bronner, which would shape subsequent reportage of JEI's inclination to 'mystery'. A headline in *The Syracuse Herald*, which reproduced the syndicated article, captured the tendency of Bronner's profile: 'England's Mysterious Richest Man Shuns Public But His Midas Touch Makes of Him A World Power'.²⁹⁵ The hyperbole in the article was unusual when set against the respectful and muted tone of coverage of JEI outside the socialist or communist press. Bronner described JEI as harbouring 'one great passion in life outside of big business — a bitter, eternal, all-consuming hatred of publicity':

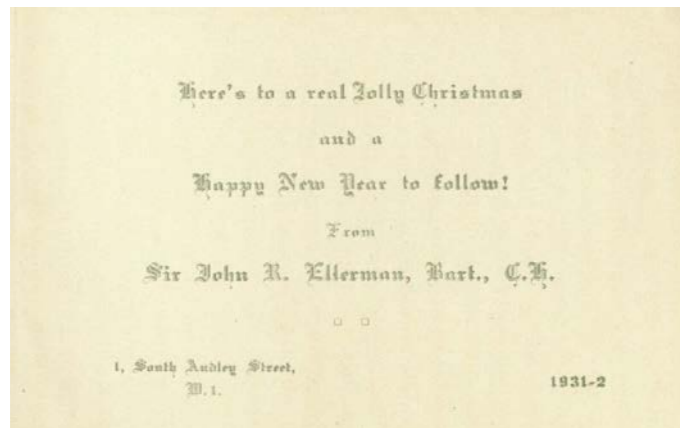
To avoid it he shuns clubs. He is not a diner-out. He even drives home every day to eat lunch in his own dining room. He is never interviewed. He never gives out statements. Photographs of him are as scarce as hen's teeth. [...] There is no man who has played so large a part in the constructive business life of England, whose personality is so elusive, even mysterious. He does not care anything about high society. He is not among those mentioned as attending first nights at the opera or theatre or horse show. [...] He does not give great parties. He is not the subject of amusing anecdotes. [...] It was once said of him that outside of his business, his home and his family he had no interests whatever, except a good dinner, a good drink, and a good cigar.²⁹⁶

This characterisation of JEI was demonstrably false: JEI frequently dined at industry luncheons and dinners, and he often attended the theatre and opening nights: in October 1936, an anonymous columnist in *The Sunday Times* noted that JEI 'was a frequent visitor to Covent Garden, and at theatrical first nights, too, his portly figure was often seen'.²⁹⁷

6.5 Denouement

As we have noted, in the 1920s, JEI disinvested from newspapers and periodicals, pivoted into the large-scale purchase of commercial and residential property in central London, and continued to oversee his significant interests in rice milling, collieries, breweries, and shipping. *The Development of British Shipping* itemised the number of ships in the Ellerman fleet in 1924, after five years of recovery from the losses of the First World War. In 1919, Ellerman's fleet held only eighty percent of the tonnage it possessed in 1914, when the firm had 126 ships and 756,077

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 151, f. 5111–12:
Christmas card from
JEL, 1932.



Ellerman's Wilson Line Ltd., and 7 ships of 8,565 dwt in Wilson and North Eastern Railway Ltd., totalling 1,403,479 dwt of tonnage in aggregate. This recovery was facilitated partly by German reparations, in the form of 'prize vessels',²⁹⁹ and partly by JEL's co-ordination with Lord Inchcape and Frank Clarke Strick (1849–1943) in acquiring William Gray and Co. Ltd., the shipyard in West Hartlepool. In 1927, JEL established Ellerman and Bucknall (Proprietary) Ltd. in Cape Town, which would handle the firm's operations in South Africa, in lieu of reliance on agents. In 1928, JEL sold his 46 percent interest in Shaw, Savill and Albion to Lord Kysant for £994,000 in shares of Kysant's firm, White Star, which JEL immediately converted to cash. Ructions affected the shipping market in the 1920s: the Communist government of Russia had drastically reduced the operations of Ellerman's Wilson Line; the boycott of British goods in India affected the Hall and City Lines, which relied heavily on the shipping of cotton for the Lancashire trade. Other businesses continued to expand. In 1926, Hoare and Co. Ltd. purchased the City of London Brewery Company for £1.375 million, loaned by JEL, in addition to 200,000 of its own shares.

Nonetheless, it is evident that by the later 1920s JEL's health was declining. In November 1929, Sir Percy Elly Bates, 4th Bt. (1879–1946), chairman of Cunard, noted in a company memorandum that he had met with JEL, 'who looked considerably better in health than when I saw him last'.³⁰⁰ Bates's memorandum observed that JEL was pessimistic about the effects of the financial crisis then occurring in the United States: 'He said that in his opinion the financial trouble in America had gone very deep indeed and would be likely to affect seriously the volume of America's general imports'.³⁰¹ There is no clear indication that JEL felt his oversight of his businesses would subside in the later 1920s. Although he evidently drafted his will in circa June 1930, he was reportedly working intensively in 1933, in resistance to the advice of his physicians.

6.6 Death and Estate

In early 1933, JEL suffered a minor stroke. He had evidently been ill in the previous year. In March 1932, he sent a telegram to the Birmingham Chartered Accountant Students' Society, apologising for his absence from the Society's jubilee celebrations, owing to his 'ill health'.³⁰² In the summer of 1933, JEL had planned on a cruise to Scandinavia, but opted instead to

dwt of tonnage.²⁹⁸ The inventory in *The Development of British Shipping* showed the extent of the recovery: 24 ships of 234,900 dwt in the City Line, 58 ships of 540,588 dwt in Hall Line Ltd., 26 ships of 221,370 dwt in Ellerman and Bucknall Steamship Co. Ltd., 25 ships of 106,200 dwt in Ellerman Lines Ltd., 5 ships of 18,724 dwt in Westcott and Laurence Line Ltd., 64 ships of 273,032 dwt in

travel to Dieppe, where he suffered a cerebral haemorrhage; he died at the Hotel Royale on 16 July 1933. A funeral was held at Putney Vale Cemetery on 20 July 1933; a death notice in *The Daily Telegraph* observed 'the funeral will be private'.

Newspaper reporters descended on the service, which they chronicled in detail. *The Daily Telegraph* provided an image of the hearse, with six liveried pallbearers, ships' captains of Ellerman Lines, walking beside it. As its report noted: 'The contrast between the far-flung commercial interests and the great wealth of the famous shipowner and the simplicity of his burial was remarkable'. The paper, having staked out the Ellerman family home, observed that 'every blind' at 1 South Audley Street 'was drawn, and a white awning had been placed between the door and the kerb to keep as private as possible the removal of the coffin and the passage of the mourners'. Four motor-hearses conveyed wreaths to Putney Vale, including one, 'composed of red roses [...] quite 6 ft. long'. Canon Edwin Brook-Jackson, Vicar of St Mary Abbots Church, Kensington, read the committal sentences at the graveside. The paper described the wreaths and 'floral tokens' left by the mourners, which their reporter had evidently inspected up close, and it provided a roll of those who attended, which consisted principally of relatives and of 'directors and leading representatives of many of the companies with which Sir John Ellerman had been connected'.

On 19 July 1933, *The Daily Express* published photographs of JEL meeting his father's coffin at Newhaven Harbour Station, after its repatriation from France. The images appeared on the paper's front page, under the headline: 'Drama of a Shy, Nervous Young Man'. This typified the paper's subsequent treatment of JEL, as we will see (III.4). 'Few people had known the dead millionaire', the paper observed, 'fewer still have met his son'. The reporter asked JEL a series of questions: 'I tried to condole with him. But at every remark I made he turned his back nervously and whispering "I have no statement to make" [,] hurried away'. On the day of the funeral, *The Daily Express* covered the proceedings with similar interest: 'Magnificent wreaths were banked six feet high at the graveside. Wreaths in the form of anchors, others designed to represent great modern steamships were formed with blue cornflowers on a background of virgin white stock and roses [...] Girls in coloured overalls had lined the grave with the most costly blooms, and at the bottom was a carpet of roses'.³⁰³

The *Daily Mail* reported that the family 'had specially refrained from publishing the time of the interment, so that only his relatives, a few friends, and business associates should be present, but an hour before the cortege arrived more than 300 people had gathered before the open grave. It was a grave such as I have never before seen':

*For an hour mourners went in a deep-packed file past the grave. There were young men — entire office staffs from all Sir John Ellerman's many enterprises; directors of his companies; deep-sea sailors who have served him; and foreign shipping agents to whom, in adding to his own fortune, he has also brought wealth. Cards on the wreaths bore such inscriptions as: "To a very great gentleman —"; "To my dear chief in affectionate memory" [...] such tributes accompanying wreaths from clerks, shipowners, hotel servants, friends, and distant relatives.*³⁰⁴

The Evening Standard interviewed a gravedigger at Putney Vale, who ‘said that in all his experience he had never seen so many flowers at a funeral’.³⁰⁵

The crush of reporters evidently caused the family distress. In the same week, Hannah Glover dispatched a letter to *The Times* to complain about the family’s treatment — the first and only letter under her name which was published in her lifetime, albeit under the name ‘A. [sic] Ellerman’, reflecting an apparent inclination to use the name ‘Annie’ instead of Hannah.³⁰⁶

*I would like to make a protest in which I am sure I will be supported by those who in various ways have been made victims of publicity in certain sections of the Press. On Monday last, as most of the world now knows, I brought home from abroad the body of my dear husband. On arrival at my home I was confronted with groups of Press cameramen, who responded to a request that they should go away with laughter. They were there to take pictures of my husband’s coffin and of myself in whatever aspect of grief they could surprise me, so that these pictures could be circulated to the world at large — and to what purpose? They secured their photographs! On arrival at the cemetery for the interment men with cameras ran beside us, leaping over graves and vying with one another to be first on the scene. As the coffin was lowered the silence was broken by the clicking of cameras. I cannot believe that the general public desires the violation of every feeling that is most sacred on this the most sorrowful and solemn occasion of life. It is an intrusion which must be revolting to anybody with the smallest vestige of sensitiveness and human kindness.*³⁰⁷

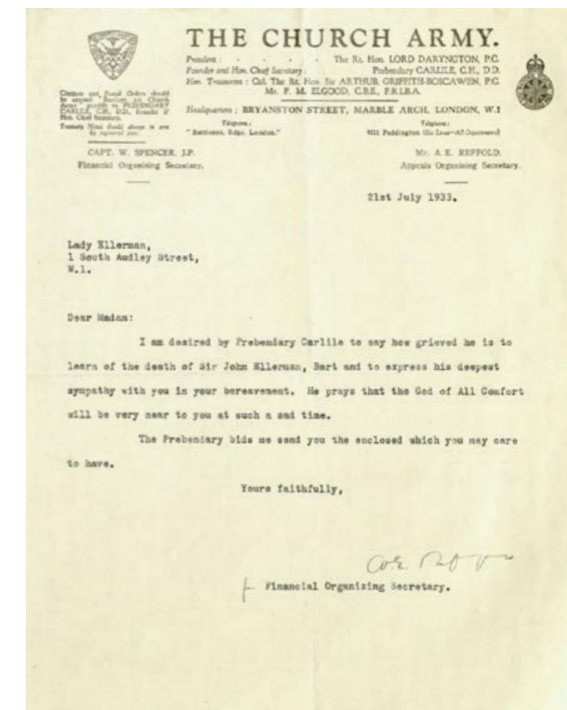
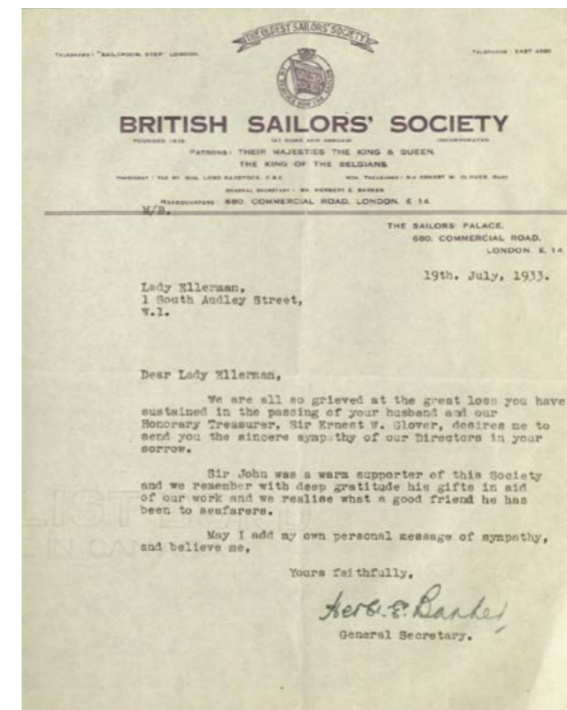
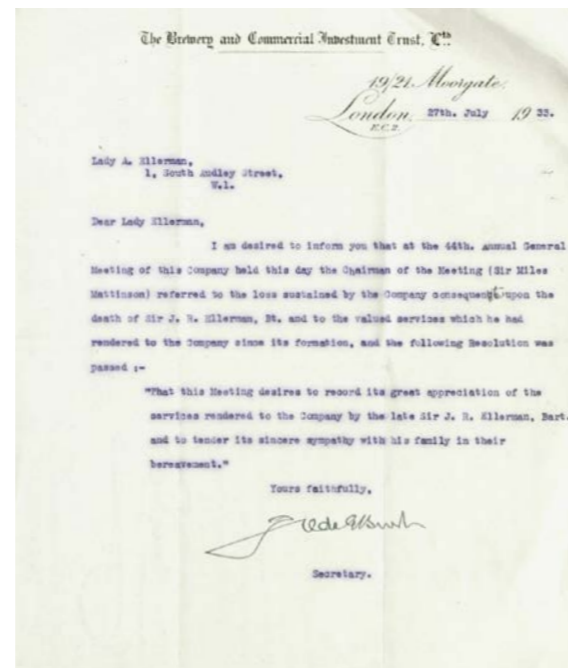
Among other responses, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941) wrote to *The New Statesman* to express her sympathy with Glover: ‘Lady Ellerman’s account of what she suffered at the hands

of photographers when her husband died is still fresh in our minds; and most of us can supplement such stories with cases of a less extreme kind which have come under our own observation’. More searchingly, Woolf asked: ‘But are we not ourselves to blame?’ Adverting to the inclination of the *beau monde* to solicit photographs of their homes or parties, Woolf wrote: ‘How [...] can we blame the press if it takes advantage of this disposition on the part of well-known people, and infers that on the whole publicity is desired?’³⁰⁸ Partly in response to Glover’s letter, The National Union of Journalists and the Institute of Journalists ‘passed resolutions instructing their members to avoid intruding’.³⁰⁹

A memorial service was held on 21 July 1933 at St Andrew’s Undershaft, Leadenhall Street, presided over by William Perrin (1848–1934), Bishop of Willesden and Edwin Brook-Jackson, attended by the Baltic Choir, staff members of Ellerman Lines, and dozens of other guests, many of them representing firms in shipping, brewing, and insurance.³¹⁰ Letters of condolence, addressed to Hannah Glover, streamed in; among them, a letter from the British Sailors’ Society conveyed its ‘deep gratitude for his [sc. JEI’s] gifts in aid of our work and we realise what a good friend he has been to seafarers’, others from the Chelsea Hospital for Women, the Church Army, the City of Hull Great War Trust, the Invalid Children’s Aid Association, the King George’s Fund for Sailors, attested similarly to their grief at the loss of a patron and subscriber. In a particularly affectionate letter from Raphael de Sola, the brother of JEI’s fiancée Esther, JEI was remembered ‘as the personification of kindness, as one who radiated happiness wherever he went’.³¹¹

Obituaries appeared in several newspapers. *The Daily Mail* emphasised the supposed ‘mystery’ surrounding JEI: ‘The mystery with which Sir John surrounded himself was

Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 151, f. 5120–8: Letters of condolence to Lady Ellerman



astonishing. The address of his offices in Moorgate-street does not appear in the London Postal Directory, and the telephone number, like that of his house, was a secret one. His private life was equally hidden'.³¹² 'He was', the paper noted, 'the Silent Ford — The Invisible Rockefeller'.³¹³

Other obituaries were elegiac and laudatory. *The Financial Times* observed that JEI's judgement 'was swift and unerring', 'he preferred to retain in his own hands the most meticulous control of the details of his vast business'. *The Daily Telegraph* likewise praised JEI's proficiency as an investor: 'He nursed innumerable concerns from doubtful positions to great prosperity, and then sold them at the proper moment, always at a substantial profit'; 'Whenever he considered a company promising enough to make it worth his while to acquire a substantial holding in it, he became the most persistent buyer of its securities'. It added, on the purported authority of a friend of JEI, "[m]otoring was his principal love outside business," said a friend. "He played a little golf, usually preferring a quiet course at Birling Gap, near Eastbourne, but I believe he had usually had enough when he had played five holes."

The Times was rhapsodic: 'He was, undoubtedly, a financial genius, [...] he rendered signal services to British industry, and particularly to shipping, and he helped by the fructifying use of capital to provide a very large amount of employment. He will be long remembered as one of the greatest forces behind British shipping that has ever been known'.

In a separate death notice, the paper observed:

*The City suffers a heavy loss by the death of Sir John Ellerman. He was perhaps the last of that long line of wealthy business men of marked individuality and independence and devotion to business to whom old London owed so much. His absorption in business was extraordinary; he had scarcely any other interest. His memory was abnormally good, and his judgment of men and things exceptionally shrewd. By the exercise of these gifts he amassed a very large fortune, but more important still originated and fostered business activities of many kinds to the advantage of the many people he employed directly and indirectly, and to the satisfaction of those who enjoyed the facilities which these various businesses provided. Sir John paid close attention to detail, but he himself attributed his success mainly to the fact that he had no partners or other people to satisfy or persuade to be of the same mind as himself. Hence he could and did reach decisions quickly. The City of London at one time possessed many men of this type, and their existence greatly facilitated the carrying through of large financial transactions. Heavy death duties and heavy taxation have greatly reduced their number.*³¹⁴

Death duties became the principal focus of the ensuing reportage of JEI's death. Virtually every death notice adverted to JEI's immense wealth. *The Daily Mail* described JEI as 'Britain's wealthiest man': 'wealthier, some people think, than any man in this country has ever been'.³¹⁵

The Daily Telegraph noted that JEI was 'reputed to be the wealthiest man in Britain':

In 1916, when he amalgamated the Ellerman and the Wilson steamship lines, Sir John declared that he was the richest man in Britain. He said his fortune amounted to £55,000,000. [...] Sir John Ellerman's income at the time of his death was estimated at £1,000,000 a year. His total fortune is reputed to be in the neighbourhood of £30,000,000. Death duties on this sum would amount to £15,000,000. Moreover it is believed that few men of very large means will be found to have left so liquid an estate.

The paper estimated that duty on JEI's estate — the duty in place was 50 percent of any estate valued at over £2,000,000³¹⁶ — would be equivalent 'to a threepenny income tax on all the taxpayers of the land': 'According to the latest available statistics an income-tax of a penny yields £4,875,000'.³¹⁷ Speculation on the size of the prospective duty was rampant. On 17 November 1933, *The Daily Telegraph* updated its readers: 'Late provisional probate figures were taken at £17,224,425 and death duties of £8,600,000 were paid upon this sum. I now learn that the total Ellerman estate will be found not only to be more than the sum already mentioned, but to exceed £40,000,000. This will necessitate the payment of over £20,000,000 to the State'.³¹⁸ The estate was described as 'one of the largest, if not the largest, ever taxed for death duties in this country'.³¹⁹ By 30 September 1936, the paper reported that JEI's estate 'which has now been resworn at nearly £37,000,000, is the biggest the Inland Revenue Department has ever had to deal with':

*This vast sum is exclusive of property abroad, which, The Daily Telegraph understands, amounts to approximately £4,000,000. It is also understood that further property has yet to be brought in for valuation before the estate is finally wound up. Already £14,600,000 has been paid in death duties on the estate. Allowing for the income-tax and super-tax which Sir John paid in his lifetime, the country will have received more than £35,000,000 as the result of his genius and enterprise.*³²⁰

The Times would report that the size of the duty was said to have offset an anticipated deficit in 1933: 'There is one noticeable windfall to record: £67,000,000 from estate duties. This is £10,220,000 more than was received to the end of 1932, and it seems highly probable that instead of the year showing a loss as the Chancellor anticipated of £2,500,000, it will show a large gain. Much of the increase is due to the heavy duties payable on the estate of the late Sir John Ellerman'.³²¹ Speeches in Parliament drew attention to the windfall. F. A. Macquisten (1870–1940), Conservative MP for Argyllshire, enjoined the House of Commons to 'congratulate ourselves on the fact that we had a citizen in this country like the late Sir John Ellerman whose estate contributed so much to the Revenue'.³²² Nancy Astor (1879–1964), Viscountess Astor, Conservative MP for Plymouth Sutton, observed: 'Is it not of great public interest that Sir John Ellerman started as a penniless boy and made a fortune; and should not we look with pride on this triumph of private enterprise?'³²³

Other commentary was less favourable. In *Practical Socialism for Britain* (1935), Hugh Dalton (1887–1962), later Lord Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Labour Party between 1945 and 1947, would describe JEI's estate as 'monstrous'.³²⁴ In the same year, *The Bricklayer, Mason and Plasterer* would note: 'No person in any country can accumulate a fortune of this size, or of half this size, or a quarter of this size, by useful work. Such fortunes are always piled up by the exercise of some power over the wealth-producing activities of large numbers of other people'.³²⁵ When, in October 1937, *The Evening Standard* reported that JEI had recovered the sum lost to estate duty, bringing the value of his fortune to £40 million, *The Socialist Standard* observed:

A news item in The Evening Standard [...] gives a staggering jolt to the hoary belief of the Labourites that you can gradually tax the capitalist out of existence and find yourselves sliding

*imperceptibly into Socialism. Sir John Ellerman, after a life of accumulation of the proceeds of the exploitation of workers, left property worth £40,000,000, of which £17,000,000 was in cash and Government securities. Under the death duties the State took £22,000,000, leaving a paltry £18,000,000 for the heir. On the authority of Sir William Cox, manager of the Ellerman estate, The Evening Standard states that the value of the estate has increased in four years back to the original level of £40,000,000! This as any economic textbook will tell you, must have been due to the brains and work of the present Sir John Ellerman. [...] It looks as if it will take capitalism quite a long time to die from death duties.*³²⁶

After 16 August 1933, discussion of the duty owed by JEI's estate was accompanied by reportage of the contents of JEI's will. The will, which JEI had completed on 3 June 1930 with the assistance of Sir Benjamin Cherry, KC (1869–1932), ran to twenty-seven pages, exclusive of a two page Codicil, which JEI appended to the will on 28 February 1933. The will appointed Frederick George Burt, Miles Mattinson, JEII, and the London General Investment Trust as the executors of the estate. One of its more remarkable provisions was that JEI had set aside £6 million in bank deposits and government bonds in anticipation of estate duty. As the *Daily Express* observed, JEI 'could not help' but pay the duty, 'and made no attempt to avoid it'.³²⁷

The will noted that the amount set aside could fall short of the duty payable, and observed of the method of settling the balance that the transfer of a 'fraction' of JEI's shares in 'any [...] Company with which I have been associated' may be complicated by a reduction in the value of the shares: 'these Companies having been dependent on my personal supervision the value of the shares may be reduced by reason of my death'. Out of caution, the will restricted the payment of certain pecuniary legacies in excess of £1,000 until two years after JEI's death, to ensure the satisfaction of the duty.

JEI itemised a number of legacies to family members, including £5,000 each to his sisters Ida and Emily, and annuities to each of £1,000 per annum for life, with separate gifts to their children. However, the most significant component of the will was the legacy which it conferred on JEII, which we discuss extensively below (II.8, III.4). As *The Daily Telegraph* reported:

*Among the bequests are: To his son Sir John Ellerman £600,000 absolutely, and £2,000,000 upon trust for him and his issue. To his daughter Annie Winifred MacPherson [sic] £600,000 absolutely, and £600,000 upon trust. To his widow £150,00, a life annuity of £30,000 free of tax, the use for life of his household and personal effects (with remainder to his son John), and the use for life of his London house (with remainder to his residuary estate).*³²⁸

This glossed over a notable effect of the will, which was to leave JEII as the principal beneficiary of the residue of JEI's estate via a 'protective trust' (III.7 below), effectively conferring a net estate of approximately £20 million on JEII, apart from the specific legacies of £2.6 million absolutely and upon trust.³²⁹ 'Thus did the Emperor of Finance, like Napoleon', *The Daily Express* reported, 'secure his dynasty'.³³⁰

7 JEI and Philanthropy

Shortly after JEI's death, *The Daily Express* remarked 'on the small amount which the late Sir John Ellerman left to hospitals'.³³¹ The comment elicited a 'number of letters'. 'The dead magnate', the paper subsequently reported, 'did not want for champions to defend him'.³³² The letters in response condemned 'this newspaper for its attitude and declaring that the late shipping magnate had done his full duty in keeping his money in the country, thus paying over eight millions in death duties'.³³³ *The Daily Express* would later prove a *bête noire* to JEII, as we note below (III.4), partly stemming from the antipathy of its proprietor, Lord Beaverbrook, to JEI and JEII. In JEI's lifetime, however, *The Daily Express* commented rarely on his activities, and never about his philanthropy. In contrast, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* routinely publicised JEI's many philanthropic gifts. As *The Daily Telegraph* noted in its obituary for JEI: 'He was a regular subscriber to a large number of charities'.

Between 1901 and 1932, the two papers reported on the following donations by JEI, often in combination with Hannah Glover, identified only as 'Lady Ellerman':

- A donation towards the construction of a monument to Queen Victoria (£50: 5 August 1901, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Salvation Army and Church Army (£100: 17 November 1905, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Lord Mayor's Cripples' Fund (£21: 13 December 1906, *The Times*)
- A donation to the widow and children of Captain James Belton of the Ellerman liner *SS City of Dundee*, which sunk after a collision in the Bristol Channel (100 guineas: 19 October 1908, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to St Bartholomew's Hospital, London (£52 10s: 18 June 1910, *The Times*).
- A donation to Great Ormond Street Hospital (£10 10s: 11 March 1912, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Macedonian Relief Fund (£105: 23 November 1912, *The Times*).
- A donation to the St Paul's Cathedral Preservation Appeal (£50: 31 March 1914, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the British Red Cross Society and St John's Ambulance (£400: 5 October 1914, *The Times*).
- A donation to the appeal launched by Princess Mary for Christmas gifts for British troops (£105: 16 October 1914, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Indian Soldiers' Fund (£105: 16 October 1914, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Queen's Appeal for the Expeditionary Force (£100: 17 October 1914, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Daily Telegraph Belgium Fund (£2,050: 28 October 1914 and 21 December 1914, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the British Water Ambulance Fund (£77 10s: 5 February 1915, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Officers' Families Fund (£100: 18 February 1915, *The Times*).
- A donation of £500 per annum 'to be terminated a year or two after the war, when things become normal again' to King Edward's Hospital (£500: 6 March 1915, *The Times*).³³⁴

- A donation to ‘the running of ambulances’ (£100: 22 April 1915, *The Times*).
- A donation to the National Committee for Relief in Belgium (£500: 28 April 1915, *The Times*).
- A further donation to the Officers’ Families Fund (£100: 29 April 1915, *The Times*).
- A donation to Mansion House Relief Fund for the loss of the *Lusitania* (£100: 7 May 1915, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Lord Mayor’s Special Fund for the Sick and Wounded (£100: 19 July 1915, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Women’s Medical School (£50, reportedly a ‘second’ donation: 26 July 1915, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Edith Cavell Memorial Fund (£21: 25 October 1915, *The Times*).
- A donation to a Red Cross and St John’s Ambulance Appeal, with a pledge to match the donation with £1,000 provided that ‘nine others would each give a similar sum’ (£1,000: 20 October 1916, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Prisoners of War Central Committee Fund (£300: 27 October 1916, *The Times*).
- A donation to the YMCA ‘to provide and maintain huts for the troops’ (£105: 24 May 1917, *The Times*).
- A donation to Lord Mayor’s Fund for sufferers from an air raid (£210: 16 June 1917, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to Comrades of the Great War £1,000,000 appeal (£5,000: 26 November 1917, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to Lady Victoria Herbert’s Fund for British Prisoners of War (£50: 2 February 1918, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Lord Mayor’s Appeal for London Hospital (£1,000: 1 March 1918, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to The King’s Fund, ‘[i]n an accompanying letter he [sc. JEI] said he believed it to be one of the most beneficial funds that had been started since the war began’ (£20,000: 5 September 1918, *The Times*).
- A donation to the British Prisoners of War Food Parcels and Clothing Fund (£300: 24 September 1918, *The Times*).
- A donation to a Red Cross and St John’s Ambulance Appeal (£10,000: 27 September 1918, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Lord Mayor’s Appeal for the Red Cross (£10,000: 22 October 1918, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Cripples’ Hospital and College (£210: 11 March 1919, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to King Edward’s Hospital Fund (£500: 7 May 1919, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Sailors’ Hostel, Limehouse (£1,000: 8 December 1919, *The Times*).
- A donation to Central Board of Finance of the Church of England (£500: 11 December 1919, *The Telegraph*).

- A donation to Vienna Emergency Relief Fund (£6,000: 31 December 1919, *The Times*).
- A donation for a ‘practical memorial’ to Louis Botha (1862–1919) (£200: 9 July 1920, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Committee of the Poor Clergy Relief Corporation (£1,000: 9 December 1920, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Newsvendors’ Benevolent and Provident Institution (£200: 14 October 1921, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Mansion House Hospitals Appeal (£500: 8 May 1922, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Newspaper Press Fund Diamond Jubilee Appeal (£105: 18 April 1923, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the London Hospital Quinquennial Appeal (£105: 28 May 1923, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Mansion House Fund for relief to victims of the Great Kantō earthquake in Japan (£2,000: 6 September 1923, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Blue Triangle Forward Movement ‘for business and professional women and girls in London’ (£105: 27 May 1924, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Marine Society’s ‘Warspite’ appeal (£100: 10 November 1924, *The Times*).
- A donation to various Poor-Boxes in London (Bow Street, Marylebone, West Ham, Lambeth) (£130 cumulatively: 24 December 1919, *The Telegraph*, 24 December 1921, *The Telegraph*, 29 December 1921, *The Telegraph*, 29 December 1924, 24 December 1926, 27 December 1927, 22 December 1928, 27 December 1929, 14 January 1930, 24 December 1930, 29 December 1930, 1 January 1931, 28 December 1931, 28 December 1932, *The Times*).
- A donation to the St Paul’s Cathedral Preservation Appeal (£250: 14 January 1925, *The Times*).
- A donation to the King Edward’s Hospital Fund (£500: 6 August 1925, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation as benefactor of the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney (unspecified: 23 May 1927, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to a London floods appeal (£250: 10 January 1928, *The Times*).
- A donation to a fund ‘opened in aid of those who are suffering from the depression in the stricken coalfields’ (£535: 7 April 1928, *The Times*).
- A donation to the National Radium Fund, used for supplying radium and other radiotherapeutic devices for treatment of illnesses (£525: 30 April 1929, *The Times*).
- A donation to the Church Schools campaign (£100: 9 May 1929, *The Telegraph*).
- A donation to the Thank-Offering Fund for the recovery of King George V (£1,000: 20 July 1929, *The Times*).
- A donation to the National Advertising Benevolent Society (£5 5s: 29 April 1932, *The Telegraph*).

Public domain:
St John's Lodge,
Regent's Park.



In addition to these gifts, JEI was directly involved in the General Committee of different charitable funds. On 31 December 1919, for example, *The Times* reported that JEI was a member of the Committee of the Vienna Emergency Relief Fund, together with Field Marshal Douglas Haig (1861–1928) and Herbert Asquith, the former Prime Minister.³³⁵

JEI's most significant charitable endeavour was the establishment of a hospital for the treatment of

disabled officers at St John's Lodge, Regent's Park. On 29 August 1916, *The Times* recorded that JEI had 'undertaken to defray all the expenditure in connexion' with the hospital. The Lodge had been lent by the Treasury and the Office of Woods and Forests to the British Red Cross Society for use as a hospital; in return for JEI's gift, it was to be called the Sir John Ellerman Hospital. The hospital was presided over by Harold Gillies (1882–1960), the pioneering plastic surgeon, serving in part as a satellite for his hospital in Sidcup. Fifty patients were expected within 'six or eight weeks' of its opening, and '[a]rrangements have been made with the council of the Royal Botanical Society for the upkeep of the gardens, the cost of which Sir John Ellerman has also undertaken to bear'.³³⁶ The hospital opened on 27 January 1917 and closed in 1919. As *The Times* noted on 4 December 1918:

*apart from the cost of upkeep Sir John Ellerman devoted nearly £20,000 to making necessary alterations and additions to the house and its equipment as a hospital. Originally it was for paralysed and permanently disabled officers, with beds allocated to general casualties, but since last July it has been a special institution for the treatment of officers suffering from facial injuries; it continues to do excellent work. Besides an operating theatre and X-ray installations, Sir John Ellerman has built and equipped surgically a workshop and two dental surgeries, where the construction and adaptation of splints and prosthetic appliances are undertaken.*³³⁷

On the same day, *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* reported that JEI had confirmed his willingness 'to continue to fund [the hospital] until 4 months after the close of the peace'. By that time, 'some 630 patients have been received into the hospital'.³³⁸

James Taylor is incorrect in his claim that JEI 'donated widely to charities but never publicly'.³³⁹ Nonetheless, it is true that JEI did not provide a published or private rationale for his acts of philanthropy, unlike Bryher and JEII, as we will see below (I.7). In its death notice for JEI, *Time Magazine* observed that JEI 'stealthily gave fat sums to charity, [and] was irked when newshawks got wind of his donations'.³⁴⁰ There is no extant evidence that JEI's policy of donation was secretive, assuming this is not a *question mal posée*. There is clear evidence of JEI's unpublicised philanthropy. In July 1924, for example, JEI donated the Harbour of

Cruden Bay — which he had acquired with the barony of Slains — to a charitable trust for the benefit of the fishermen of the Bay.³⁴¹

The causes JEI supported were various, but it is clear that they focused particularly on medical causes and on relief from the suffering caused by the First World War. Louise Morgan's judgement that JEI was '[g]enerous and sympathetic in his own small circle', but 'lacking in broad humanitarian outlook'³⁴² is difficult to accept, in the light of JEI's demonstrable tendency to support medical causes outside his circle. When awarded the Companion of Honour in 1921, *The Times* recorded that the honour was bestowed, in part, for the 'public spirit' manifested by his benefactions:

*During the war, notwithstanding the calls upon him by his large business interests, his strong public spirit was constantly, though unostentatiously, displayed. He gave freely of his experience and counsel to the Ministry of Shipping and his services were much appreciated. He equipped and maintained the hospital which bore his name at St John's Lodge, Regent's Park.*³⁴³

In his will, JEI provided a number of charitable gifts to hospitals: the King Edward's Hospital Fund (£1,500),³⁴⁴ the Cancer Hospital (£1,000), London Hospital (£1,000), Charing Cross Hospital (£500), Westminster Hospital (£1,500), Middlesex Hospital (£1,000). In addition, JEI provided the trustees of his will with a power to appoint £1,500 per annum for twenty years to 'such Hospitals and other Charities or Charitable Funds in England[,] Scotland and Wales or elsewhere as they may from time to time select'.

In combination, JEI's known charitable gifts amounted to approximately £100,000 in his lifetime, although the amount could be considerably higher if anonymous and unpublicised gifts are included.³⁴⁵ This was not a form of systematic philanthropy, comparable to the Guinness Trust, founded in 1890 by Edward Guinness, Lord Iveagh, whose estate is often compared to JEI's as the largest ever in Britain at the time of his death. In November 1889, Guinness donated £200,000 to the Guinness Trust, which was devoted to providing affordable housing for 'working men'.³⁴⁶ JEI's philanthropy was *ad hoc* and personally managed, in lieu of a Trust or charitable committee for disbursement. The proposition advanced by JEI's defender in the letters page of *The Daily Express*, namely that JEI's payment of estate duty was equivalent to a form of philanthropy, may reflect JEI's thinking on the subject. It is possible that JEI believed systematic philanthropy was unnecessary, given the forthcoming redistribution of a significant proportion of his wealth by the incidence of the estate duty. However, two points require emphasis. First, avoiding the estate duty entirely was infeasible: although estate tax was described by its critics as a 'voluntary tax', reduced via gifts in advance of death, the scale and complexity of JEI's assets made avoidance of estate tax impracticable for a considerable proportion of his assets. Second, the Inland Revenue believed that JEI was engaged in reducing the duty payable by the use of offshore companies. In a report of 5 January 1935 on the avoidance of estate duty, the Revenue functionary O. W. Godwin noted that JEI had transferred considerable funds to Audley Estates Ltd., a company registered in Prince Edward Island, Canada, and which members of JEI's family controlled.³⁴⁷

Furthermore, there is evidence that JEI was engaged in tax avoidance beyond estate

planning. As Peter Scott has found, ‘[t]ax avoidance was commonplace among Britain’s economic elite by the late 1920s, but a small proportion of business millionaires developed it to a level where they could avoid a large proportion of their tax liability, mainly via transmuted income into capital gains (which were not subject to income tax) and/or creating excessive depreciation allowances’:

Ellerman [sc. JEI] used the first method to avoid much of the taxation liabilities [sic] for himself and his companies. For example, in March 1927 Ellerman Lines Ltd returned 80 percent of the amount paid up on its deferred ordinary shares, capitalized £1,600,000 of its undivided profits, then called up the shares again — applying the capitalized profits in payment of the call (all on the same day). This manoeuvre — essentially distributing profits to shareholders as capital gains — netted £1,443,520 of tax-free income³⁴⁸ for Ellerman personally, while use of the same device in October 1929 provided a further £500,000 (with Ellerman personally receiving £300,000). Ellerman’s Wilson Line also used this ruse to distribute £1,900,000 in 1925, £1,140,000 in 1927, £150,000 in 1929, tax-free. The 1929 Companies Act required such payments to be sanctioned by the courts, but in 1933 Ellerman Lines Ltd had no difficulty gaining court sanction for further capital repayments of £3,270,000.³⁴⁹

The conceit that JEI viewed tax as a species of philanthropy is harder to accept in the light of these strategies for tax avoidance. As Taylor has observed, credibly, although without cited authority, JEI ‘employed every legitimate measure to outwit the predators of Somerset House, as he was inclined to call the tax authorities, of whom he saw a great deal’.³⁵⁰

In 2006, a letter writer to *The Daily Telegraph* recalled the following anecdote: ‘Sir John Ellerman used [...] occasionally to stay at the Anglesey Arms Hotel in Menai Bridge. It was said that he and his wife would enter the hotel lounge, sit down and order “a pot of tea for one please, and two cups”’.³⁵¹ There is no reason to doubt that JEI was capable of parsimony, but he was not obviously averse to charity. The difficulty is how one interprets the extent of his giving in proportion to his means. In his memoir, Robert McAlmon recalled a conversation with Wyndham Lewis, in which Lewis ‘mentioned a man who was the son of one of Sir John’s shipping-line managers. “He says that Sir John hasn’t a friend in the city [sic], he’s so hard about money”’. McAlmon took exception to this claim: ‘I was irritated. That wasn’t right. [...] He [sc. JEI] gave out quantities of money, and he didn’t go in for the snobbishness of public philanthropies or endowing artists or institutions’.³⁵² This judgement was fair to JEI, but it is important to emphasise that JEI’s known philanthropy places him among the lesser rank of charitable donors in the early twentieth century, including figures with considerably less wealth than Guinness. It is evident that JEI took considerable pains to ensure that the vast majority of his wealth was transmitted not to charity but to JEII. In proportion to his means, his known giving was limited; arguably, it was trivial. Yet he was a taxpayer nonpareil, who possibly considered this burden enough to discharge any serious obligations to philanthropy.

Outside his gifts to charities, it is clear from the published recollections of Bryher that JEI was solicitous of the welfare of his employees. Shortly before his death, when advised to

rest by his physicians, JEI responded: ‘How can I?’ ‘[W]e are still in the aftermath of war and if I retire now, hundreds might lose their jobs’.³⁵³ In his will, JEI provided £12,500 for a trust for the benefit of ‘necessitous persons formerly employed in shipping lines and their Widows or other Dependents’, to which the codicil to his will added £15,000, to supplement a fund created separately by Ellerman Lines. There can be no doubt that JEI was concerned for the livelihood of personnel in his household or wider employment: his will provides pecuniary gifts to specific employees of his companies, his chauffeurs and household servants, and one month’s wages, plus twenty-five percent, to every officer and engineer of fourteen years’ service in his shipping companies. Moreover, it is clear that he gave the matter considered attention, since he adjusted the gifts in his codicil to ensure that the effects of the devaluation of the pound, following Britain leaving the gold standard in September 1931, would not unduly diminish the amounts bequeathed. As we note below (II.9), Bryher would associate her father’s philanthropy with a form of Victorian paternalism, in which a munificent industrialist is better positioned to distribute the profits of his enterprise than a state which has appropriated the sums through taxation.

In different ways, Bryher and JEII would follow their father’s example in applying a portion of their wealth to charitable causes. But their lives, as we will see, were remarkably different to JEI’s — and to each other’s.

ANNIE WINIFRED ELLERMAN (BRYHER) (1894–1983)

JEI and Hannah Glover's first child was born on 2 September 1894 in Margate, Kent.³⁵⁴ Her first names at birth were Annie Winifred, but she is now known primarily by the name Bryher, which she used as a pen name in her publications, her correspondence, and in legal documents throughout her life. In 1948, she changed her name by deed poll to Mrs. Winifred Bryher.³⁵⁵ While we refer to her as 'Bryher' on this basis, she would remain 'Winifred' to members of her family, and to those who knew her as a young child.³⁵⁶

1 Archive

A considerable proportion of what we know of Bryher's life is owed to her autobiographical publications, *The Heart to Artemis: A Writer's Memoirs* (1962) and *The Days of Mars: A Memoir, 1940–1946* (1972), as well as her careful preservation of personal correspondence and family papers. Today, Bryher's papers are held in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, and by members of her adopted daughter Perdita Schaffner's family. However, a significant volume of material is held in libraries and archives across the world, where many of Bryher's notable correspondents have deposited their incoming letters. Contrast this with the surviving papers of Bryher's father, JEI, and her only sibling, JEII, who either personally oversaw the destruction of their incoming private correspondence — and any retained drafts of their outgoing private correspondence — or whose associates did so, presumably out of sympathy for the pair's confided preferences.

Bryher's tendencies were the exact opposite: Yale preserves 24 linear meters of her papers, which includes a small collection of material belonging to her father, her mother, her grandparents, and other relatives.³⁵⁷ The survival of material in other repositories testifies to Bryher's extraordinary range of friends and acquaintances during her lifetime, including many luminaries of twentieth-century literature, film, and the arts: James Joyce (1882–1941), Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), André Gide (1869–1951), T. S. Eliot (1888–1965), to name only a few. Bryher's connection to these individuals stemmed, in part, from her activities as a philanthropist and literary patron. However, she was creative in her own right — as a journalist, poet, novelist, critic, and filmmaker — and her daily interactions were deeply embedded in creative milieux. Moreover, her decades-long relationship with the American poet Hilda Doolittle (1886–1961), known by the pen name H. D., ensured that Bryher remained at the centre of the Anglo-American literary world for most of her adult life. Although Bryher has eluded sustained biographical treatment, her links to this world are increasingly accessible to scholarship following the publication of her correspondence with Marianne Moore (1887–1972), Norman Douglas (1868–1952), Sylvia Beach (1887–1962), and H. D. herself.³⁵⁸

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH
(6 & 7 Wm. IV., cap. 86.)

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE,
SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON.

The sum of two shillings and sixpence, exclusive of Inland Revenue Stamp (54 & 55 Vict., c. 39, of one penny), is payable for every certified copy of an entry of birth, marriage or death, in addition to any fee that may be required to be paid for a search in the indices to enable the entry to be traced. 5 & 7 Wm. IV., c. 86, s. 33.

Application Number S.2/1203/46

REGISTRATION DISTRICT *Thanet*
BIRTH in the Sub-District of *Margate* in the County of *Kent*

No.	When and Where Born.	Name, if any.	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Full Name of Informant if different from that of Birth.
12.	<i>Second September 1894 Margate Villa Harold Road N. S. 15.</i>	<i>Annie Winifred Ellerman</i>	<i>Girl</i>	<i>Hannah Glover</i>	<i>Glover</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>H. Glover Mother 53. Upper Bedford Place Bloomsbury London</i>	<i>2 September 1894</i>	<i>A. B. Pilcher</i>	<i>Registrar</i>

CERTIFIED to be a true Copy of an Entry in the Certified Copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 18th day of February, 1946.

B 44055

This Certificate is given in pursuance of the Act 5 & 7 Wm. IV., c. 86, sec. 33 & 34.
Section 33 of the Act provides that "All Certified Copies of Births, marriages and Deaths, purporting to be issued or stamped with the Seal of the General Register Office, shall be received as evidence in the same, and shall be deemed to be true, unless the contrary is proved."
CAUTION—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars in this Certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to Prosecution.

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 147, f. 5032:
Bryher's birth
certificate

2 1894–1914

Bryher's early life has been described as 'sequestered'.³⁵⁹ JEI and Hannah Glover were not married at the time of Bryher's birth, and JEI's name is absent from her birth certificate. Her illegitimacy, in combination with her father's aversion to press coverage, presumably lay behind the decision to shield Bryher from the spotlight. Bryher was educated by governesses at home, and by omnivorous self-directed reading, particularly the historical novels of G. A. Henty (1832–1902), whose *The Young Carthaginian, A Story of the Time of Hannibal* (1897), Bryher would later describe as a particular influence.³⁶⁰ Although Bryher was shuttled to various homes in England, and 'occasionally' to her aunt Ida Butlin at Edgbaston,³⁶¹ her early years were filled with a varied itinerary of international travel. Her first trip abroad was to the Paris Exhibition in 1900, a trip which she later recollected in the short essay *Paris 1900* (1938). The latter captured turn of the century Paris in a manner which Bryher's friend Walter Benjamin, author of the now better-known *Berlin Childhood Around 1900* (1950), found very affecting.³⁶² The family subsequently took a series of regular trips overseas. While the summers were dedicated to Switzerland, winters frequently saw Bryher and her parents range to Algeria (1905), Egypt (1903), France (1908–9), Italy (1901–7), and Spain (1905). Of these, Bryher was especially moved by Egypt. *The Heart of Artemis* conjures up a world of camels, bustling markets, and encounters with Bedouin who would all but disappear by the time of her return in 1923. Egypt also kindled Bryher's incipient fascination with languages, and she added to her facility in French, which her father had insisted she learn from a young age, an ability to 'chatter' in Arabic.³⁶³

Between 1910 and 1912, Bryher attended Queenwood School in Eastbourne, a girls' school. Her matriculation coincided closely with her mother's marriage to JEI, and with the birth of her only sibling, JEII, in December 1909. Her parents had declared that she 'had been allowed to run wild for too long'.³⁶⁴ Bryher disliked Queenwood; she was close with other alumnae from the school, but the experience of her time there was reportedly unpleasant:

Top left:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 114, f. 4018:
Bryher as a young girl
in Paris, 1900.



Bottom left:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 114, f. 4018:
Bryher, 1912,
inscribed 'self in bad
temper'.



Top right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 114, f. 4018:
Undated photo of
Bryher, inscribed
'Norway, aboard The
City of Vienna'.



Bottom right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 102, f. 3694:
Undated photo of
Bryher and her
mother in Algeria.



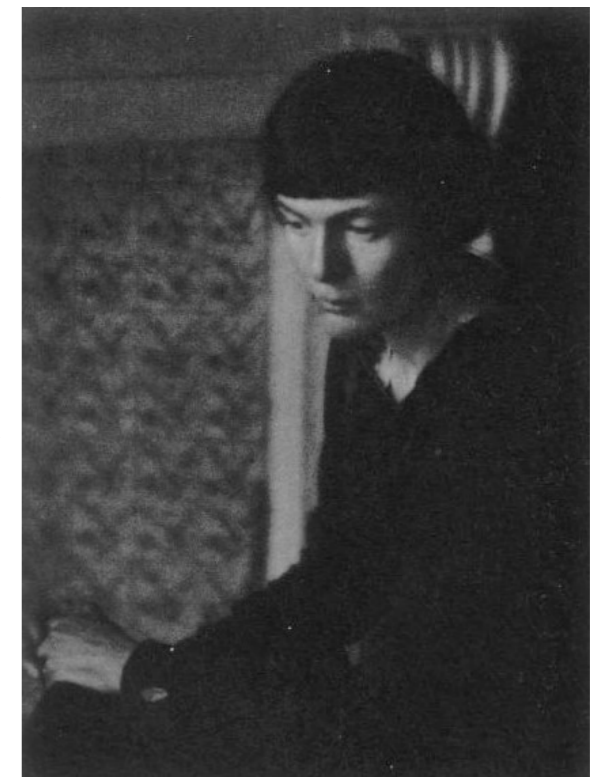
'The experience could have driven me to insanity or suicide and it was as crippling for a time as a paralytic stroke'.³⁶⁵ Her first novel *Development* contained a thinly-veiled autobiographical account of her time there, with Queenwood fictionalised as 'Downwood'. The work's criticism of contemporary education, and especially the cramped formalism of girls' education, sparked a flurry of letters in the *Daily Mail* on its publication in 1920.³⁶⁶ Bryher would throughout her life continue to rail against the 'mental inertia caused by [...] average school instruction', countering it with a 'new education based upon understanding and sanity' that would encompass the use of film and the cinema.³⁶⁷ Nonetheless, to Queenwood she attributed 'two advantages, in view of our unsuspected future of wars and financial disaster'. First, she was 'hardened physically'. Second, she was made to acknowledge 'that the aim of life was service'.³⁶⁸

Bryher benefited differently from her time at Queenwood by her friendship with Doris Banfield (1895–1920), a classmate. From Bryher's own account, it was this friendship that prompted her first visit to the island of Bryher, in the Isles of Scilly, in 1911. This was the occasion which forged her connection to the islands, inspiring her subsequently to adopt the name 'Bryher' as her own. Bryher would spend six summers in the Isles, three before and three after the First World War. Later she would reflect that it was 'Scilly of all places and countries that holds my heart', in spite of a life of travel from Khyber to the Arctic.³⁶⁹ As Bryher put it in a letter of 1957 to Laurie Lee (1914–1997): 'my real home, I always feel, is in the Scillies, it is something against which there is no struggling possible'.³⁷⁰

3 1914–1926

Bryher initially expressed an interest in studying archaeology; she enrolled in the University of London, where she studied Arabic and Egyptian hieroglyphics. With the outbreak of the First World War, she quickly substituted archaeology for journalism and literature. In 1914, she tried to register as a land worker, but '[l]ittle attempt was made to recruit female labour until 1917', when she finally procured menial employment. 'I answered the telephone and did odd jobs, my chief task seemed to be carrying heavy baskets of potatoes up a rather steep hill'.³⁷¹

In 1914, Bryher published her first collection of poetry, *Region of Lutany* (1914). She would later dismiss these 'bad verses', noting how an encounter with the poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898) convinced her that everything she had written was



Public domain: Photo
of H. D. by Man
Ray, circa 1917

Yale, Bryher Papers, b.
109, f. 3902–3908:
H. D. and Perdita, circa
1920–22.



H. D. and Amy Lowell (1874–1925). Bryher later described her rapturous encounter with the collection: ‘I felt the approach of another age [...] imagist poetry made me drunk with joy’.³⁷³ In 1917, Bryher reviewed Lowell’s *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917), ‘incoherent with enthusiasm’,³⁷⁴ and wrote to Lowell for the first time, inaugurating what would become a frequent practice of writing to authors whose books or poems she admired.³⁷⁵ Lowell’s response contributed to a rapid broadening of Bryher’s literary horizons. Lowell turned her towards the work of Dorothy Richardson (1873–1957), whose *Pointed Roofs* (1915), the first in a series of thirteen novels under the collected title *Pilgrimage*, would strongly influence Bryher’s own early fiction. In 1918, Bryher published a pamphlet, *Amy Lowell: A Critical Appreciation*, in which she championed Lowell’s work.³⁷⁶ In the same year, Bryher translated Bion of Smyrna’s *Lament for Adonis* from Greek (a poem dating to circa 100 BCE).

It was through Lowell that Bryher first became acquainted with H. D.. Lowell sent Bryher a copy of H. D.’s collection of poetry, *Sea Garden* (1916), whose verses Bryher learned ‘by heart from cover to cover’. This encounter unwound in a series of serendipitous ways. Bryher was initially unaware of H. D.’s identity, discovering — only some months later and from Lowell’s *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917) — that H. D. was ‘a woman and an American’.³⁷⁷ Bryher soon learned more from her other literary connections. Clement Shorter informed Bryher that H. D. was then staying in Cornwall at a cottage owned by Cecil Gray (1895–1951).³⁷⁸ This happened to be near where Bryher and Banfield were intending to spend the summer. Bryher’s first meeting with H. D. would occur on 17 July 1918, an encounter memorialised in Bryher’s fiction and autobiographical writing, and later observed by the pair as their ‘anniversary’.

The following two years were marked by an intense association with H. D., who became Bryher’s lover and companion. The relationship was plunged immediately into a crisis,

‘meaningless’.³⁷² The publication of *Region of Lutany* was financed privately by JEI. He helped facilitate Bryher’s entry into literary London, placing her in contact with Clement Shorter, editor of *The Sphere*, who in turn introduced her to A. A. Baumann (1856–1936), editor of *The Saturday Review*, for which Bryher would serve fitfully as a book reviewer.

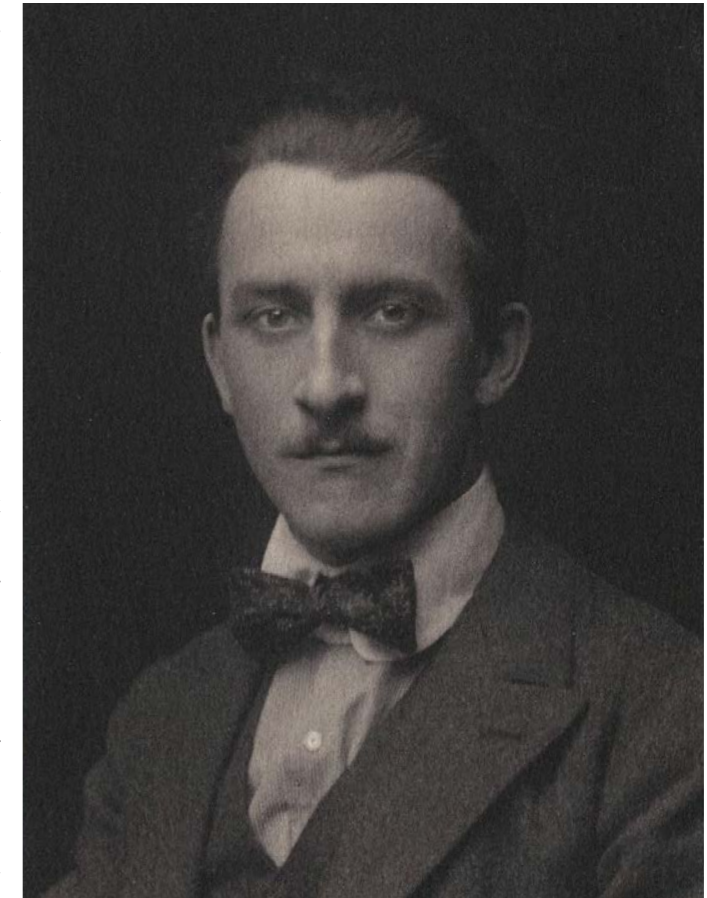
This period was marked by Bryher’s first acquaintance with the poetic school of ‘imagism’, which was associated particularly with an anthology of 1914, *Des Imagistes*, edited by Ezra Pound (1885–1972).

The publication included poems by

when H. D. contracted influenza during the pandemic of 1919, while pregnant with her daughter Perdita, whose paternity was disclaimed by H. D.’s estranged English husband Richard Aldington, the poet and literary factotum.³⁷⁹ Aside from a brief period in Cornwall and the Scillies in June and July, Bryher and H. D. spent much of this time in London. The period was marked by Bryher’s encounter, potentially at H. D.’s suggestion, with the sexologist Havelock Ellis (1859–1939), who had published his six-volume *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* between 1900 and 1910. Ellis was important to Bryher in at least two ways. First, he was responsible for introducing Bryher to psychoanalysis. Second, their meeting led Bryher to articulate aspects of her gender identity, and especially — as she later outlined to H. D. in a lengthy letter — her long-held sense that she should have been born a boy: ‘We agreed it was most unfair for it to happen, but apparently I am quite justified in pleading I ought to be a boy,— I am just a girl by accident’.³⁸⁰ Ellis would accompany both Bryher and H. D. on a trip to Greece in early 1920.

In late August 1920, Bryher and H. D. travelled to the United States. On arriving in New York, Bryher published *Development* (1920), the first of three semi-autobiographical novels, and edited a volume of the poetry of Marianne Moore. In New York, Bryher also met Robert Menzies McAlmon, an aspiring American writer. McAlmon had founded *Contact* magazine, in 1920, with the poet William Carlos Williams (1883–1963), a friend of H. D.. *Contact* brought McAlmon into Bryher’s orbit. The magazine — which appeared in four issues between 1920 and 1921 — published work by H. D., among many future luminaries of American poetry. Bryher corresponded with McAlmon during her travels with H. D. to California. She proposed to him in February 1921, and they married in March.³⁸¹

This decision to marry McAlmon struck many of Bryher’s acquaintances as a puzzling choice, given her relationship with H. D.. However, Bryher’s marriage to McAlmon was one of ‘convenience’. She later recalled that ‘my family would leave me alone’ on account of this ostensible heterosexuality: ‘he [sc. McAlmon] would join me for occasional visits to my parents, but otherwise we would live strictly separate lives’.³⁸² Bryher later acknowledged that



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 113, f. 3979:
Undated photo of
Robert Menzies
McAlmon.

she and McAlmon never ‘felt the slightest attraction towards each other’.³⁸³

Bryher’s status as the daughter of JEI was still clouded in obscurity. On reporting her marriage announcement, *The New York Times* — drawing on the entry for JEI in *Burke’s Peerage*, which attributed to him only a son — recorded that Bryher was an imposter, holding herself out fraudulently as the child of the famed industrialist.³⁸⁴

Bryher acquired American citizenship with her marriage to McAlmon, a development which helped her realise a longstanding dream of living in the United States, a place that embodied the potential escape from the confined world of her youth and later teens in London. Writing to Lowell in November 1918, she had expressed her desire to ‘run away to America, live on what I earn myself, and have adventures’.³⁸⁵ The trip undercut some of these wilder illusions, and in her third semi-autobiographical novel *West* (1925), she observed that America ‘was going to be new, different’, but found it closer to ‘Victorian England grafted on to the cheap end of Nice’.³⁸⁶ This impression was far from a fixed view. Bryher would later recognise that she had ‘failed’ on her first visit, unable to ‘adapt my fantasy of America to its reality’.³⁸⁷ Her real appreciation of the country would come much later in a period of frequent stays that followed the Second World War.

In late February 1921, Bryher, H. D., Perdita, and McAlmon returned to London. McAlmon met JEI and Hannah Glover, and the meeting was apparently successful: H. D. reported to Amy Lowell that Bryher’s parents ‘forced upon the couple a whirl of parties and a cascade of gifts’.³⁸⁸ In McAlmon’s memoir, *Being Geniuses Together, 1920–1930* (1938), he described these events, and the Ellerman family, in memorably splenetic vignettes. As glimpses into the private world of the family in the 1920s, they are invaluable, if tendentious — we excerpt them above and below extensively (II.4, II.7).

During their time in London, Bryher and McAlmon resided at 1 South Audley Street, while H. D. was given an apartment in St. James’s Court. JEI offered McAlmon a number of editorial posts at the periodicals he controlled, including *The Sphere* and *Tatler*. But Bryher and McAlmon decided to relocate to Paris. In 1921, McAlmon founded Contact Editions, with Bryher’s financial support. The publishing house’s list of authors included Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961), Nathanael West (1903–1940), Ford Madox Ford (1873–1939), and Djuna Barnes (1892–1982). In 1922, Bryher published her next novel, *Arrow Music* (1922) and befriended Man Ray (1890–1976), the photographer, who reportedly was the first to teach her how to use a camera.³⁸⁹

Bryher was now part of the constellation of writers, poets, and artists who thronged early to mid-1920s Paris. Her letters from this time are filled with references to this vibrant world, as visits to the studios of Ray and Constantin Brâncuși (1876–1957) brushed up against lunches with James Joyce (1882–1941), dinners with Hemingway, and long evenings with Gertrude Stein (1874–1946) and her partner Alice Toklas (1877–1967).³⁹⁰ Bryher’s entry into these circles was eased by her considerable wealth, and the inclination, which she shared with her parents, to act as a patron. JEI provided McAlmon with an allowance and funded the growth of Contact by a substantial gift of £70,000. McAlmon distributed this money as subventions to struggling authors: Joyce, notably, benefited from a \$150 monthly stipend.³⁹¹

Hannah Glover herself, encouraged by Bryher, sent several cheques to the *avant-garde* American musician and composer George Antheil (1900–59), who was then living in a one-bedroom apartment above Sylvia Beach’s bookshop, Shakespeare and Co.³⁹²

Beach, in particular, would benefit from Bryher’s own patronage. The two were brought together by McAlmon, with Beach, in her memoirs, recording the ‘great day for Shakespeare and Company’ on which McAlmon brought in ‘a shy young English girl’ with eyes ‘bluer than the sea or sky or even the Blue Grotto in Capri’.³⁹³ This initial meeting began a great friendship between Bryher and Beach. Beach and her then partner Adrienne Monnier (1892–1955) maintained a regular correspondence with Bryher, and they would frequently visit each other between 1925 and 1962. In addition to sending regular gifts to Beach and Monnier every Christmas, Bryher stepped in when Shakespeare and Co. faced considerable financial difficulties in the later 1930s. Beach warmly embraced Bryher’s help, thanking her in effusive terms for being such a ‘wonderful fairy godmother’.³⁹⁴ She would later observe that Bryher ‘has done more than anyone knows [...] to keep together her large family of intellectuals, who are dispersed in many countries. She has looked after them in war and peace’.³⁹⁵

Shakespeare and Co. would receive other benefits from Bryher and her family. Hannah Glover donated a small bust of William Shakespeare, which graced the mantelpiece until the store’s closure.³⁹⁶ Bryher herself contributed directly to the organisation of the shop. As much as it was a bookstore, it functioned concurrently as a meeting place and sorting office for many of the literary expatriates in 1920s Paris, including as an address for receiving mail. Having apparently seen customers search haphazardly through piles of unsorted mail, Bryher took action, providing a large letterbox for the store. In addition to an array of alphabetically-ordered pigeonholes this also included three larger compartments, one for McAlmon, one for Bryher, and a third for Joyce.³⁹⁷

Bryher’s gift was more than merely a thoughtful offering to a newly-dear friend, since it facilitated and enabled her to preserve the outward impression that she lived with McAlmon. Bryher was not enamoured with Paris, with her general dislike of cities compounded by her aversion to the ‘intolerably dull’ places McAlmon preferred to visit.³⁹⁸ Instead, from 1921 and for much of the 1920s, Bryher and H. D. resided in Territet, Switzerland, where they



Tate, Bryher Papers, b. 113, f. 3979: Undated photo of Bryher, inscribed ‘Passport, London?’

Yale, MSS 899, b. 1:
Extract of Bryher's
journal of visit to
Egypt, 1923.

January 18th left Florence
for Rome. Comfortable
journey. Tea on train.
Hotel Continental.

January 19th Drive on
Pincio. Very cold. Winter
roses. Lunch at hotel.
Train to Naples.

January 20th Escalvier.
Walk in afternoon.
Tortoiseshell. Tea at
Miss Middleton's tea shop.

January 21st Museums.
Aquarium. Storm
views up. Rain.

rented an apartment in a lakeside complex known as 'Riant Château'.³⁹⁹ Beach played a key role in maintaining the illusion that Bryher was present in Paris by providing Bryher's letters with a Paris postmark. The residence in Territet also offered Bryher ready financial benefits, chief among them — albeit dependent on her being absent from Britain for nine months per year — exemption from supertax.⁴⁰⁰

From their base in Switzerland, Bryher travelled widely with H. D. between 1922 and 1927: to Egypt, Turkey, and Italy. In addition to visiting new locations together, these voyages also provided the occasion for the pair to meet correspondents they had previously encountered only in epistolary form, foremost among them the Austrian-born British writer Norman Douglas. Bryher and H. D.'s open relationship continued throughout this time, but it was on occasion strained by Bryher's 'insistent watchdogery'.⁴⁰¹ As a solution to this potential issue, and to allow each their own space when it was required, from 1925 Bryher paid for a seven-year lease for a flat at 169 Sloane Street, London.⁴⁰² These years also saw Bryher continue her own efforts at writing, both fiction and non-fiction. In 1923, she published her second semi-autobiographical novel, *Two Selves* (1923), which continued the narrative of *Development*. In 1925, and in addition to *West*, Bryher authored *A Picture Geography for Little Children*, with illustrations of Asia.

4 1927–1940

Bryher and McAlmon's divorce in June 1927 was followed by Bryher's marriage in September of the same year to H. D.'s lover, Kenneth Macpherson, a Scottish-born novelist. The marriage permitted H. D., who was then still married to Richard Aldington,

to continue her affair with Macpherson, whom she had met in 1926. The encounter between JEI and Macpherson was frostier than the former's meeting with McAlmon. As Macpherson recalled, in his own memoir: 'One was really trying to communicate with the Ice Cap. I decided he was a sort of [...] precision instrument, a full-time solitary chess game. [...] I accepted that John thought little of me'.⁴⁰³

Bryher's marriage to Macpherson facilitated her re-acquisition of British citizenship — which she had lost on her marriage to McAlmon — and it allowed her to adopt Perdita in 1928, pre-empting the possibility of H. D. losing custody of Perdita in any eventual divorce from Aldington, who would have been considered her father by law.⁴⁰⁴ The new triangular relationship was based in Switzerland from this period on, with H.D. memorably writing to Ellis that '[t]he Macphersons are almost MYSELF, we seem to be a composite beast with three faces'.⁴⁰⁵ The trio — who referred to each other by their animal nicknames, 'Fido' (Bryher), 'Kat' (H. D.), and 'Dog' or 'Rover' (Macpherson) — would eventually establish a permanent residence in Vaud, at a home Bryher constructed above Lake Geneva. The home — designed by the architect and set designer Alexander Ferenczy (1895–1931) in a Bauhaus style — was completed by September 1931 and named Kenwin, a portmanteau of Macpherson and Bryher's first names, following a suggestion by JEI himself. Kenwin was soon filled with a small collection of exotic animals, which included monkeys and tiger cubs among its inmates. The Bryher-Macpherson-H. D. ménage-a-trois would be put under considerable strain in the early 1930s, particularly following Macpherson's homosexual relationship with a

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 112, f. 3948:
Kenneth Macpherson
in Iceland, 1929.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 113, f. 3984–
3989: Kenneth
Macpherson, circa
1930–9.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 113, f. 3973:
Undated photos of
Kenwin.

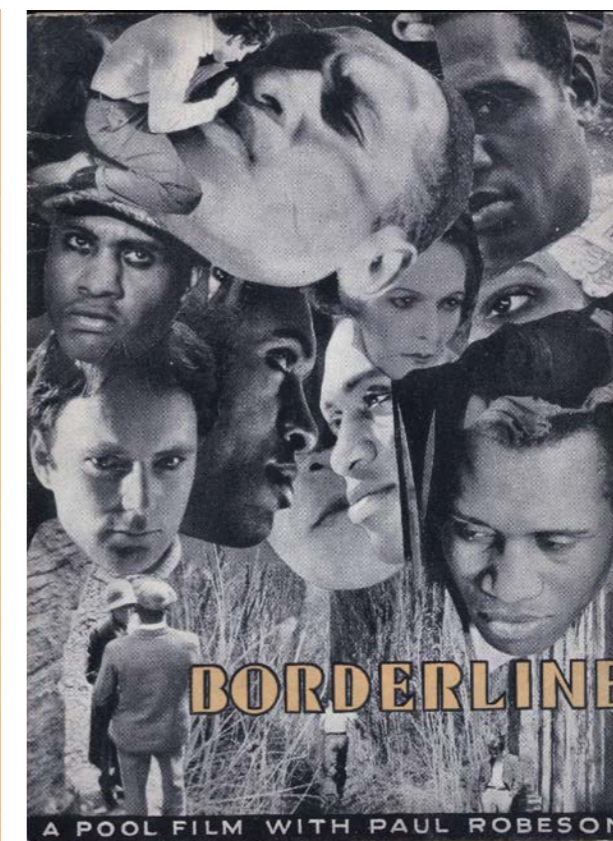
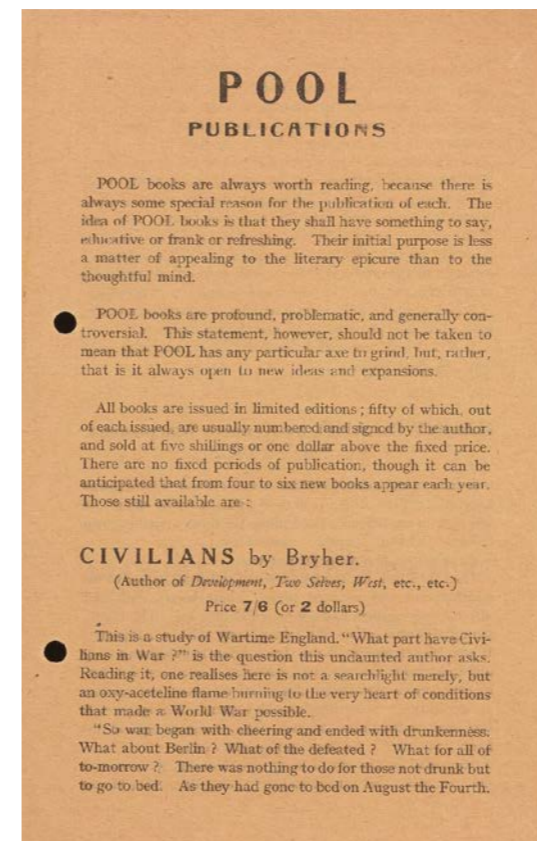
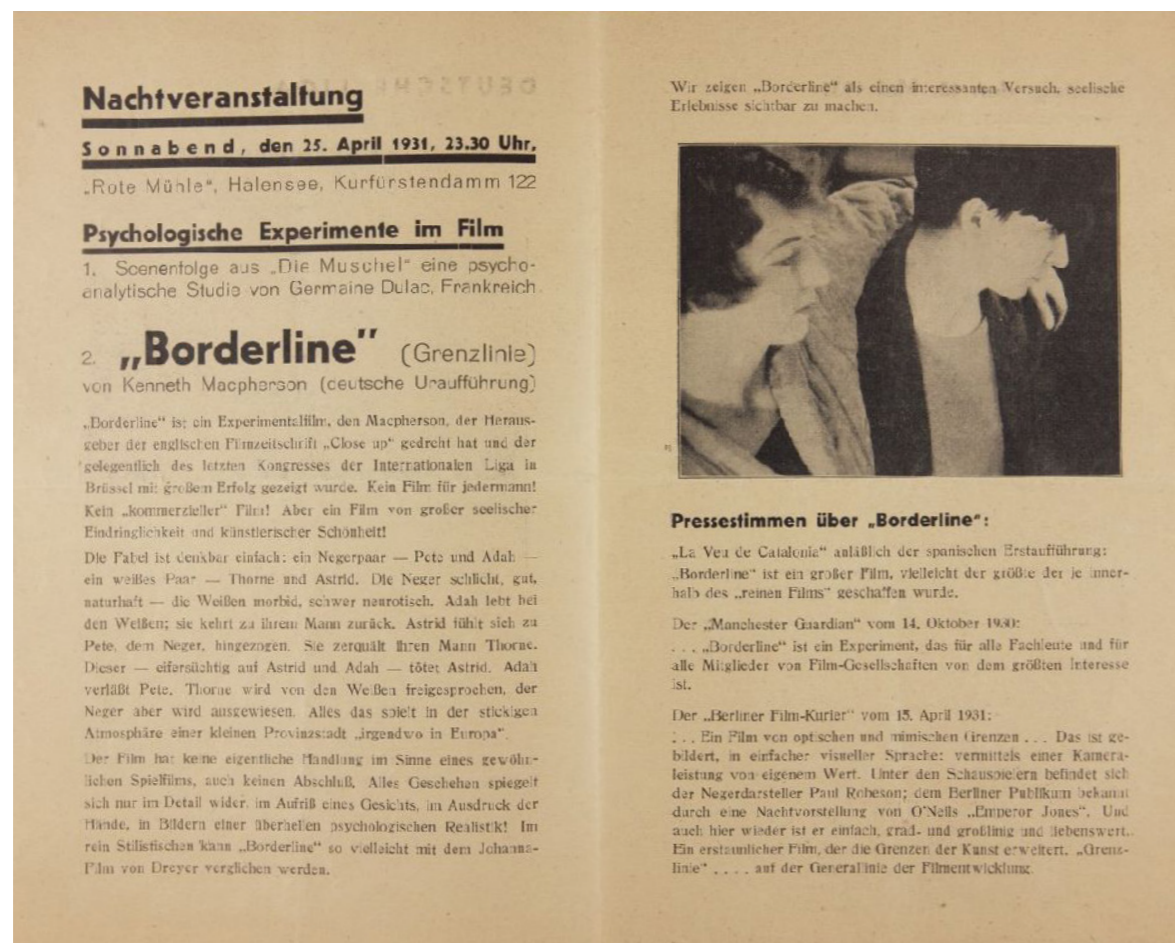


jazz musician in Monte Carlo in the summer of 1930,⁴⁰⁶ and Bryher's unsuccessful courtship of the Austrian Jewish actress Elisabeth Bergner (1897–1986).⁴⁰⁷

Nonetheless, their literary and artistic pursuits flourished. In particular, Bryher's interest in film developed during this period. She founded POOL Productions in 1927 and, the film periodical *Close Up*, the first English-language magazine devoted to the subject, which was issued continuously from July 1927 until December 1933. *Close Up* would publish articles by Upton Sinclair (1878–1968) and Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948), among several others. In 1929, Bryher herself authored a study of Soviet film making, *Film Problems of Soviet Russia*, which celebrated Eisenstein's work. She was also directly involved in the production of a small number of films: *Wing Beat* (1927), described in its advertisement as a 'free verse poem', *Foothills* (1929), a rhapsody on the Swiss landscape, and *Borderline* (1930), a critique of racial prejudice. Each film included H. D. and Bryher among its stars; their co-stars in *Borderline* were the social activist Paul Robeson (1898–1976) and his wife Eslanda (1895–1965).⁴⁰⁸

Bryher's interest in film was galvanised by her discovery of Weimar-era Berlin. She first travelled there in November 1927 at the suggestion of Robert Herring (1903–1975), then an assistant editor of *The London Mercury* and subsequently the film critic of the *Manchester Guardian*. Bryher's encounter with the city, and her subsequent views of it, mirrored her reaction to

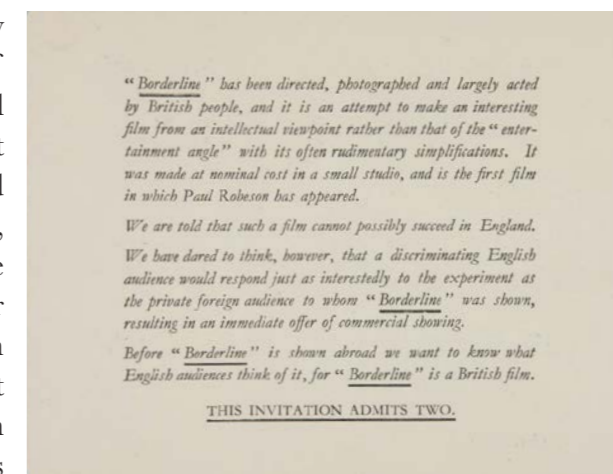
Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 168, f. 5631: Programme for screening of *Borderline*, Deutsche Liga für unabhängigen Film, 1931



Left: Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 170, f. 5679: POOL Publications Catalogue, circa 1927.

Right: Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 168, f. 5632: Borderline Poster.

America. In contemporary letters, dating to her arrival in the city, she expressed considerable ambivalence, regretting that, while Macpherson seemed to like the city 'more and more', she did not 'click' with it, despite every 'logical law that [she] ought to'.⁴⁰⁹ This tepid initial impression was soon discarded. By the time she composed *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher would claim that she 'fell in love with [Berlin] [...] at once to [her] own amazement'.⁴¹⁰ Berlin, she noted, was 'raw, dangerous, and explosive', containing something 'very brittle and snapt up and electric' in contrast to 'traditional cities' like London or Vienna.⁴¹¹ The city opened up for Bryher a new world of film-making and artistic and architectural experimentation. Especially important was the chance to meet directors who had first fixed her attention on the medium, and above all G. W. Pabst (1885–1967), the Austrian pioneer of new realism.⁴¹² Bryher had seen Pabst's *Joyless Street* in Montreux in 1925, and she later attributed her interest in film-making to this experience.⁴¹³ In regularly visiting the city in the four years



Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 168, f. 5636: Invitation to a screening of 'Borderline', 1930.

following 1928, Bryher became increasingly knowledgeable of the German language and culture in Germany. She took responsibility for writing on German film for *Close Up*, while also co-authoring a textbook for learning German, *The Lighthearted Student* (1930).

Berlin was also the site of Bryher's most significant single engagement with psychoanalysis. Once more, Pabst played a crucial, if in this case largely coincidental, role. Bryher had been aware of psychoanalysis since her meeting with Havelock Ellis in the late 1910s and she had thereafter subscribed to psychoanalytic journals. In 1927, Bryher had briefly visited Vienna, where she had the chance to meet Freud himself, enthralled by her account of the turbulent flight. It was through Pabst that Bryher met Hanns Sachs (1881–1947), a psychoanalyst who had trained with Freud in Vienna, and who formed part of Freud's inner circle. It was with Sachs that Bryher would launch an 'inquiry into the secrets of the mind', beginning — after a long correspondence — the analysis that she 'always felt to be the central point in [her] life'.⁴¹⁴ Until his departure for Boston in 1932, Bryher pursued analysis with Sachs both in Berlin, for the few months a year she was there, and in Switzerland, where Sachs took his analysands in the summer.⁴¹⁵

Bryher's experience with Sachs confirmed her unwavering commitment to psychoanalysis. As she commented in a letter to H.D., 'better to die a Freudian than live anything else'.⁴¹⁶ The letter was sent in 1933, a period in which H. D. herself was undergoing the first of two sustained periods of psychoanalysis with Freud in Vienna. This cemented the relationship

between Bryher and Freud, whom she deeply admired. In a letter to Macpherson of 1933, she described Freud as 'the most magnificent mind' she had ever encountered.⁴¹⁷ Such was the increasingly familiar relationship between Bryher, Freud, and H.D. that Freud held out hope that they might be able to accept into their home at Kenwin one of the puppies of his beloved chow, Yofi. Finally, Freud's daughter, Anna Freud (1895–1982), was for a time Bryher's close acquaintance, until their apparent falling out in 1938.⁴¹⁸

By the early to mid-1930s, Bryher was increasingly enmeshed in psychoanalytic circles. This included patronage of psychoanalytic research and training. She subsidised the publication of *The Psychoanalytic Review* and provided funds for the establishment of a Hanns Sachs Training Fund, from September 1933, to support the training of lay analysts.⁴¹⁹ In

1934, she accompanied Sachs to Lucerne, where they attended the thirteenth International Psycho-Analytical Congress. This devoted involvement stemmed partly from Bryher's own desire to become a lay analyst or, in her and H. D.'s vernacular, obtain a 'dog collar'. This was ultimately frustrated, it seems, on the grounds that she was unwilling to move permanently to either Boston or Vienna in order to carry out two control analyses.⁴²⁰ She was ultimately denied a lay analysis licence from the Boston Psychoanalytic Society in 1938.

Two years earlier, in a letter to the psychoanalyst Walter Schmideberg (1890–1954), Bryher observed of her inclination to train as a psychoanalyst: 'I never could have kept the rules, not even Freudian ones[.] I should have wanted to make experiments'.⁴²¹ Convinced of the life-altering value of psychoanalysis, to which she would also attribute her ability to endure the Second World War, Bryher would encourage others from her circle to undertake analysis, among them Macpherson (initially unwilling, but later grateful), Herring, and Silvia Dobson (1908–1994).⁴²²

In Berlin, London, and Vienna, Bryher was increasingly alarmed by deteriorating political conditions. She had encountered fascism as early as the autumn of 1923, when, in the company of Norman Douglas, she had watched 'rank upon rank of Blackshirts' cross the Piazza della Signoria in Florence, commemorating Mussolini's March on Rome.⁴²³ By 1931, she was pessimistic regarding the political situation, above all the prominence of 'race feeling' in Germany. Together with Sachs's impending departure for his own safety, this premonition marked her last visit to Berlin for nearly thirty years.⁴²⁴ In England and Austria, developments were just as concerning. In the former, especially in the summer of 1933, members of her family and their close associates were preparing for a potential war with Germany. Thoby Prinsep, who would soon take over management of Ellerman Lines, and John Todd, Bryher's cousin, predicted conflict. JEI, 'terrified' at the prospect, planned to flee to America or Norway.⁴²⁵ While undergoing her analysis with Freud in Vienna, H. D. came even closer to violence, being stuck on a tram at the centre of a suspected bomb attack, and witnessing first-hand the effects of Nazi terrorism.⁴²⁶

Bryher responded to these developments in various ways. In part, she redirected her literary efforts and patronage from their focus on film towards direct comment contemporary on political and cultural concerns. In June 1933, and inspired by Emile Zola's pamphlet *J'Accuse!*, she published an article in *Close Up*, reporting on the use of concentration camps in Germany: 'I cannot understand how any person anywhere who professed to the slightest belief in ethics could stand aside at such a moment'.⁴²⁷

This period of Bryher's life was marked by the sudden death of JEI. This event altered Hannah Glover's life permanently. As Bryher observed, her mother 'never recovered from the shock but had six long, and I fear, unhappy years before she could join him'. In the aftermath of this personal tragedy, Bryher continued to invest her time and energy in literary and philanthropic projects. One of these came in publishing, where, following the discontinuation of *Close Up* in 1933, Bryher founded the Brendin Publishing Company. In addition to publishing limited editions of books, among them H. D.'s *The Hedgehog* (1936), Brendin would issue the literary periodical *Life and Letters To-day: An International Magazine*

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 115, b. 4045–6:
Hanns Sachs, circa
1929.



of *Living Letters*. This was the result of Bryher's purchase of the existing periodical *Life and Letters*. Brendin's *Life and Letters* would be edited by Dorothea Petrie Townshend (1895–1968), a friend from Queenwood,⁴²⁸ and Robert Herring.⁴²⁹ As the editors explained in the first issue, their ambition was to provide a haven for authors whose work struggled to find an outlet because of reservations about the work's commercial potential.⁴³⁰ This was Bryher's vision for the journal. As she explained, in a letter to Herring in May 1935, three months before the September launch, she wanted to promote genuine artists, developing 'the world of Eisentstein [sic] and Marianne Moore. Of Gertrude Stein [...] Brecht and the new American painting'.⁴³¹ This necessarily eclectic programme was adroitly captured by the first issue, which contained articles by Stein and Eisenstein, Havelock Ellis, André Gide, Steven Runciman (1903–2000), and Lotte Reiniger (1899–1981). The periodical's fight for the 'best qualities in this world' and the 'continuance of spiritual freedom' was impliedly anti-fascist, and the magazine's political sympathies would become increasingly apparent in the articles it published concerning the Spanish Civil War.⁴³²

As superintendent of *Life and Letters To-day*, Bryher's own personal involvement has at times been overlooked, even while her active involvement in every inch of the publication and its management is documented by the considerable correspondence between her and Herring. This also included a wide array of written submissions. While Sylvia Beach was initially disappointed not to have seen Bryher's name among those listed in the first issue's contents page, she could, upon reading it, have found Bryher's earliest contributions nestled in the review section.⁴³³ In the years that followed, Bryher reviewed multiple books per issue and serially published her short novel 'Manchester', a fictionalised account of her ill-fated pursuit of Elizabeth Bergner. Bryher would later come to lament the magazine's apparently limited cultural afterlife, lambasting its 'general boycott' by 'literary historians of the period'. Yet the periodical could boast many serious milestones: it published the first story by Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) translated into English and an early story by Franz Kafka (1883–1924).⁴³⁴ Judged by the standards of the time, *Life and Letters To-day* enjoyed considerable success: its first print run of 3,000 sold out, and after a few issues it no longer required a subsidy. In 1937, and under the auspices of Beach who acted as its distributor in France, it would be accorded a considerable place at the 1937 Paris Exhibition.⁴³⁵

Together with her editorial occupations, a second major project during the period of circa 1932–45 was Bryher's support of refugees from Nazism, particularly the Jewish communities of Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia. As noted above (II.4), Bryher appears to have believed that her father had descended from Central European Jews. Louise Morgan Theis (circa 1886–1964), the expatriate American journalist living in London, noted in a journal entry of 1933 that Bryher had identified her father's ancestry as 'Jewish': 'She told me many times that she felt greatly drawn towards the Jews and felt more Jewish than English'. Yet, Theis conceded, Bryher 'possibly may have made it up'.⁴³⁶ Gertrude Stein would describe Bryher as 'an ethical Jewess', possibly on the basis of Bryher's self-description.⁴³⁷ For his part, Ezra Pound dismissed her as a 'Jew-bitch', and her father as 'the most venomous variety' of Jew.⁴³⁸ In 1935, Bryher commissioned a genealogist to trace her family's history, in part to

determine whether her Ellerman ancestors were Jewish. As Kenneth Macpherson recorded in his memoir of Bryher: 'She told me she had hopefully searched the family tree in vain for Jewish ancestry'.⁴³⁹ The genealogist conveyed the findings that we noted earlier (I.2).⁴⁴⁰

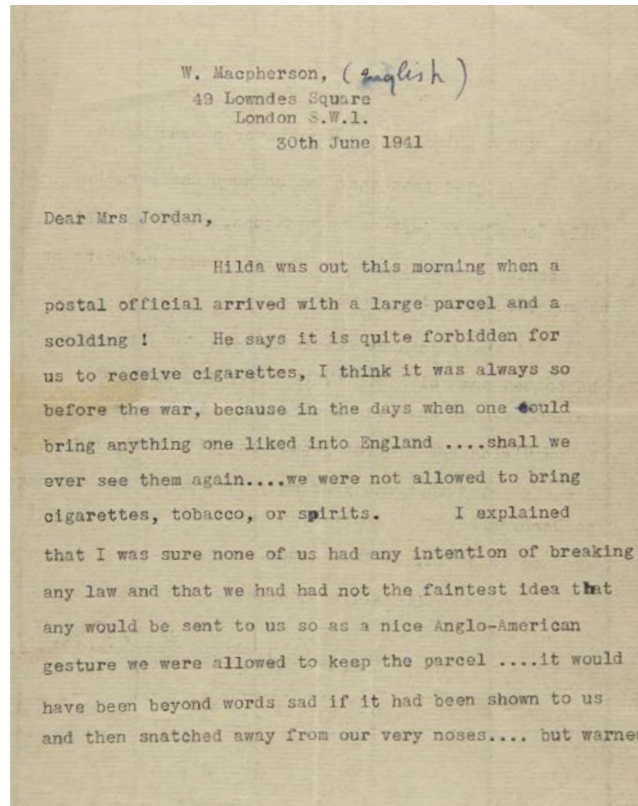
Bryher visited Prague and Vienna in this period 'several times', in order to 'interview applicants and bring out documents that they needed for their visas'. She smuggled visas enfolded 'in copies of the *Times*', a newspaper which was 'considered so pro-Nazi at that time that its readers were usually unmolested at the frontier'.⁴⁴¹ Bryher provided financial assistance, and accommodation at Kenwin, to approximately 100 refugees between 1933 and 1939. Some financial assistance was sent for distribution to Freud, who observed to H. D. that Bryher sent a cheque 'every other day' to some 'unfortunate'.⁴⁴² Bryher attempted to provide funds directly to Freud and his family, in case they should have to escape Vienna in an emergency. Freud politely declined her overtures, forwarding the funds instead to the 'Committee for Assistance to German Jews'.⁴⁴³ The writer Heinrich Mann (1871–1950), the elder brother of Thomas Mann (1875–1955), had earlier returned a cheque to Bryher in this same fashion, insisting that she help others less well off than himself.⁴⁴⁴ While Bryher feared at times for her own safety, she evidently relished her notoriety among the Nazi regime, writing to Macpherson in 1933: 'it is too wonderful [...] It is said I am on the proscribed list in the north. I am wagging my tail all but off'.⁴⁴⁵ In 1934, H.D. would warn Silvia Dobson not to mention Bryher's name while she visited Germany since she 'is on the black list for rescue work she did of Jews last winter and before'.⁴⁴⁶ Among the many refugees Bryher aided was the intellectual Walter Benjamin. Bryher first met Benjamin in Paris, in 1936, and supported him financially throughout 1938 and 1939, and until Benjamin's death by suicide, fleeing Nazism, in 1940. As Gisèle Freund (1908–2000) informed Benjamin in November 1939, there was still every hope for his escape while Bryher was attempting to 'move heaven and earth' to help him make it to the United States.⁴⁴⁷ In *The Days of Mars*, Bryher would recount that she had assumed Benjamin had successfully fled to safety to America, before discovering the truth from Arthur Koestler's (1905–1983) *Scum of the Earth* (1941), while browsing it in a bookshop near Hyde Park.⁴⁴⁸ The full details behind Bryher's activities in this period remain in comparative obscurity, as she destroyed her records pertaining to the activities in 1940, when faced with a potential German invasion of Switzerland.

5 1939–1961

1939 was marked by the deaths of three figures who had shaped the first half of Bryher's life. These included two men who had kindled her fascination with psychoanalysis: first, in July, Havelock Ellis, and then, in September, Freud, who had fled from Vienna to London. A week earlier, on 16 September, Hannah Glover died in Cornwall. For much of the 'phoney war' in this period, travel was nonetheless still possible, allowing Bryher, in December 1939, to meet friends in Paris and London, where she saw to her mother's affairs. She did not remain in England, going back instead to Kenwin before the expiration of her two-month Swiss re-entry permit in late January 1940. She would stay in Switzerland until September, furtively attempting to help as many refugees as possible until her own and difficult voyage back to London via Barcelona and Lisbon.

Left:
Yale, MSS 175,
b. 1, f. 3–5: Letter
from Bryher to Viola
Baxter Jordan,
1941.

Right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 103, f. 3736–
3775: Undated
photo of Bryher.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 114, f. 4023:
Undated photo of
Norman Holmes
Pearson.



As Bryher herself admitted in *The Days of Mars*, she did not have ‘a good war’ in England. This flowed, in part, from her long-standing opposition to appeasement. Her haranguing charge, ‘why didn’t you listen to me?’, alienated friends in England.⁴⁴⁹ Bryher voiced her opposition to appeasement routinely. In early 1940, she wrote to H. D.’s school friend Mary Herr that she blamed ‘the English government intensely for not having stopped Hitler before German rearmament became serious’.⁴⁵⁰

Bryher’s war was largely spent in London, where she lived with Perdita and H. D. on Lowndes Square, in what would eventually constitute the longest time she had lived together with H. D. in a single dwelling. The apartment played host to the ‘Lowndes Group’, an

assortment of figures who became Bryher’s and H. D.’s most constant companions during the war, including Edith Sitwell (1887–1964) and her brother Osbert (1892–1969), whom Bryher had known since 1932, as well as the writer and artist Dorothy Cole Henderson (d. 1961) and her husband Gerald (d. 1962), the librarian of St. Paul’s Cathedral. To these would be added, from 1943, Norman Holmes Pearson, the Yale scholar whom Bryher had first met in New York in 1937 and who, in 1943, moved to London to work for the OSS. Pearson played an important role in H. D. and Bryher’s lives in these years, notably by acting as an intermediary between the pair, who bristled while living together in close confines. Bryher herself would later pay considerable credit to Pearson’s influence in sparking her post-war interest in historical fiction.⁴⁵¹

Having failed to find anything especially useful to do for the war effort, Bryher preserved her morale by finding an outlet in the ‘most *useless* thing I could do’, namely learning Persian.⁴⁵² Inspired by Gerald Cole she indulged her interest in history, regularly visiting the London Library and, on occasion, traipsing around the city in an effort to locate the sites and imagine the sounds of Elizabethan London.⁴⁵³ Unlike H. D., who, much as she had been in 1914–1918, was determined to stay ‘inside the citadel’, Bryher was willing to seek solace away from London, enjoying the company of the Sitwells at Renishaw Hall in Derbyshire, and, in 1941, embarking on a difficult and somewhat fraught journey to see Faith (1878–1960) and Compton Mackenzie (1883–1972) on the island of Barra in the Outer Hebrides.⁴⁵⁴ Above all, Bryher spent time in Cornwall, where she stayed at the flower farm she had purchased for her school friend Doris Banfield. The summer weeks that Bryher stayed in the foxglove dotted Cornish landscape, escaping from the ‘battered streets and craters’, led her to feel that ‘[i]n actuality as well as in my mind I was living in two worlds’.⁴⁵⁵

Bryher lingered in London after the close of the conflict, partly waiting for a permit to return to Switzerland, partly owing to H. D.’s ill health.⁴⁵⁶ These two issues would be linked together: when the permit arrived, valid for only ten days, she left quickly in order to find H. D. a clinic in Switzerland, from where she was transferred in May 1946, relocating to Klinik Brunner in Kusnacht, near Zurich.⁴⁵⁷ Other members of their family left England too, with Perdita moving to the United States, where she would marry the literary agent John Valentine Schaffner in 1950.

Bryher would embrace the opportunity for travel in the period that followed the war. ‘It was almost my ideal of life’, she wrote in 1947, ‘flipping up and down all over continents’.⁴⁵⁸ That same year saw a trip to the West Indies with Herring and Schmideberg, and the next decade would see her enjoy trips to familiar haunts in England and Italy, and the inception of a regular series of visits to the United States, where she took the opportunity to see the Schaffners, Pearson, and Marianne Moore. The 1950s would also see her take on a series of even more ambitious overseas voyages. In 1954, together with Macpherson and his partner Islay de Courcy Lyons (1922–1993), she went to India and Pakistan, where she looked on with disapproval at the ‘Victorian remnants that still littered India’.⁴⁵⁹ In the summer of 1958, and after having ‘waited twenty five years’ for a permit, she fulfilled a lifetime ambition to go to Greenland: ‘The scenery was magnificent, mountains as high as the Alps, blue seas filled with

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 114, f. 4011:
Bryher in the Orkney
Islands, 1955.



icebergs of fantastic shapes'.⁴⁶⁰ In doing so, she evidently overcame her own earlier concerns: in 1951, in a typewritten letter to the archaeologist Thomas Charles Lethbridge (1901–1971), she noted her 'life long wish to go to Greenland', before adding, in blue ink, 'but now I am too old'.⁴⁶¹

Bryher was not peripatetic. From her home in Kenwin, she commenced a sustained period of writing her memoirs, alongside autobiographical and historical fiction. A number of these works took their immediate inspiration from the war years, such as *Beowulf* (1946), a fictionalised recollection of her experience of air raids during the war, and *The Fourteenth of October* (1952), a reckoning with what 'nearly happened' in 1940, in which the Normans — 'the Nazis of their time' — successfully conquered

a wealthy and cultured England before twisting history to their own ends.⁴⁶²

In other cases, the war rekindled her passion for longstanding concerns. The chief instance here was the novel *The Player's Boy* (1953), which told the story of James Sands, an apprentice who would have had a successful career on the Elizabethan stage, if he had been born only twenty years earlier. Sands had come to Bryher's attention during the Second World War, when — 'sniffing' along the shelves of a library — she came across T. W. Baldwin's *The Organisation and Personnel of the Shakespearean Company* (1927). It was as if a 'thunderbolt of Zeus struck', learning that Sands might, in his sole performance, have played Bellario, in John Fletcher's *Philaster* (circa 1608–10).⁴⁶³ The figure of Bellario, a character played by a 'girl page', had been one of Bryher's early obsessions, ever since she had come across William Hazlitt's lectures on Elizabethan literature in her father's library, aged fifteen.⁴⁶⁴ For Bryher, rather than merely reflecting how boys customarily played female parts on the era's stage, the 'girl page' — a boy dressed up as a girl who played a girl impersonating a boy — validated her own early desires regarding her gender identity. Bryher published a short essay on the subject in the *Fortnightly Review* in 1920, and she used examples of the trope elsewhere.⁴⁶⁵

A serendipitous discovery of a first folio of *Philaster* in the bookshop co-owned by the antiquarian bookseller Kenneth Maggs (1900–1959), spurred a further stretch of collecting rare books, many of which she passed on to scholars for their private use.⁴⁶⁶ This notably included a collection of manuscripts pertaining to the life of Sir Walter Raleigh (circa 1552–

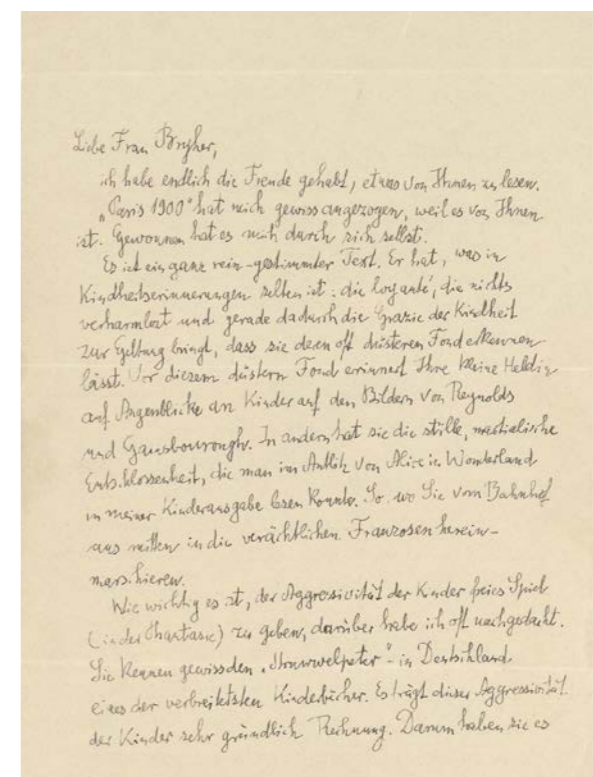
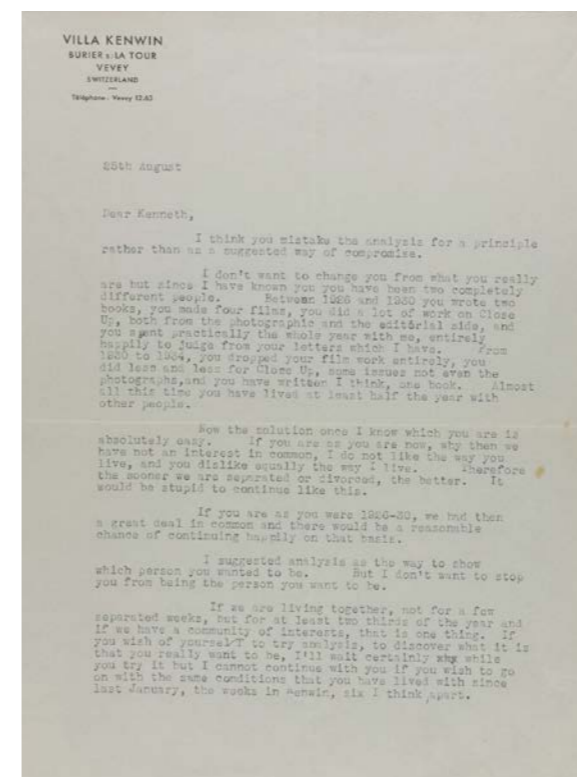
1618), whose 'poetry and life' had absorbed her.⁴⁶⁷ These would be presented to the editor of an anthology of his poetry, Agnes Latham (1905–1996).⁴⁶⁸ Edith Sitwell, meanwhile, was loaned an early Shakespeare folio, an edition of which was among many other late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century books subsequently presented to Yale University.⁴⁶⁹

In 1948, Bryher divorced Macpherson, who had moved to New York in 1940, and who rarely corresponded with her until 1952, when he moved to Capri, set up in a villa gifted to him by Bryher, the first of a series of such gifts of Italian property. Their exchanges, chronicling his life on the island and his travels with de Courcy Lyons, continued until his death in 1971. H. D. spent a considerable part of 1946–9 in a sanatorium in Küsnacht, at the Hotel Minerva in Lugano, and at the Hotel de la Paix in Lausanne, from where she wrote to Bryher almost daily. Her health declined significantly in these years; after a stroke and a heart attack, she died in October 1961.

6 1961–1983

Bryher's contemporaries were concerned for her following H. D.'s death. Alice Toklas commented to John Schaffner that '[i]t is impossible to believe in Bryher without H. D'.⁴⁷⁰ Yet Bryher's final two decades, which she spent for the most part at Kenwin, would prove to be remarkably productive. In the period that followed *The Player's Boy*, she wrote *Roman Wall* (1954), *Gate to the Sea* (1958), and *Ruan* (1960). In combination with her two autobiographies, she added a further series of historical novels: *The Coin of Carthage* (1963), *Visa for Avalon* (1965), *This January Tale* (1968), and *The Colors of Vaud* (1969).

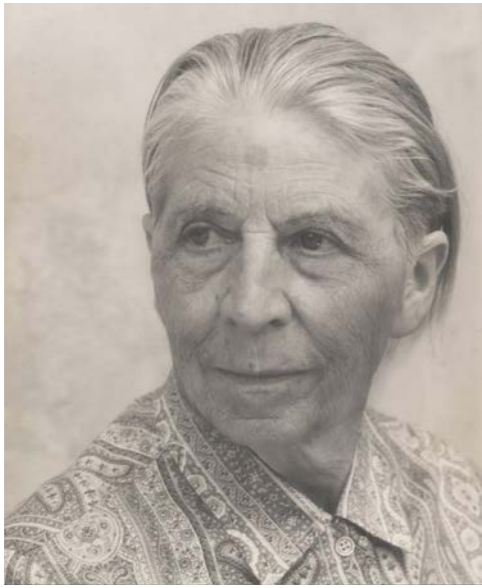
After H. D.'s death, Bryher also continued to make regular trips to New York to visit the



Left:
Yale, Bryher
Papers, b. 67, f.
2573–2593: Letter
from Bryher to
Kenneth Macpherson,
proposing divorce,
circa 1948.

Right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 3, f. 111:
Letter from Walter
Benjamin to Bryher,
1937.

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 105, f. 3784–
3790: Bryher, circa
1963–6.



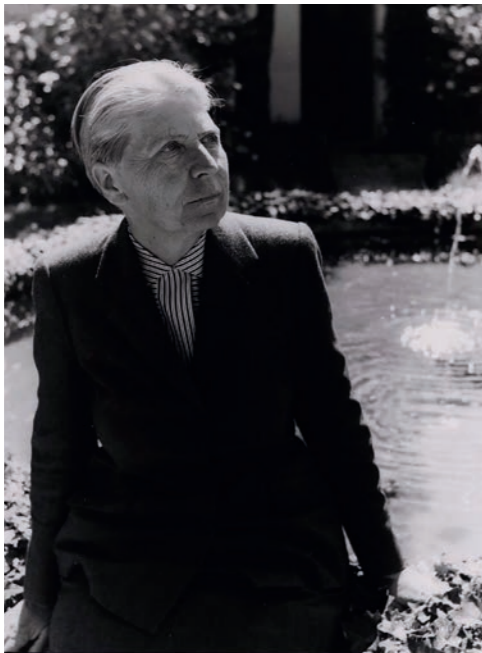
Schaffner family. Perdita and John had established their own business, the ‘John Schaffner Literary Agency’, and they would have four children in the decade between 1950 and 1960: Valentine, Nicholas, Elizabeth Bryher, and Timothy. Bryher considered ‘the children her own grandchildren’, and she contributed to their life and education, and funded some of their college tuition.⁴⁷¹ The Schaffner family would also come to possess Bryher’s circa eight-thousand volume library.⁴⁷²

Indefatigable her entire life, Bryher’s frenetic activities slowed in the 1970s. She died at Kenwin on 28 January 1983. Bryher’s obituary in *The Times* described her as a ‘distinctive historical novelist’, and commemorated her role in ‘helping Jewish refugees escape from Nazism’.⁴⁷³ Her obituary in *The Daily Telegraph* noted that she ‘shared the family shyness about public appearances’, but conceded that she was ‘nothing of a recluse’.⁴⁷⁴ Neither referred to her sexuality or her life with H. D. Bryher’s will, dated 20 November 1975, gave the majority of her estate to Perdita Schaffner and her children.⁴⁷⁵

7 Bryher and the Ellermans: JEI and Hannah Glover

Bryher described her own childhood as ‘above criticism’.⁴⁷⁶ Hannah Glover’s letters to Bryher, addressed ‘My dear Dolly’, are affectionate and familiar,⁴⁷⁷ and Bryher’s memoirs of her adult relationship with her parents is typically warm in its recollections. Yet the relationship was characterized by an awkward furtiveness around her private life. As we noted above (II.3), while residing with H. D. after 1922, Bryher used Sylvia Beach as an intermediary for correspondence with Hannah Glover: Beach would provide Bryher’s letters with a Paris postmark, to give the impression that Bryher was then residing with her ostensible husband, McAlmon.⁴⁷⁸ As Bryher later observed, the subterfuge ‘saved my parents a lot of anxiety’.⁴⁷⁹ In his own memoir, Kenneth Macpherson would describe a similar attempt

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 105, f. 3784–
3790: Bryher, circa
1963–6.



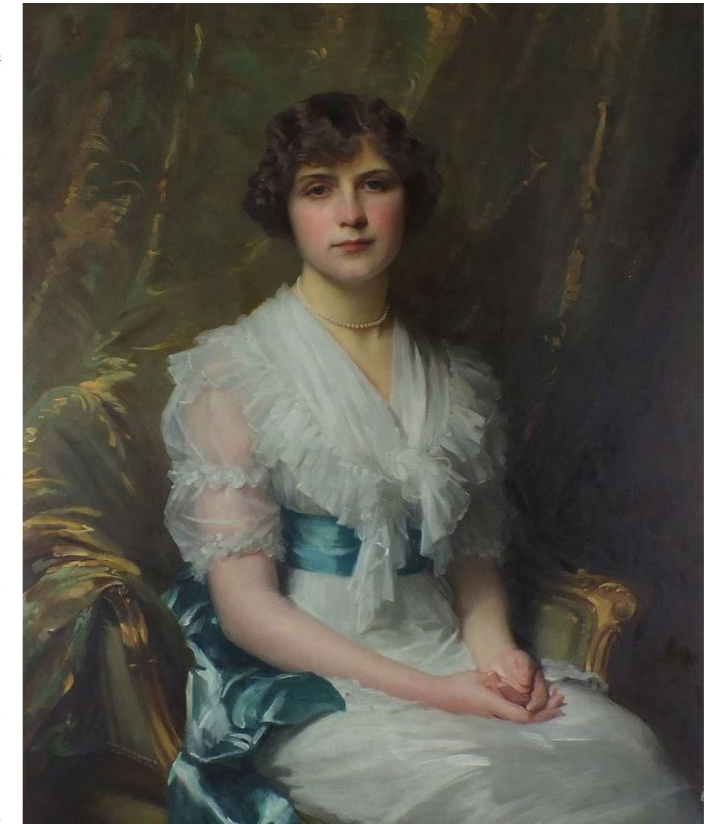
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 102, f. 3728–
3729: Undated
photo of Bryher and
Sylvia Beach.



at outward conformity: in 1928, attending the premiere of *Show Boat* with Macpherson and her parents, Bryher appeared in a dress purchased by her mother for the occasion, an item of clothing uncharacteristic of her usual attire. She arrived with the dress back to front and inside out, totally oblivious to her error.⁴⁸⁰ The portrait of Bryher by Sir Samuel Luke Fildes, RA embodies these parental expectations brightly. Recovered in 2015 from a Cornwall garage, and exhibited by Fildes at the Royal Academy in May 1915,⁴⁸¹ the portrait was believed by its owners to have originated with Glover’s estate.⁴⁸² In his memoir, Macpherson recalled the portrait, a ‘preposterous piece of trash’, embarrassing Bryher when he encountered it at 1 South Audley Street: ‘Her only comment, quite sufficient, when I mentioned the painting, was: “Don’t.”’⁴⁸³

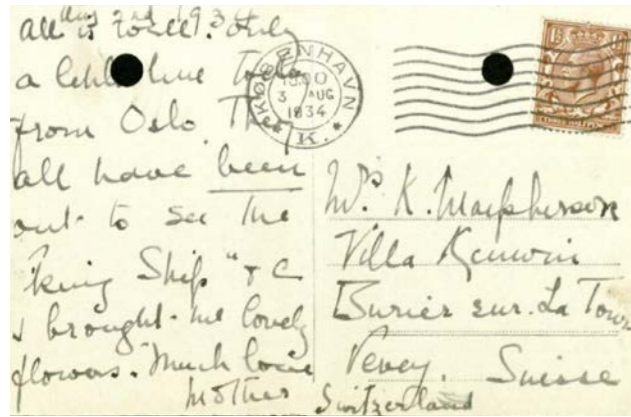
Bryher’s closest friends were evidently exposed to confided judgements about her parents. Louise Morgan Theis would recall in 1933 that Bryher ‘used to tell me how “abnormal” and queer and unlike other people her father and mother were’.⁴⁸⁴ McAlmon’s memoir is the most significant repository of these confidences. McAlmon notes that Bryher ‘warned him’ before their visit that the family home was ‘a stuffy old museum’. He observes, in apparent paraphrase of Bryher’s wording, that Bryher’s childhood ‘had been unfree’: ‘[s]he had never been allowed proper pets or friendships’, ‘could not do this or that, know so-and-so’. There was an abiding suspicion when socialising that ‘one was being used, such-and-such a person was trying to know one simply because of the wealth in the offing’.⁴⁸⁵ McAlmon’s memoir otherwise consists of his own observations about Bryher’s family. McAlmon describes the Ellermans as ‘frighteningly anti-social and lonely’, and their internal interactions as ‘involved and unusually complicated’.⁴⁸⁶ ‘Wealth, the war, and the phobias, manias, dementias, prejudices, and terrors that come from both, were the dominant factors’.⁴⁸⁷ Glover’s intemperate conduct is presented by McAlmon as a leitmotif of family life. When ‘in a mood’, she was ‘sure to speak her irritations and mind without restraint’. ‘Her Ladyship upset’, he added, ‘was something formidable’.⁴⁸⁸

McAlmon writes that JEI and Glover exercised a parental ‘tyranny’: ‘The children had to fight not only Sir John but her for whatever freedom they got, but it was [JEI’s] regime which made the tyranny’.⁴⁸⁹ McAlmon attributes the following diatribe to Glover: ‘Blast my children’s freedom and happiness. I had them for my own pleasure. If I had my



JEI, Aria House:
Sir Luke Fildes, RA,
portrait of Bryher,
1915.

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 10, f. 408–11:
Postcard from
Hannah Ellerman to
Bryher, 1934.

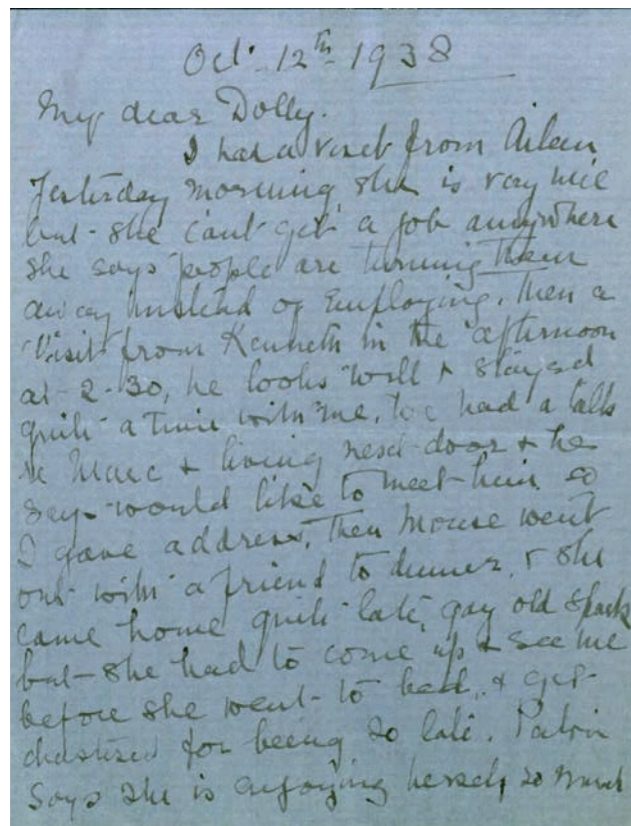


way I'd burn every book they possess and keep them by me'.⁴⁹⁰ JEI's and Hannah Glover's 'attitude' to JEII is presented in a particularly critical light. It 'appalled' McAlmon:

*It was impossible to think it improper for the lad to walk across Hyde Park in other than a bowler hat; there was no sane reason why he should not ride in taxis or buses and learn to pay for himself, realizing costs and the value of money in relation to various objects or pastimes. He did not then know the difference in value between sixpence, a shilling, and a half crown; he was taken wherever he went by his parents, a governess or tutor, in either the Rolls-Royce or the Lanchester. His sister [sc. Bryher] talked to him of what a disgrace it was that the parents should treat him as helpless, as they had her, a girl, and in so doing ruined her capacity for full self-expression and enjoyment of life.*⁴⁹¹

According to McAlmon, JEI had a 'monomania for planning his family's life to the minutest detail'.⁴⁹² McAlmon conceded that JEI was a 'courteous and genial host, a travelled and liberal man of the world, and one who did not judge people too harshly'.⁴⁹³ Yet '[s]trange emotional moments came upon him', in particular his 'jealous[y]' of 'anyone's attention' to Hannah Glover, which had forced her to 'renounc[e] most of the

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 10, f. 408–11:
Letter from Hannah
Ellerman to Bryher,
1938, addressed 'My
dear Dolly'.



friends of a more gregarious and buoyant girlhood'.⁴⁹⁴

In October 1933, writing to H. D., McAlmon would express his annoyance at this association with the Ellerman 'tribe'. In his account of Bryher's insistence, circa 1921, that the pair maintain an association with the family, McAlmon noted that Bryher was impelled to preserve good relations out of anxiety for her father's health and concern over the fate of 'the money':

*Personally it makes me miserable to have the whole damned E[llerman] tribe, John [sc. JEII], mamma, dada, Aunt Emmy, etc. and a flock of others, in my dream life, when I so clearly "did not belong," and in the beginning had thought we agreed to avoid the tribe and live abroad without Br[yher]'s appeal that "dada might not live long, and there's the money".*⁴⁹⁵

Bryher's published recollections of her parents differ markedly from McAlmon's, but they are qualified by a clear admission of her difference in attitude to theirs. On recalling her parents' request for her to 'go back to live with them again' after her visit to the United States in 1921, she noted that she 'was desperately afraid of hurting their feelings'. Yet 'I knew equally well that after a period of comparative freedom, I could not adjust to a conventional routine'.⁴⁹⁶ As she observed in *The Heart to Artemis*:

*Both my parents had great courage. I was a disappointment to them once my childhood was over because I could not accept a number of stupid rules that had, after all, almost deprived them of happiness. It was the inevitable conflict of the generations. Their mark is on me although I am also myself: I try to carry on the essential part of their tradition whilst modifying it to meet the changing times and much of any aid that I have been able to give is directly derived from their influence.*⁴⁹⁷

Bryher's memoir is marked repeatedly by this ambivalent assessment of her parents' influence. Particular tension surrounded her father's belief that the business world was no place for women. '[W]omen', her father reportedly insisted, 'will never be accepted at conferences'.⁴⁹⁸ JEI's attitudes did not simply defer to his colleagues' prejudices. Writing to H. D. in May 1933, Bryher explained that there was potentially a chance for Perdita to go into an Ellerman business, but that opposition would be found in the person of JEI himself, 'because he hates women in business'. This was despite the much more open and willing attitude demonstrated by one of her father's employees, who was optimistic for Perdita's future, reportedly telling Bryher: 'so many [women] are in [our employment] now, and so good at it'.⁴⁹⁹

Bryher would contend that '[t]he rebellion of youth is necessary to the survival of mankind': '[t]he ambitious young have to leave their neighbourhoods and love-hate conflicts with an older generation to try their luck in some unfamiliar place'.⁵⁰⁰ However, this attempt to generalise her familial experience sits awkwardly with the impression left by her correspondence and memoirs. Bryher could not accept the particular conception of femininity held by her parents, either in her mother's obsession with female social graces or her father's conceit that women were unsuitable by nature for 'business'. The scholar Susan McCabe has described Bryher's 'loyalty' to her parents as 'manic'.⁵⁰¹ It was undoubtedly complex.

8 Bryher and the Ellermans: JEII and Esther de Sola

Bryher's relationship with her brother was perhaps more complex. Our knowledge of their relationship derives almost entirely from Bryher's recollection of it, or the recollection of Bryher's associates, particularly McAlmon and H. D.. JEII's side of the story is not available, either because he declined to commit it to writing or because he and others destroyed any writing related to it.

The siblings' relationship can be divided into two phases: before the death of JEI and after it. The first phase was evidently friendly. JEII initially gravitated to Bryher's social circle in his youth. One letter from JEII to Sylvia Beach, of April 1925, records their 'pleasant conversation when I was last in Paris'.⁵⁰² Bryher herself facilitated the publication of JEII's youthful novel, *Why Do They Like It?* (1927),⁵⁰³ at Maurice Darantière's (1882–1962) press in

Dijon, a press which had printed works for Contact.⁵⁰⁴ This evidently occurred when the siblings were close. Writing to H. D. and Macpherson in 1927, Bryher indicated that JEII was at that time very ‘upset’ with his performance in his studies,⁵⁰⁵ and that she agreed with Beach that he ‘ought to spring his book on the family now as a counter-blow’ since they would ‘scream so hard that they’ll forget to scream about the exam’.⁵⁰⁶ Yet this plan may have backfired. When the book appeared, Bryher underestimated their annoyance at publicity: ‘My family discovered John’s book so we are both REALLY in disgrace at present. They have taken it harder than almost anything we have either of us done, ever’.⁵⁰⁷ John remained in Bryher’s orbit. He published in *Close Up* under the same pseudonym, and he co-starred in POOL’s experimental film *Wing Beat* (1927), ‘wildly dancing’.⁵⁰⁸

Bryher would later recall that her parents had erred in declining to allow JEII, in June 1923, to remain in Paris with Marc Allégret (1900–1973), his tutor, later a film-maker and a lover of André Gide. Her parents’ decision to use Allégret as JEII’s tutor was made without any sense of his *avant-garde* sympathies. As Bryher wrote to H. D. in that month: ‘Such a joke! Dadda trotted all over Paris to get a nice conventional tutor for [JEII]’, only for Bryher to discover that Allégret was ‘an intimate friend of [...] Miss Beach’ and the ‘entire Dada movement’.⁵⁰⁹ As Bryher later observed in *The Heart to Artemis*: ‘Allégret wanted my father to leave my brother in Paris for his education and I have often wondered whether this would not have turned out

better for him in the end. Perhaps not,’ she added. ‘[H]e hated being out of London. Whatever broadening of the mind he got while I still knew him, came from Marc.’⁵¹⁰

This retrospective assessment, composed circa 1963, is unfairly coloured by her judgement of JEII’s later conduct, and it contradicts the record of his adventurous interest in travel to locations outside London, especially in the wildernesses of South Africa. The record of Bryher’s subsequent interactions with JEII is fragmentary.⁵¹¹ Yet there are strong indications that JEII remained close to Bryher between 1927 and 1933. In 1933, Louise Morgan Theis reported in her journal that JEII was ‘as ever, under her [sc. Bryher’s] thumb. The only maternal feeling she has is centered on him [...]. Normal things have become abnormal to her and the other way around’. As Theis noted, in a remarkable aside: ‘She [sc. Bryher] has constantly tried to prove to John that he is more girl than boy’.⁵¹²

The siblings maintained a correspondence prior to their father’s death, but only portions of it are extant. Bryher’s letters to JEII have not survived and only three from JEII are present in Bryher’s papers, one undated letter and two from 1933; his valedictions in each letter are signed ‘with love’. In the first dated letter (25 January 1933), JEII confided his ambition to purchase a hands-on business, alighting on ‘a tobacconists [sic]’: ‘I should be glad to hear what you think of this project’.⁵¹³ In the second dated letter (29 June 1933), JEII wrote to Bryher excitedly, with news of his engagement. JEII asked her to ‘hold the fort’ with their

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 10, f. 412: Letter
to Bryher from JEII,
1933.

1. SOUTH AUDLEY STREET,
W.1
Essexday,
Dear Bryher. Please forgive my
writing before, I had
such a frightfully hectic
time since you left. All
over the house isn't the
good. Family peccates
after you what + various
remedies etc. suggested for
conditions but as usual
with everything in family
nothing came of it.
So last week I got a
flat. All comes me,

5 Sherwood Court,
Sejourn Place, W.1.
A delicious neighbourhood -
the Maylebone Road end of
Edgware Road - just off,
my chaffin + his mother
are living there now + are to
do for me. I have not
yet moved + don't intend
to for a month or so.
Family know nothing about
it yet. It was fun seeing
about getting it right. A
wardrobe jammed on the first
floor + could not be got up,
A dog was the next thing

I would have sold my soul to the
devil for an Alsatian but
unfortunately I can only keep
a small dog so today purchased
the next best thing - a
Norwegian Elk hound - a hunting
dog + mine should be O.H.
He is 5 months + never away
from home before but we
brought him back in the
car + he never made a sound
+ have since taken him for
two walks - he was off the
lead all the time on the Heera
tonight + was as good as
gold. So I sincerely hope
he will in time be a serious
rival to the monkey! What

happens now only God knows
I hope that all this will work for
the best. I must say I think
it will. Hope things proceed
with you + that the flat
is better. Give it my regards
also old Kenneth if he'll
take them. Apologise you
kind letter invite I must
decline. The dog will be
too young to be left and
the flat will probably need
attention - I very much doubt
whether we shall have a hope
of getting it straight till then.
Mrs. Thady all the same. I hope
we shall see you over here some
day soon. Have wrote the other day
after all these years, with very best
wishes, John

parents over the coming summer, as he embarked on his honeymoon.

Their father's death in July marked the beginning of the second phase of the siblings' relationship. According to the terms of his will, JEI's principal beneficiary was his son. JEII received £600,000 and £2 million upon trust, together with the residue of JEI's estate, approximately £20 million. Bryher received £400,000 (increased by fifty percent to £600,000 by a provision in JEI's codicil) and another £400,000 upon trust (increased by fifty percent to £600,000 by a provision in JEI's codicil), which complemented the financial gifts he had distributed to her during his lifetime, including £500,000 in London property as a new year's present in 1930.⁵¹⁴ McAlmon and Macpherson received £50,000 each.⁵¹⁵ The exact nature of the events which followed the reading of the will is obscured by their elliptical recollection in *The Heart to Artemis*, but it is clear that a devastating break occurred. The relevant passage in the memoir must be quoted at length:

My brother disappeared just when my mother needed him most. The will was read, we tried to resume ordinary life. [...] And then the jackals came. My mother had always left her jewellery when she went abroad in a safe in my father's office. It was her own property and she was asked to remove it before probate. The safe itself was in a basement and thickly covered with dust. We noticed marks as if it had been recently opened but did not trouble further then about the matter. My mother took out her case and we went away.

My father had told us all on several occasions that he had left a Letter of Directions as well as a Will. Nobody could find it. The lawyers put forward the theory that my father had omitted to write it because of his illness but I happened to remember distinctly that he had mentioned it to me when he was still doing a dull day's work at the office. I cannot of course prove that it existed: on the other hand my father never made such statements lightly, so the strong inference is that somebody, at some time, perhaps during the funeral had managed to get at the safe and remove it. Not that it would have affected my mother or myself who were provided for under the terms of the Will. The document in question was rather in the nature of a directive (or so we understood) about the carrying on of the business.

Be that as it may, almost all of my father's trusted associates were demoted or retired within the next few weeks, and as for my brother, he returned for a few hours and said unpardonable things to my mother although she was ill at the time. I remonstrated, he threw a chair at my head and I have never seen him since. He married before my father had been dead a month.

The family split. Aunt Emily and her family clung to us loyally and I shall always be grateful to my cousin, John Todd, he [sic] visited my mother and invited her to go out with him regularly until she died. I broke off communications with my other aunt and her connections. I knew what my father would have asked of me, to defend my mother in every possible way, and I did the utmost to carry out his wishes. "You had such patience," my mother wrote to me just before she died.⁵¹⁶

In her only other reference to JEII in *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher recalls a visit to London in early 1940: 'It was a gloomy visit', she writes, 'because I had to store or dispose of my mother's possessions. It was the last time that I went inside the London house that then reverted to my brother. I had no idea where he was. The few necessary business arrangements were made through our lawyers'.⁵¹⁷ One extant letter from Bryher's lawyer, Philip Frere, of March 1956, includes his advice to dispose of her interest in an 'Ellerman Property Trust' to her brother:

'I will get in touch with the lawyers about it'.⁵¹⁸

The break between the siblings appears to have centred, in part, on JEI's disapproval of his son's prospective marriage to Esther de Sola, whom we discuss extensively in the next chapter (III.4). The sequence of Bryher's discussion of JEII's prospective marriage in *The Heart to Artemis* is suggestive, as it intimates that her brother's marriage was a cause of her father's death:

In May 1933, my father was seriously ill. [...] I was not unduly anxious because apart from a few attacks of influenza, I had seldom known him to spend a day in bed. He was worried, however, about my brother who wanted to marry almost the first girl that he had met.⁵¹⁹

As Bryher went on to note: 'My father asked him to wait for a year, travel and then if he was still of the same mind, promised his consent'. To this Bryher added portentously: 'None of us knew that there were people who were already doing all they could to break my brother completely away from his home'.⁵²⁰

It is difficult to establish whom Bryher meant to identify as the 'people' conspiring against her. In a letter from Sigmund Freud to Bryher of 19 July 1933, Freud conveyed his condolences to Bryher on the news of her father's death, before noting: 'I suspect you will have a turbulent time ahead of you, during which a lot will depend on your mother's health and behaviour'.⁵²¹ Freud's knowledge of these circumstances must suggest that Bryher had conveyed her anxieties about her father's estate to her close circle. For his part, JEII's communications with Bryher prior to their father's death provide no obvious evidence of any concern about their imminent estrangement, although JEII concedes that he expected a difficult reception from their parents to the news of his impending marriage. In his letter to Bryher of 29 June 1933, JEII noted that Bryher would 'be delighted to hear that Esther de Sola and I are engaged to be married. I sincerely hope to be married next month'. In reference to Esther's deceased brother, JEII's close friend, he noted: '[y]ou know what a good friend [he] was to me and everyone seems more than pleased that in this way the friendship between the family and myself is to be made solid I hope forever'. Turning to his parents' reaction to the news, JEII notes:

I told the family (ours) this evening. Contrary to all expectations they took it calmly. Daddy prophesied doom and hoped we would be happy. Mother cried, said she always admired Esther, and would we like the Eastbourne furniture.

Closing the letter, JEII observed: 'I know you have a regard for the de Solas and for me and am quite sure you will be pleased to learn this news, though [...] I did not expect it through so soon'.⁵²²

In a letter to H. D. of July 1933, Macpherson described JEII's conduct as 'contemptible',⁵²³ referring presumably to his insistent plans of marriage, or perhaps the 'unpardonable' comments he had made to Hannah Glover. Newspaper reports of JEII's wedding, which must have emerged from a leak he had contrived with his circle, note expressly that Hannah Glover did not attend:

The ceremony, which took place yesterday, was kept a complete secret — so secret that only a few of Sir John's intimate friends and relatives knew of it by the evening. The marriage took place in the heart

of the country, over 50 miles from London, said Lt.-Col. William Cox, a friend of Sir John's, to a representative of THE DAILY TELEGRAPH last night. It took place at a registrar's office, and there were only three or four persons present. Sir John's mother was not among them. There was no reception and no excitement of any kind. Sir John had determined upon a quiet wedding.

In a further wedding notice, the following day, the six witnesses were identified as Esther's sister and brother-in-law, Jessica Elvira de Sola (1904–84) and Ronald de Pass (1897–1977), JEI's niece Ida Mary Cox and her husband William Cox, a manager of a property trust for JEI, William Graham, JEI's solicitor, and Thoby Prinsep, a longstanding director of Ellerman Lines. This group presumably consisted of the cabal suspected by Bryher of breaking JEII 'completely away from his home'.⁵²⁴

The difficulty with Bryher's account of JEII's alienation is that it is incompatible with other evidence. In a letter to Bryher of 12 October 1938, Hannah Glover herself recalled that JEII and Esther had visited her for a mirthful dinner.⁵²⁵ In an undated letter from 1939, Glover notes that John and Esther had visited again, without a suggestion of overhanging acrimony.⁵²⁶

Nonetheless, Glover was undoubtedly perturbed by her son's behaviour. Indeed, she was distinctly suspicious of William Cox, whose death in 1939 she marked with a scathing letter to Bryher, denouncing Ida Cox's conduct after JEI's death, while intimating that William had manipulated JEII:

Cox died in a train going to Nottingham yesterday, his wife with him. Now perhaps she will understand something of what I had to put up with when Dada passed, the filthy creature, she showed little mercy or sympathy then now she has got the same. [...] [A] bigger rogue never lived and a lot of good he has had out of it and she the worst. I am dreadfully upset though for John bad as he has been to me, as he hasn't a man friend to turn to & that horror has just landed them with a big house [sc. JEII and Esther's new property in Kensington Palace Gardens] where I feel sure he was going to boss things.⁵²⁷

Glover was undoubtedly closer to Bryher: she resided on Bryher's property in Cornwall during the Second World War, and her estate, proved at £279,228 in value,⁵²⁸ was given entirely to Bryher on her death in 1939.⁵²⁹ Yet Bryher's suggestion that an irreparable break in the family occurred in 1933 is imprecise, if not misleading.

References to JEII's conduct are sparse in Bryher and her circle's later correspondence, but it is evident that hostility lingered. In a letter to Bryher of April 1952, H. D. recorded her encounter with a woman who had been an acquaintance of Glover, and who had asked after JEII, stating that the latter could 'save civilization'. To this, H. D. added caustically: 'if the RAT should ever emerge', an allusion to JEII's scientific study of rodents, and a clear indication that H. D. believed Bryher's contempt for JEII was undimmed two decades after their break.⁵³⁰ Bryher evidently kept notice of her brother's activities: a small collection of press clippings is preserved with her papers at Yale, chronicling his life between 1933 and 1973.⁵³¹ Shortly after his death, an obituarist for *The Daily Express* contacted Bryher, and requested a reaction. She reportedly responded: "I am the complete opposite of my brother."⁵³²

9 Bryher and Philanthropy

In *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher observes that, after she left Queenwood, 'I prayed that my destiny might be service to artists and poets'.⁵³³ It is easy to dismiss this as 'teleological' — a retrospective superimposition of later tendencies on the inclinations of her youth. Yet practically every year of Bryher's life after 1914 was involved, in some way, with placing her wealth and connections at the disposal of others. Her ability to act in this way stemmed, most obviously, from the extraordinary wealth accessible to her from an early age. As McAlmon's memoir indicated, the Ellerman household appears to have fretted over the implications of their wealth for social interactions generally: doubt surrounded the ulterior motives of friends and new acquaintances. H. D.'s recollections pull in another direction. As she related to a correspondent in May 1935, Bryher was not conscious of the effect her parents' status had on their relationship: 'there has been a deadly terror, a thing Br[yher] has never quite realized — my own position, alone in the face of her gigantic parents. I am sure you must realize what a powerful person [JEI] was'.⁵³⁴

It is clear that Bryher's association with her parents' influence, and the power commanded by their wealth, was never outwardly characterised by rejection or embarrassment. In a report carried in *The Times* on her father's death, Bryher, identified as 'Mrs Macpherson', was said to have asked the priest to deliver the following note as eulogy:

My father gave me something for which I can never repay him. He had the courage not to send me to school, but to educate me himself. Because of the many hours I spent with him in my early childhood and in the time of his greatest activity, I would like to give to his memory a little to others of what he gave me.

Bryher offered an 'engineering scholarship' as a 'tribute to his memory' to 'men of his ships or to their families', in addition to 'a small sum of money to buy one or two pictures each year from living artists'.⁵³⁵ In *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher would again publicly celebrate her father's ingenuity in business. As she noted in a revealing passage:

It should not be forgotten that England is enjoying a higher standard of living to-day because of the efforts of the nineteenth-century industrialists to open up vast tracts for settlement in Canada and Australia and create risk capital. All of us, the entire welfare state, are living upon the riches that they made possible. We are moving now into another type of development but it is one that has emerged from the last hundred years, it is not a new growth. People like my father had a much deeper sense of responsibility about those whom they employed than is found in the huge, amorphous corporations of the present time. Bureaucracy has replaced private enterprise in many fields but it is arbitrary and less sensitive to human needs. The present tendency to scrap men and women after a lifetime of service simply because of some age limit, seems to me far more evil than Victorian initiative.⁵³⁶

This vision of paternalistic capitalism is starkly distant from the socialism that swirled around Bryher's social circle in the interwar period, and which attracted her contemporary Nancy Cunard (1896–1965), the Communist sympathiser, whose background and conduct otherwise bear remarkable comparison to Bryher's.

Bryher herself had known Cunard since the 1920s, and would, in the early 1930s, support

some of the causes promoted by Cunard. This included contributing directly to the Scottsboro Defence Organisation, which was then defending nine young Black men, known as the ‘Scottsboro boys’, accused of raping two white women in Alabama, in 1931.⁵³⁷ As early as 1924, Bryher indicated that she did ‘not approve of’ Cunard, particularly Cunard’s drinking and sexual promiscuity. The patronising, infantilising, and often racist language Bryher used to describe some of Cunard’s Black associates, including referring to Paul Robeson himself as a ‘chocolate baby’, were characteristic of an anxiety around Black acquaintances.⁵³⁸ In March 1933, she warned Macpherson to be careful about allowing ‘Nancy and her negroes’ to use H. D.’s London flat.⁵³⁹ The difference between Cunard and Bryher’s worlds would be further revealed in the Second World War when they avoided Cunard, since ‘we couldn’t cope with “politics”’.⁵⁴⁰

Bryher’s own politics are difficult to place. In *The Heart to Artemis*, Bryher observed that she had ‘lost all confidence in governments’ during and after the First World War: ‘Less bureaucracy and more common sense might have saved so many lives’.⁵⁴¹ As we have noted (II.3), a considerable impetus for Bryher residing in Switzerland prior to 1940 was a desire to avoid supertax in Britain. Her relocation to London in 1940 was framed by the legalistic insistence, attached to her official documentation, that she could not be considered resident for tax purposes. After the Second World War, exchange controls limited what she could remove from Britain and, as she lamented to Thomas Charles Lethbridge in 1951, restricted her philanthropic impulses: ‘At the present time most of my income gets “frozen” in England. I can come over once a year and spend it wildly for a fortnight, then I come back here [sc. Kenwin] and look sadly at my very few Swiss francs’.⁵⁴² This exasperation with the regulatory controls of the state, and the competence of its bureaucracy, mirrored her resistance to the pieties of social convention in the early and mid-twentieth century. Yet the evidence of her political inclinations — aside from the extraordinary courage of her anti-fascist and refugee work in the 1930s — is more limited. There are no explicit indications that Bryher’s philanthropy was motivated by a sense of the state’s inadequacy as a source of welfare for the necessitous. But it is clear that Bryher considered herself a more effective conduit of financial support than institutional ‘charities’ or their mid-twentieth century antecedents, and there is ample evidence of her scepticism of the political establishment in Western Europe.

Bryher’s philanthropic activities were wide-ranging and generous. The recipients of her largesse included H. D., who would describe Bryher as a ‘baby Maecenas’,⁵⁴³ and who, in 1940, received a settlement of £70,000 in trust with an income for life of £2,450 annually.⁵⁴⁴ Other beneficiaries included Dorothy Richardson, who received a trust fund in 1933, with an income for life of £120 per annum,⁵⁴⁵ Paula Heimann, whose medical studies Bryher funded in 1939, Margiad Evans, Horace Gregory, Paul Valéry, Djuna Barnes, Else Lasker Schuler, Heinrich Mann, Yves Bonnefoy, Marianne Moore, Marya Zaturenska,⁵⁴⁶ Jean Toomer, Richmond Barthé, Edith Sitwell and the Sitwell brothers, and Laurie Lee, to name only a selection of the better-known individuals.⁵⁴⁷ In this lifelong exercise of beneficence, Bryher was not at all the ‘complete opposite’ of her brother, as we will see in the following chapter. But she was, in a way he obsessively eschewed, a conspicuous philanthropist.

III

SIR JOHN REEVES ELLERMAN, 2ND BT. (1909–1973)

JEI and Hannah Glover’s second child was born on 21 December 1909 at 5A Earls Avenue, Folkestone, Kent. His names at birth were the same as his father’s: John Reeves. John Reeves Ellerman II (JEII) would be the couple’s only legitimate child. He was baptised on 24 March 1910 at St Mark’s Church, North Audley Street.⁵⁴⁸

1 Archive

JEII has left a comparatively modest collection of documents relating to his life. His most substantial publications, which relate to the study of rodents, reveal only limited information about his activities and personal associations. Nothing equivalent to his father’s business records or his sister’s autobiographical writings is extant. Very little personal or professional correspondence survives. This archival absence is presumably the result of the intentional destruction of the vast part of JEII’s incoming private correspondence and any retained drafts of outgoing letters — a process of systematic elimination that might have stemmed from JEII’s desire to maintain his privacy. JEII’s life presents additional challenges for the biographer. Unlike his father, JEII did not take an active or leading role in the companies he owned. Unlike his sister, JEII did not associate with the most celebrated literary and artistic figures of his era. JEII used his immense wealth to pursue a life in private, with only limited forays into public business, or patronage, or the literary *beau monde*.

A collection of relevant documents is intermixed with the papers accumulated by other members of JEII’s family. The Beinecke Library preserves letters sent by JEII to Bryher, as we have noted (II.1). The archive of Ellerman Lines preserves incidental letters concerning specific points of business or accounts of JEII attending annual shareholder meetings. More frequently, the survival of material is the direct result of JEII’s interests in natural history and musical theatre, including his correspondence with Alister Hardy (1896–1985) at the Bodleian Library, successive members of the D’Oyly Carte family at the British Library, and his correspondence with the South African journalist Piet Beukes (1882–1975), the editor of the Afrikaans newspaper *Die Landstem*. Finally, John Ellerman Foundation preserves a small body of JEII’s and Esther Ellerman’s private papers, which were evidently donated by Esther or her family, but these shed only limited light on their activities, except in the correspondence maintained between JEII’s representatives and the Inland Revenue regarding JEII’s residency for tax purposes, which necessitated a careful inquiry into JEII’s and Esther’s income and physical location between circa 1960 and 1973.

Left to right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII,
circa 1910.



Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII, 1910.

Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII,
circa 1919–1920.



All three:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII, circa
1919–1920.

Left:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII, circa
1919–1920.



Centre and right:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII, circa
1919–1920.

The photos are blurred.

All pictures:
Yale, Bryher Papers,
b. 107, f. 3848–
3853: JEII, circa
1919–1920.



2 1909–1933

JEII was first sent to St. Bede's Preparatory School at Eastbourne in 1918. The school was located on Duke's Drive, opposite the house owned by JEI and Hannah Glover. It was at St. Bede's that JEII formed his lifelong friendship with Dennis Martin-Jenkins (1911–1991), the son of one of his father's business acquaintances, Frederick Martin-Jenkins, and later a leading figure in the Ellerman businesses. In February 1979, Dennis Martin-Jenkins discussed the family's connection in a speech delivered in JEII's honour. According to Martin-Jenkins, JEI 'was thrilled beyond measure when a son, 16 years younger than his then existing only child [sc. Bryher] [...] was born'. The link between their families was established in circa 1916–17, when Frederick Martin-Jenkins, a Chartered Accountant, was asked to mediate in a dispute between JEI and the ship owner Frank Clarke Strick regarding William Gray and Co. Ltd. (I.6.5 above). 'Knowing that Sir John had a son of preparatory school age', Frederick Martin-Jenkins asked for JEI's advice 'as to which prep. school to

Public domain:
St Bede's School



select'. JEI recommended St. Bede's. The school reportedly numbered seventy to eighty students. In Dennis Martin-Jenkins's recollection, JEII 'was in his youth an intelligent, fun-loving, mischievous, happy little boy', who 'loved team games but was not blessed with a ball player's eye[,] though he admired and gave his all in support of those who had those gifts'. In fact, JEII 'had many near-similar gifts of his own', as a 'very good horseman, a super gymnast', 'a brilliant roller-skater', a 'very good swimmer', possessed of a talent of walking on his hands 'with his legs in the air', or at other times 'waggl[ing] his ears like a rabbit whilst keeping the rest of his face absolutely dead-pan'. Martin-Jenkins recalls that one of the perks of friendship with JEII at St. Bede's was access to his family's cook:

Like all small boys of any era we, at St. Bede's, were always hungry and the knowledge that if you were on John Ellerman's "In list" on half holidays or when the riding class returned to the school [...] the cook from the house over the road might come across with a silver tray piled high with chocolate cakes and ginger beer for "Mr. John and his special friends" made many of us be extra nice to him the day before those events might occur.⁵⁴⁹

In September 1923, JEII was sent to Malvern College in Worcestershire, where he remained — as a member of Boarding House No. 5 — until July 1925. (Dennis Martin-Jenkins recalls that JEII had 'wanted very much to go to Eastbourne College where many of his friends from St. Bede's were going, but his father ordained otherwise'.⁵⁵⁰) JEII's name is conspicuous for its absence from the *Malvernian* magazine, which recorded the sporting accomplishments of his classmates. On leaving the school, his entry appears as 'J. R. Ellerman' in the school yearbook, without any denotation of the achievements characteristic of his classmates: 'Prefect', 'L. Corpl. in Corps', 'XI. Cricket'.⁵⁵¹

When not at school, JEII frequently travelled with his parents, although not to the same extent that marked Bryher's early years. By the 1920s, the family were regular visitors to Paris, and this notably included the period in which — pushed, like Bryher, to learn French — JEII had Marc Allégret (II.8 above) as his tutor. JEII and Bryher were still close at this

stage. As Bryher put it, capturing her attitude towards him in early 1927: 'Johann [sc. JEII] is very happy and cheerful and I don't know what I'd do without him'.⁵⁵² This camaraderie reportedly flourished during Bryher's divorce from Robert McAlmon, when the siblings — learning of the pantomime required on Bryher's part by French law — left Bryher's lawyer's office in 'paroxysms' of laughter.⁵⁵³

Much of what we know of JEII's own views of this period in his life — from his schooldays to life in London and Paris — derives from his own account in the loosely autobiographical novel *Why Do They Like It?*, published in 1927, under the pseudonym 'E. L. Black', as we have noted (II.8). This work was closely connected to Bryher and her circle: Bryher facilitated its publication and advertised it in *Close Up*, where it was billed as an 'absorbing and revealing document'.⁵⁵⁴ *Why Do They Like It?* was framed as a critique of contemporary public school education, decrying the rituals of its boys and masters as a 'prehistorical museum', and lambasting their obsession with school sport.⁵⁵⁵ The main themes mirrored aspects of Bryher's own early work — particularly, as she had in her novel *Development*, chronicling the experience of life in a boarding school.

In *Close Up*, and contemporary correspondence, Bryher outlined what she saw as the principal achievement of *Why Do They Like It?*: the 'psychological picture of the attempted crushing of an intelligent mind that was given no chance of development because it was "Done" only to think of games'.⁵⁵⁶ This summary in *Close Up* was accompanied with a foreword by Dorothy Richardson. In addition to noting the potential value of the book to an educationalist, Richardson praised the talent of its author, who 'should never have been sent to a Public School'.⁵⁵⁷ Others in Bryher's circle welcomed JEII's book. Norman Douglas, then in Milan, told Bryher soon after the publication of *Why Do They Like It?* that he 'liked it immensely'. The book conveyed 'a true impression of the utter inanity of such school life', in its 'deliberate piling-up of monstrous and silly details'.⁵⁵⁸

Why Do They Like It? evidently embarrassed JEI and Hannah Glover. In Bryher's memorable words, '[t]hey have taken it harder than almost anything we have either of us done, ever' (II.8 above). This no doubt reflected how forthrightly the book had raged at their decision to send JEII to Malvern, pseudonymised as 'Nelson' by JEII, and their related unwillingness to listen to JEII's criticism of the school's shortcomings. When the novel's protagonist, James Freeman, receives a letter from his mother disparaging his complaints about the school ('You don't really hate Nelson. It is all pretence'), he immediately fires one back, scolding her for not listening to how he hated 'this place like hell'. As Freeman observes, this act of minor adolescent rebellion was ineffectual: 'it was no good talking to the family. One might as well talk to a typewriter, except that the family were worse, for they could answer back'.⁵⁵⁹

It is not difficult to see why Beach and Bryher believed *Why Do They Like It?* would make JEI and Hannah Glover 'scream'. As much it savaged the contemporary public school system, the book portrayed Freeman's family life in an unusually negative light. JEI was presumably offended by how thinly JEII had disguised his work of fiction. With homes in London and on the south coast, Freeman had a French tutor in Paris, a 'Monsieur Ellgret', and a sister who

lived abroad with an American husband, who encourage him to ‘tell the whole world how much’ he hated Nelson, ‘the beastly place’.⁵⁶⁰ Freeman describes his early life in terms closely equivalent to those used by Robert McAlmon in his later memoir, discussed above (II.7). As McAlmon had criticised JEI and Hannah Glover for not allowing JEII to ride in taxis or buses, JEII’s protagonist was also marooned, never allowed out on his own, and restricted to travelling by chauffeured car. Freeman had ‘never had freedom’, JEII writes: ‘He was never allowed to go out by himself. The son of a famous railway merchant, and an only son, a son and heir, the darling must never go out by himself, in case he gets kidnapped or run over’.⁵⁶¹ Freeman’s apparent rejection of his family’s restrictive world, and his preference for the freedom embodied by his sister and her husband, are captured resonantly in his choice of reading material: Samuel Butler’s *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), the posthumously-published indictment of hypocrisy in Victorian domestic life.

JEII’s connections with Bryher and the POOL Group led to his involvement in other collaborations, including his participation in the film *Wing Beat*, as we noted above (II.8). It also saw him publish an additional short piece in *Close Up*, once more under the pseudonym ‘E. L. Black’, entitled ‘Animals on the Films’. This essay linked closely to what was, and would become, JEII’s enduring fascination with the natural world. From a young age, JEII was permitted to keep mice and porcupines in the loft of the family home; indeed, Dennis Martin-Jenkins recalled JEII starting a ‘craze’ at St. Bede’s for keeping ‘tame mice [...] in cages in the play-room’.⁵⁶² As soon as he was old enough to think about moving into his own home, a flat in Seymour Place, Marylebone, one of the first things he purchased was a dog: ‘I would have sold my soul to the devil for an Alsatian but unfortunately I can only keep a small dog so today I purchased the next best thing—a Norwegian elk hound’.⁵⁶³ In addition to keeping pets, JEII was also a frequent visitor to the zoo. Writing to Beach in 1926, Bryher asked whether she had received the ‘hippo photograph’ JEII had sent her: ‘He has got a lot of more interesting snaps at the Zoo, and visits the hippo inside the cage there weekly’.⁵⁶⁴ In Paris, JEII also took the opportunity to visit the Ménagerie du Jardin des Plantes de Paris, in the fifth arrondissement.⁵⁶⁵

In ‘Animals on the Films’, JEII skewered the portrayal of animals by the contemporary film industry. His principal charge was that animals were frequently anthropomorphised, which meant they were ‘represented as blown out with a kind of pompous human attitude, and their very often superior qualities softened and blurred in human imitation’.⁵⁶⁶ JEII championed the careful study of ‘animal psychology’, calling on filmmakers to embrace the rich possibilities for both education and entertainment that would redound to anyone who subjected animals to ‘a close and sympathetic study’.⁵⁶⁷ JEII enjoined readers to inspect the facial expressions of different animals, a sensitive analysis of which revealed not only the animals’ differences from humans, but the wide variety within the animal kingdom, as each species exhibited its own ‘definite moods’.⁵⁶⁸ JEII’s own weekly trips to the hippo enclosure of the London Zoo were marshalled in evidence: ‘They are fascinating creatures, and their habits and ways so subtle, that a film giving true value to them would be in the nature of a revelation’.⁵⁶⁹ JEII’s strictures may well have been noted by others in Bryher’s circle.

Macpherson devoted his next film, *Monkeys’ Moon* (1929), to a depiction of the psychology of two of his pet monkeys.⁵⁷⁰

3 1927–1933

The course of JEII’s life between 1927 and 1933 has proven difficult to trace precisely, especially for the years leading to JEI’s death. Many speculative claims are associated with this period in his life. James Taylor’s study of Ellerman Lines and Professor William Rubinstein’s entry for JEII in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* observe that JEII was sent to Switzerland to be educated for two years before reading law at the Inner Temple.⁵⁷¹ Neither of these claims can be substantiated. There is no extant evidence that JEII was schooled in Switzerland and there is no record that he enrolled in the Inner Temple or any Inn of Court. A letter from Bryher to H. D. and Macpherson of March 1927 refers to JEII being ‘upset’ with his performance in an exam — identified by the editor of the correspondence, Lauren D. Eckenroth, as a ‘legal’ exam — yet this must refer to JEII’s end of school studies, given his age (17) at that juncture.⁵⁷²

JEII’s immediate destination, following his schooling, was in reality more proximate than the Inner Temple, let alone Switzerland. On finishing school, JEII worked in his father’s business at Moorgate. Unlike his father, JEII did not take to the business, attributing his lack of success ‘largely to lack of interest on my part’.⁵⁷³ (This may have been connected to the fact that he was not remunerated for his labour.⁵⁷⁴)

Outside work, JEII’s spare time during this period was devoted to the theatre, and especially light musicals. Attending the theatre was a favourite pastime of the family. In his memoir of life at 1 South Audley Street in the 1920s and early 1930s, Kenneth Macpherson recalled how the Ellermans frequently visited the theatre on Saturday nights, although exceptions were made if anything remarkable was opening on other evenings, such as Noël Coward’s operetta *Bitter Sweet* (1929).⁵⁷⁵ The family became friendly with several prominent figures in the theatrical world. JEI was familiar with Rupert D’Oyly Carte (1876–1948), and Hannah was an ‘intimate friend’ of Clara Novello Davis (1861–1943), the Welsh singer and conductor, who was the mother of the actor, dramatist, singer, and composer Ivor Novello (1893–1951). The latter’s



Public domain:
Clara Novello Davis.

shows at the Drury Lane theatre were another series that prompted the family to attend performances on a weekday.

From a young age — he later noted he had attended performances of Gilbert and Sullivan from at least the age of seven — JEII enjoyed frequently visiting the theatre.⁵⁷⁶ He also took the opportunity to stage and produce small shows, including a production of *Treasure Island* at St. Bede's. These were all pursuits he shared with his alter ego, James Freeman, from *Why Do They Like It?*, whose 'chief interests lay in [the] theatre'. Freeman, JEII writes, 'was interested in plays, acting, actors'.⁵⁷⁷ In addition to arguing with his contemporaries about how theatre was immensely superior to cricket — 'give me the chance of going to see a show, or cricket, and I would choose to go to the show a thousand times rather' — Freeman also produced and performed in his own plays in a model theatre, including a play called *Buried Treasure*.⁵⁷⁸

In the period immediately after leaving school, JEII involved himself in the theatrical world in London. As well as continuing regularly to attend shows, he began his own amateur dramatic company, 'John R. Ellerman Productions'. From the late 1920s, the company staged an array of shows at 372 Euston Road. JEII was involved in every aspect of the performances. In addition to organising the troupe, he wrote the script and music for the 1930 Christmas pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Hollybone of Hollybone Hall*, hidden, once more, behind the pseudonym 'Ed. Black'. The company's other performers were drawn from a mix of JEII's circles, including those from work, such as Noel Brady and Charles Pratt, and JEII's friends, such as Gabriel de Sola (1907–1931) and Jessica Elvira de Sola, the brother and younger sister respectively of JEII's later wife, Esther de Sola (1910–1985) — whom we discuss below (III.4). The group continued to stage performances until the lease on the Euston Road premises expired in the early 1930s.

By the turn of 1933, having completed five years at Moorgate, JEII was actively considering his future. This was motivated, in part, by a sense of professional malaise. JEII recognised he did not have his father's flair or drive to succeed in commerce, and he was open to considering other options. As he wrote to Bryher in that year, he hoped to add to his amateur interest in the theatre a role as a theatre ticket agent, although he had not made any concrete plans: 'at present I have nothing in mind except the idea of the thing'. Another venture he considered for some



From left to right:

Public domain:
Abraham de Sola

Public domain:
Clarence de Sola

Public domain:
David Aaron de Sola.

months, and on which he had come to place most of his hopes, was the possibility of starting business as a tobacconist: 'This I feel is more or less a necessity of life, and the income would probably be sure if small'. The main advantage of the plan, he indicated, would be that he would find 'something independent of family to do until one emerges from this period, which I feel is somehow not too good for any'.⁵⁷⁹ He evidently made some progress in this scheme, since by mid-March Bryher could write to H. D. that 'he has started his tobacco shop'.⁵⁸⁰ However, events would soon alter the course of JEII's life.

4 1933–1945

As we have seen (I.6.6), JEI's death was unexpected. As much as its effects rippled throughout the whole family, they were perhaps most deeply felt by JEII. Overnight, JEII went from being a twenty-three year old former apprentice and owner of a small tobacco business to the proprietor of one of Britain's largest commercial enterprises. When the terms of JEI's will had been finalised, according to which JEII received £600,000 and £2 million in trust, together with the net remainder of the estate, approximately £20 million,⁵⁸¹ JEII became one of Britain's richest men, if not its richest. This was a title JEII continued to hold until his death some forty years later, and it was widely reported, including in several editions of the *Guinness Book of World Records*.⁵⁸² As Dennis Martin-Jenkins would later recall, with his father's 'sudden' death, JEII 'had to grow up and face his huge responsibilities in a great hurry and before he had had a proper chance to become fully prepared to meet [them]'.⁵⁸³

In conjunction with this change was JEII's engagement to Esther de Sola. Esther was born in Montreal to Clarence de Sola (1858–1920) and Belle Maud Goldsmith (1875–1965). On her father's side, she was descended from a family of prominent Canadian Jews. Clarence's father, Abraham de Sola (1825–1882), was a *hazzan* or cantor in Montreal's Jewish congregation of Shearith Israel, and Professor at McGill University, where he earned a reputation as a leader of North American Orthodox Jewry. His own father, David Aaron de Sola (1796–1860), had served as the cantor of Bevis Marks synagogue in London, where, in 1831, he had reportedly delivered

Left:

Public domain:
The de Sola home,
Montreal.



Right:

JEF Archive: Interior
of the de Sola home,
Montreal.



JEF Archive:
Belle de Sola, 1956.



the first English-language sermon in the synagogue's history. Clarence's mother, Esther Joseph, was the daughter of Henry Joseph (1773–1832), a successful businessman and militia officer during the War of 1812. By the time of his death in 1920, Clarence had achieved remarkable success in business: after completing his studies at McGill University, he founded De Sola Brothers and Company in 1881 with his brothers, shortly after which they became the Canadian agents for Comptoir Belgo-Canadien, a syndicate of Belgian steel manufacturers. The company engaged in shipbuilding for the Upper Lakes of Canada and the ocean trade. Among other ventures, Clarence established a steamship service between Antwerp and Montreal, and served as president of the Ocean Steamship Company of Canada, and several other lines. He was appointed Belgian consul in Montreal in 1905, and received Belgian's highest 'knighthood', as a chevalier of the Order of Leopold, in 1919, in part for his role in mobilising Belgian reservists in Canada during the First World War. In addition, Clarence was one of the incorporators of the Federation of Jewish

Philanthropies.

In 1898, Clarence was elected corresponding secretary of the Zionist Society of Montreal. In the following year, he was elected president of the Federation of Zionist Societies of Canada. In June 1899, he met Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), the father of Zionism, in Vienna, and he was instrumental in establishing the Canadian branch of the Jewish National Fund in 1910, which was then devoted to purchasing tracts of land in Palestine for Jewish immigrants. He was reportedly close to Arthur Balfour (1848–1930) during the latter's tenure as foreign secretary (1916–1919), when Balfour promulgated the so-called Balfour Declaration (1917).⁵⁸⁴ Esther's mother, Belle, was accomplished in her own right: she had received a BA from Western Reserve University, before her marriage in October 1901.⁵⁸⁵

Esther was one of four children: her brothers Gabriel and Raphael, and her sister Jessica, emigrated to England in 1923, after Clarence's sudden death, while visiting Boston, in May 1920.⁵⁸⁶ Esther had attended the Trafalgar School for Girls in Montreal from 1919, together with her sister Jessica, who had graduated from the school in 1922,⁵⁸⁷ before the family's relocation to England. Esther then attended a secondary school in Wimbledon before moving to Paris to study art. On 28 June 1929, she was described by *The Times* as a debutante, presented at Court to Queen Mary (1867–1953).⁵⁸⁸ JEII and Esther's brother Gabriel evidently became close friends: Gabriel, who had attended St. Bede's, starred alongside JEII in one

of the latter's theatre productions, and it was through Gabriel that JEII met Esther.⁵⁸⁹ Gabriel's sudden death in February 1931, at the age of 23, evidently brought JEII and Esther closer.⁵⁹⁰ As JEII noted in his letter to Bryher, announcing his engagement (III.3 above): '[y]ou know what a good friend Gab was to me and everyone seems more than pleased that in this way the friendship between the family and myself is to be made solid I hope forever'.

JEII's prospective engagement had been a source of keen anxiety for JEI in the months before his death. As we noted above (II.8), Bryher would report that JEI had tried to persuade JEII to put the matter off for at least a year. It is striking how completely JEII rebelled against this proposal. He and Esther rapidly formalised their engagement, and this soon became public knowledge: their engagement was announced in *The Daily Telegraph* on 24 July 1933. Even *The Telegraph*, however, expected there to be a delay before the wedding: not only had JEI recently died, the paper observed, but Esther de Sola had been unwell. Only a few days before JEI's death, she had had an operation for appendicitis, and she was subsequently treated at a nursing home in the countryside. There was 'no question at the moment of a marriage in the autumn'.⁵⁹¹

Nonetheless, the couple refused to delay their wedding: they were married at Chertsey Registry Office, Surrey on 22 August.⁵⁹² The ceremony was a small one, conducted almost entirely in secret, without JEII's sister or mother present. Of the six witnesses in attendance, one was especially close to JEII: William Cox (1881–1939), his godfather. There is considerable evidence of the close relationship between the two, with JEII buying property on Cox's behalf and dedicating his first book on mammalogy to Cox. Cox, in turn, remembered JEII in his will, leaving him a diamond and onyx set of evening studs and cufflinks.⁵⁹³ As we noted above (II.8), Hannah Glover was suspicious of Cox's influence over JEII.

JEII's and Esther's wedding made national and



JEF Archive:
*Esther de Sola on her
wedding day,
August 1933.*



international news.⁵⁹⁴ Press attention rapidly descended on the couple, forcing them to abandon their plans to remain in Eastbourne a week. Instead, they swiftly departed north to Scotland. The intense interest was something JEII would resent intensely. It had begun in earnest with his father's death, with journalists latching onto the drama presented by the 'shy, nervous young man' who was 'heir to the Ellerman millions'.⁵⁹⁵ JEII had refused any comment to journalists at the funeral, and his dislike of media coverage would become a matter of obsessive concern throughout his life.

JEII did not take on an immediate and regular role in the Ellerman business portfolio. This was unsurprising, since he was comparatively young and inexperienced. Instead, JEII delegated much of the responsibilities associated with overseeing the business to trusted members of the firm. This included Sir Miles Mattinson, who was invited to become chairman. Other key roles went to those who had been present at his wedding, including Thoby Prinsep, who was made part of a triumvirate responsible for the shipping lines with H. H. Heron and Hubert Stanley Holden (d. 1946), and William Cox, who was placed in charge of operations at Moorgate.⁵⁹⁶ On his death in 1939, Cox's obituaries would attribute to his influence a considerable expansion in JEII's wealth, such that JEII's fortune was reckoned to amount to a sum higher than the estate he had inherited, notwithstanding the effects of the estate duty.⁵⁹⁷

Business was far from JEII's main preoccupation. There is virtually no evidence that JEII ever sought to work regularly at the firm or take on greater responsibility as its proprietor. Those close to him, such as Cox, would comment to others that JEII had 'not the slightest interest' in business.⁵⁹⁸ As the decade continued, JEII seems to have found the weight of expectation associated with his position as a burden he was reluctant to bear. He was increasingly aggrieved by intrusions from the press. His attention to detail in this respect was keen, bordering on compulsive: throughout 1936 he had a meticulous record kept of every time he was mentioned in a newspaper or periodical. Of particular concern was the publication of details regarding his private life. After their return from Scotland, JEII and Esther spent much of the rest of the 1930s at Airth Lodge on the Charlecombe Estate, close to Sunningdale, Berkshire, an address which was disclosed in several national newspapers. A particular offender was Lord Beaverbrook's *Daily Express*, which repeatedly discussed JEII's location in a series of 1936 articles.⁵⁹⁹ At one point, press photographers had surmounted a stone wall topped with shards of glass, in an attempt to photograph JEII.⁶⁰⁰ These practices caused JEII acute disquiet, and it was reported that life had become impossible for him in Sunningdale. In 1938, more unusually, JEII appeared in *L'Os à Moelle*, the magazine run by the French satirist Pierre Dac (1893–1975), who confected an invented conversation between JEII and Dac, the latter supposedly posted undercover in London 'déguisé en vice-amiral'.⁶⁰¹

JEII pursued several solutions to rid himself of the press's invasion of his privacy, including the sale of some or all of Ellerman Lines to foreign buyers.⁶⁰² It is clear that JEII's state of mind at this time was fraught. His associate and factotum E. Bridges Webb was concerned that JEII would go off the 'deep end' if the intrusions persisted.⁶⁰³ This caused anxiety to those close to him: Bridges Webb and Cox, in particular, were keen to prevent

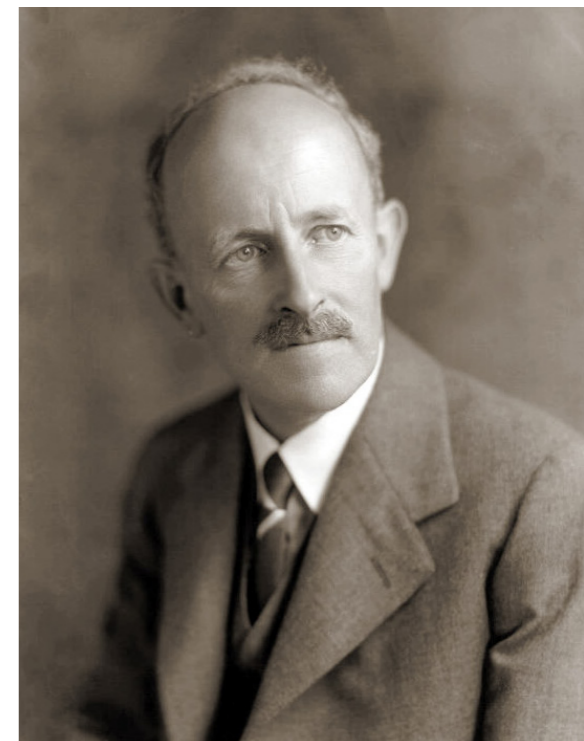
the sale of the fleet, especially to a foreign buyer. One concern was the potential risk to their own position if they failed to control the press.⁶⁰⁴

This began a period of considerable activity in response. From late 1936 through 1937, JEII took action to rid himself of the 'molestation'.⁶⁰⁵ JEII asked Bridges Webb to convince the editors of London's leading papers not to divulge his address, an injunction which they were all willing to follow except Lord Beaverbrook.⁶⁰⁶ JEII consequently tried to tackle the problem in a different way, and attempted to purchase the offending newspapers outright, only for Beaverbrook to refuse to part with *The Daily Express*.⁶⁰⁷ In imitation of his father (I.4.5, I.6.2), JEII acquired a considerable stake in a number of newspapers. He purchased Illustrated Newspapers Ltd., which his father had formerly owned, in the belief that Fleet Street would be more reluctant to bother him since 'dog does not bite dog'.⁶⁰⁸ He remained the controlling shareholder of Illustrated Newspapers Ltd. until he sold his interest to Roy Thomson (1894–1976), 1st Baron Thomson of Fleet, in 1961.⁶⁰⁹ In 1938, JEII also purchased a substantial block of shares in Odhams Press, which controlled *The Daily Herald*, a considerable shareholder in *The Daily Mirror* and its parent company IPC, when the latter acquired Odhams in 1963. Finally, JEII acquired a stake in Associated Television Ltd., which would later become Central Television.

A second approach involved divestment. JEII reportedly felt that divesting himself of his fortune would limit press interest in his life. This proposal provoked a complex set of discussions, largely conducted between Bridges Webb and figures in the upper echelons of the Baldwin government. While



JEF Archive:
Undated photo of
JEII and Esther
Ellerman.



Public domain:
Maurice Hankey, 1st
Baron Hankey

these discussions ultimately extended to the Prime Minister himself, Stanley Baldwin (1867–1947), they chiefly involved the Cabinet Secretary Maurice Hankey (1877–1963), 1st Baron Hankey whom JEII and Bridges Webb believed would serve as a conduit between JEII and Baldwin. The nub of their talks focused on developing a scheme — initially proposed, it appears, by Bridges Webb, rather than JEII — to transfer the whole of Ellerman Lines to the nation, via a series of trusts managed by a board that included Bridges Webb, Cox, and other figures nominated by the Prime Minister.⁶¹⁰ The scheme was seriously considered, and variations of it were discussed by Bridges Webb, JEII, Hankey, and others throughout 1937.

Yet the scheme ultimately foundered. One difficulty was the opposition of Ellerman’s advisor, Sir Joseph Ball (1885–1961). Another was the indiscretion of Bridges Webb. Hankey advised JEII that it would be impossible for Bridges Webb to maintain secrecy surrounding the arrangement, which led to a “bust-up” for ‘the little plan of an Ellerman Trust’.⁶¹¹ The scheme was evidently viewed by its proponents as a vehicle for self-enrichment or preferment: Hankey was soon to retire and felt the plans could offer him secure remuneration in his dotage; Bridges Webb and Cox were concerned with the status and social recognition that the scheme promised them, as prospective trustees.⁶¹² Cox, for example, believed he would garner a knighthood.⁶¹³

However, one cannot neglect the seriousness which JEII brought to the proposal. JEII was eager to embrace the scheme as a dissolvent of the press’s interest in his life. Hankey had made it a *sine qua non* of his involvement that JEII would ‘kno[w] what he is doing’.⁶¹⁴

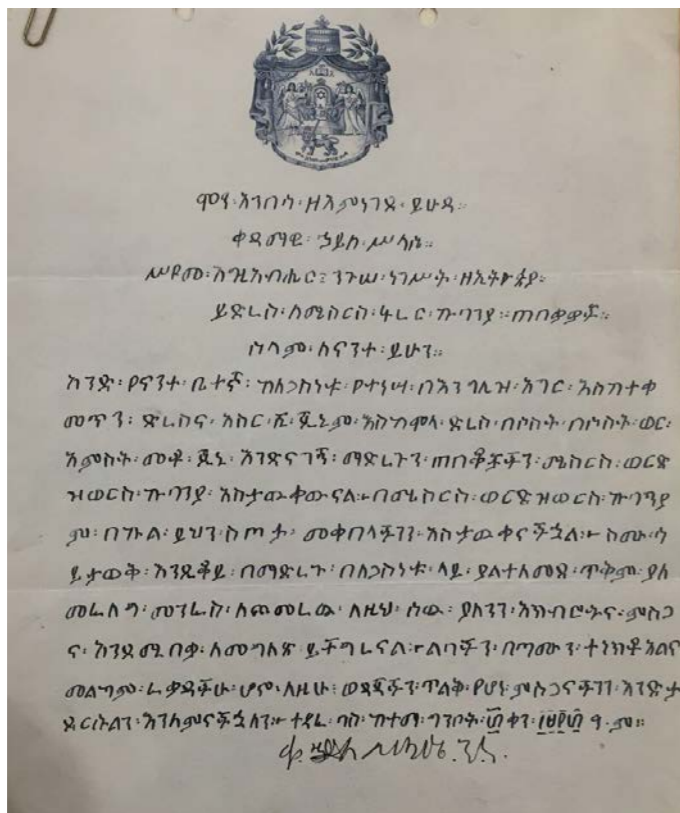
JEII convinced him on this point. At a meeting on 15 July 1937, Hankey noted that ‘[i]n the course of the interview I asked him point blank if he realised what a big thing he was doing, and if he really wanted to do it. He insisted strongly that this was the case’.⁶¹⁵

The failure of this scheme did not end JEII’s involvement with Hankey in the later 1930s. These interactions turned on JEII’s substantial financial resources, and especially his willingness to donate funds to political purposes. While JEII did not publicly express his political views, he was ‘keen on keeping the Conservative party in office’, and he expressed a willingness to direct his resources to the party.⁶¹⁶ Hankey was consulted to suggest

‘worthy objects of National Importance’.⁶¹⁷ These talks resulted in Ellerman committing substantial funds to combat German, Italian, and Communist propaganda, a further annual fund to which Hankey could propose — pending JEII’s approval — various causes, and the commitment that Illustrated Newspapers would be placed at Hankey’s disposal as and when he saw fit.⁶¹⁸ In the years following the collapse of the trust scheme, Cox played a key role as an intermediary between Hankey and JEII’s funds. Among the schemes they supported were offering financial support to the exiled Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie (1892–1975), a considerable donation to the Territorial Army, and an attempt, organised in part through talks with Baldwin, to purchase Rufford Abbey in Nottinghamshire as a place of accommodation for refugees from Nazi Europe.⁶¹⁹ Cox’s death cut short much of this activity; it would come to a complete halt following the imposition of wartime tax increases.⁶²⁰

The relationship between JEII and those in high political positions was not unidirectional. JEII would call on Hankey’s services at the outbreak of the Second World War. Conscription had evidently been one of JEII’s longstanding fears. At the height of tension concerning a potential war earlier in 1933, Bryher had noted, in a letter to H. D., that JEII was ‘terrified’ at the prospect of conflict: ‘he will refugee [sic] to America or Norway’.⁶²¹ In the first month of the outbreak of hostilities, JEII’s solicitor, Hubert Davenport Price (d. 1958), broached the issue with Hankey, at this stage Minister without Portfolio and a member of the War Cabinet. At JEII’s urging, Price asked whether JEII could receive an exemption from active service.⁶²² Hankey was familiar with JEII’s infirm constitution, noting, after their meeting in July 1937,

JEF Archive: Letter from Haile Selassie, conveyed to JEII as his anonymous benefactor.



JEF Archive: Bagshot Platoon, December 1944.

that he had a ‘very poor physique’ and, in December of the same year, that ‘E. looked ill, thin’.⁶²³ Price and JEII proposed that an exemption could be granted on the basis that JEII was a significant businessman, whose place at the helm of Ellerman Lines was essential to the war effort.⁶²⁴ Hankey reported, in April 1940, that the Ministry of Labour had responded negatively. Merely being the director of a company was not an exempted category of employment. JEII would need to undertake a medical examination.⁶²⁵ More worryingly, any postponement to the examination would require the agreement of the Board of Trade, which would risk publicity.⁶²⁶ As Hankey noted in a memorable letter, there was a risk that their activities ‘were moving into an area of unacceptable danger. The weak and spineless young heir whose neurotic hand could not grasp the sceptre and who was mainly concerned to live in obscurity and get out of national service’.⁶²⁷ The matter was ultimately resolved quietly, and fortuitously for JEII. He took the medical exam and the results exempted him from active service. Over-determining the exemption was that JEII had become a company secretary in January 1940 — a status which had, by then, become an exempted category of employment.⁶²⁸

During the war, JEII and Esther resided at Weston House in Bagshot, Surrey, together with several billeted Ellerman Lines personnel,⁶²⁹ and at Esther’s mother’s home Sunningdale.⁶³⁰ Their home in Kensington Palace Gardens was damaged by bombing, and they would not reside in it again after the end of the war. JEII’s war years are difficult otherwise to reconstruct. In March 1940, *The Telegraph* reported that a Nazi play, ‘broadcast from several stations’, had depicted JEII and Churchill ‘making £4,000,000 between them by withholding news of the damage to H.M.S. Nelson in order to speculate on the Stock Exchange! [...] Sir John, incidentally, was given what purported to be a Jewish voice’.⁶³¹ In 1939, JEII was described as a ‘known antifascist’ (‘bekannte Antifaschist’) in an article on ‘Jewish domination in England’.⁶³² In 1940, JEII was identified as a Jew in the Nazi-endorsed publication by Claus Krüger, *Juden in England* (1940–2).⁶³³ In the same year, The Imperial Fascist League identified JEII as a ‘hereditary titleholder of Jewish blood’.⁶³⁴ In 1941, he was described as a ‘known antifascist’ in a Nazi-endorsed publication *Der Südosten: Grossdeutschland und das neue Europa* (1941).⁶³⁵ JEII was separately denounced by the Nazi propagandist William Joyce (1906–1946), ‘Lord Haw Haw’, as a Jewish industrialist,⁶³⁶ and his name was in the *Sonderfahndungsliste G.B.*, a Nazi arrest list, otherwise known as ‘Hitler’s black book’.⁶³⁷ In 1941, the Nazi propaganda magazine, *Illustrierter Beobachter* published an extended criticism of JEII, which included the following claim:

Ellerman Junior’s house on Millionaire’s Row in Kensington Palace Gardens is well worth seeing: the wallpaper alone — genuine Chinese silks and French tapestries — cost a few hundred thousand pounds; the golden bathroom furnishings for him and his very young Jewish wife, formerly known as Esther de Sola in every London nightclub, rival in splendour the rooms for the Siamese cats which Ellerman keeps for amusement.⁶³⁸

JEII was detached from the war effort. A series of inaccurate reports in *The Daily Express*, including his reported donation of a baby elephant to an Airth estate fire brigade,⁶³⁹ have sown confusion about his activities; one report of 9 October 1941 spuriously claimed that JEII had ‘made a secret business flight to Moscow’. However, as JEII informed *The Daily Express* editor Herbert Gunn (1903–1962) in 1950, he had never flown in a plane, still less flown to

Moscow. Another unusual report, dated 13 September 1939, noted that JEII had completed a ‘600-page biography’ of his father-in-law, Clarence de Sola. However, the source of this information was not disclosed, and no evidence of the biography exists.⁶⁴⁰ Instead of these imagined activities, JEII’s war was devoted largely to his studies in mammalogy, in which he would become a world expert.

5 1946–1973

JEII’s post-war years were marked by several considerable changes from the previous decade. This included the relocation of JEII’s main base in England: after ‘tiring’ of Sunningdale, he relocated to his ‘home town’ of Eastbourne.⁶⁴¹ Until the disruption caused by the decision to erect blocks of flats in 1963,⁶⁴² he would claim to have enjoyed the area, writing to the zoologist Martin Hinton (1883–1961) in 1954 that ‘I certainly would never again voluntarily live anywhere but Eastbourne. It is where I started my life, where I belong, and where I hope to finish my life (the last being my sole remaining ambition)’.⁶⁴³ When he and Esther needed to be in London, they used a suite at the Dorchester Hotel: spending as many as seven weeks at the Dorchester per year.

The freedom of the post-war years also meant that JEII and Esther were no longer confined to England. In addition to regular summer trips to France, JEII and Esther travelled further afield. This was prompted, at least initially, by JEII’s health. As early as 1939, JEII had been advised by a doctor to spend the winter in a warm and dry climate such as South Africa.⁶⁴⁴ In the winter of 1947–48, JEII finally made the voyage, together with Sir Ian



JEF Archive: Esther, JEII, and Ian Fraser, 1945.

Left and below:
JEF Archive: JEII
and Esther Ellerman,
1947.

Right: JEF Archive:
Undated photo of
JEII and Esther
Ellerman.



Fraser (1897–1974), the blind conservative party politician, and his wife Irene, Lady Fraser (d. 1978), Esther Ellerman's sister Jessica Elvira, William James Riddell (1909–2000), the competitive skier, as well as a chauffeur and a maid. JEII was immediately enraptured, writing back ecstatically to Hinton that 'South Africa absolutely beats hell! Have had a wonderful holiday'.⁶⁴⁵ The trip would mark the beginning of his and Esther's near-annual pilgrimage to Cape Town.

This era of JEII's life was again characterised by a persistent distance from the day-to-day affairs of his various business holdings. Although he willingly fulfilled, when necessary, the few duties required of him in that setting, his post-war life was typified instead by his and Esther's regular vacations abroad, his cultivation of a lifelong interest in musical theatre, his research into rodents, and his burgeoning involvement in philanthropy.

5.1 Musical Theatre

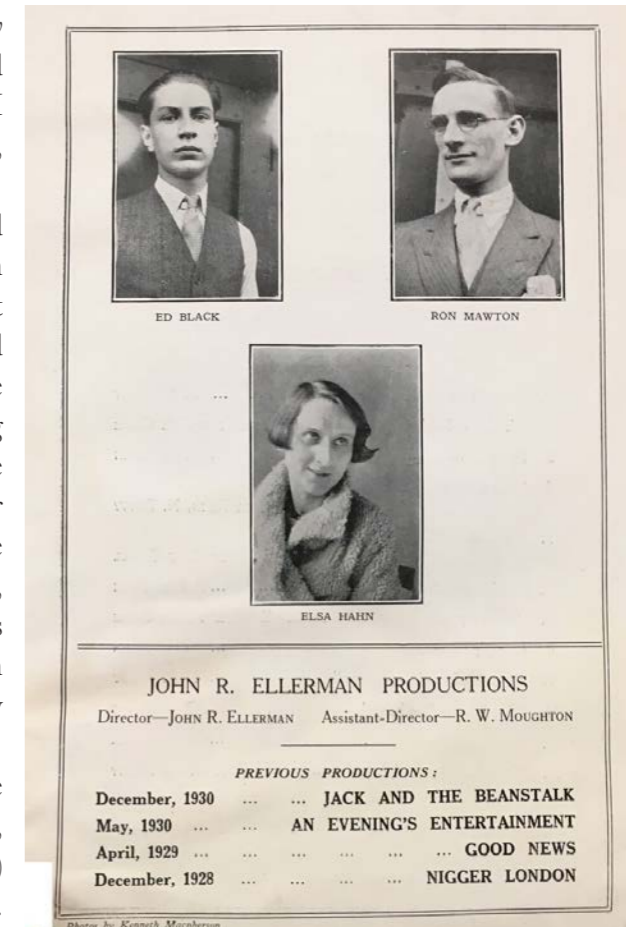
JEII's early life, as we have seen, was marked by his interest and participation in musical theatre, culminating in his co-ordination of an amateur dramatic troupe and their performances at 372 Euston Road. The end of JEII's public performances did not spell the end of his theatrical career, as he appears to have continued to stage private shows for his

friends and employees. In 1939, *The Daily Express* would report that Airth Lodge had played host to a small theatre, in which JEII had held performances of *Dick Whittington*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, and *Faust*.⁶⁴⁶

Alongside these private shows, JEII and Esther regularly attended performances in London. One practice JEII had begun at a young age and continued until the end of his life was to keep copies of theatre programmes. This collection — reaching a considerable number, including some rare and valuable copies — would later be donated to the Garrick Club's Theatre Museum.⁶⁴⁷ Throughout his adult life, JEII maintained close ties to London's performers and producers, above all with the members and associates of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company.

The company had its origins in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, when Richard D'Oyly Carte (1844–1901) began producing light operas by W. S. Gilbert (1836–1911) and Arthur Sullivan (1842–1900).⁶⁴⁸ The association between the three was immensely profitable, and Richard subsequently invested his money in London real estate, constructing both the 1,300-seat Savoy Theatre and the Savoy Hotel, in which JEI became a shareholder.⁶⁴⁹ After Richard's death in 1901, these properties remained in the family, managed successively by his wife Helen D'Oyly Carte (1852–1913), his son Rupert D'Oyly Carte, and his granddaughter Dame Bridget D'Oyly Carte (1908–1985), until the company closed in 1982.⁶⁵⁰

By the early 1930s, JEII was a regular visitor to the company's productions. JEI's own relationship with Rupert facilitated the relationship. 'I daresay you will remember



JEF Archive:
Programme for
JEII's production
of *Hollybone of
Hollybone Hall*,
featuring JEII as 'Ed
Black'.



Public domain:
Dame Bridget
D'Oyly Carte.

my name as I believe you know my father’, JEII would write to Rupert, in his first extant letter to the D’Oyly Carte family, when in early 1933 JEII requested seats for the company’s first night performance of *Princess Ida*.⁶⁵¹ The request was successful: ‘I want this done promptly — can you get the two seats he wants’, Rupert scrawled on JEII’s letter. The pair subsequently exchanged several rounds of polite correspondence in the 1930s, including on the subject of procuring a souvenir programme of the 1921 Gilbert and Sullivan season, which was, JEII wrote, ‘the most artistic and interesting season of Gilbert and Sullivan that I have ever seen’. However, it was with Rupert’s daughter, Bridget, that JEII formed a lasting friendship.⁶⁵²

JEII would continue regularly to attend shows and performances into the post-war period — and his enthusiasm was matched by Esther’s. In 1954, JEII would highlight, with a note of some self-congratulation, that ‘during the season my wife saw her hundredth performance of Gilbert and Sullivan by your company, and I reached my hundred and fiftieth, having started approximately 37 years ago’.⁶⁵³ JEII’s attendance at D’Oyly Carte shows stemmed largely from his appreciation of the company’s traditionalism in performing Gilbert and Sullivan. In 1962, the troupe lost its exclusive copyright to Gilbert’s lyrics and the exclusive right of performance. The company faced pressure from its own trustees to modernise. Yet JEII was insistent that Bridget should fight the drive to innovate: ‘Personally I cannot help feeling that the companys [sic] main chance of survival is to stick to tradition. Nobody else will, and the fact that the operas have been performed consecutively for 86 years surely shows that the lines originally laid down by Gilbert were right’.⁶⁵⁴ JEII added a few months later: ‘so long as D’Oyly Carte continues, wild horses wouldnt [sic] make me go to a Gilbert & Sullivan by any other company’.⁶⁵⁵ JEII’s own preferences meshed with D’Oyly Carte’s resistance to modernisation. Through three generations, the company had struck a careful balance between maintaining its traditional staging practices without losing sight of changes in contemporary style, especially in periodisation and dress.⁶⁵⁶

JEII became a connoisseur of the company’s work, and his letters to Bridget D’Oyly Carte stand out among his extant correspondence. Where his exchanges with contemporary natural scientists were for the most part brief, professional, and business-like, with a few important exceptions, the letters to D’Oyly Carte frequently ranged over multiple closely-typed pages, as JEII went into minute detail, offering his opinion of each season’s shows, ranging from evaluations of new and old performers to notes of disappointment if any lines had been cut to shorten the length of a given show. (He evidently knew all the musicals by heart.⁶⁵⁷) JEII’s knowledge of the performances was considered so comprehensive that he was asked to provide feedback for drafts of Cyril Rollins’s and Richard Witts’s *The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company in Gilbert and Sullivan Operas: A Record of Productions, 1875–1961* (1962).⁶⁵⁸

JEII felt an evident investment in the company and its success. He offered advice if he foresaw any potential difficulties posed by upcoming performances. In 1954, he advised Bridget on how the company could avoid using a racial slur in the upcoming season’s revival of *Princess Ida*.⁶⁵⁹ JEII’s connections to D’Oyly Carte were also cemented financially. By the later 1950s, JEII had signed a codicil to his will, stipulating that his shares in the Savoy Hotel would revert to Bridget, after his and Esther’s death.⁶⁶⁰

5.2 *Natural Science*

Alongside musical theatre, JEII’s other great interest in life was natural science, particularly the zoological study and taxonomy of mammals. This concern has long been met with a mix of perplexity and derision from commentators. As *The Daily Express* dismissively framed JEII’s choice in 1948: ‘The empire of trade lay before him. He chose instead the world of rodents’.⁶⁶¹ The association encouraged other unfavourable comparisons: H. D. likening him to a ‘rat’, as we noted above (II.8), or the claim, confided to his journal by David Lindsay, Earl of Crawford, that JEII ‘had the appearance of a rodent himself’.⁶⁶² This disdain sits in sharp contrast to JEII’s sense of the significance of his work, and how he had felt press intrusion into his life had compromised his dedication to it. As he reportedly noted in conversation with *The Daily Express* journalist Hugh Cudlipp (1919–1988), later 1st Baron Cudlipp in 1950: “‘What if the persecution goes on? How can I do my work — important work, too?’”⁶⁶³ JEII’s assessment of his accomplishments as a scientist and as a patron of science was not self-aggrandising. His scientific work was widely recognised by contemporary authorities, a feat remarkable for someone who undertook no formal scientific training in zoology. Moreover, he played an active role in national and international zoological circles and organisations, and he financed research trips and publications. In many respects, the obsessiveness and the minute attention to detail which JEII devoted to financial matters was mirrored by JEII’s exertions in zoology.

JEII’s fascination with animals was evident from his earliest years, and included his frequent visits to the zoo in London and Paris, the pet porcupines and mice he was allowed to keep in the attic, and the article he penned for *Close Up*, insisting on our need to appreciate animal psychology. The Charlecombe Estate provided him with space to develop these interests, and he ensured its grounds constituted a ‘sanctuary for birds and other wild life’.⁶⁶⁴ He also continued to keep rodents indoors. While rumours circulated in the press and among those who were outside his inner circle that these were hedgehogs, JEII’s correspondence reveals that they continued to number only porcupines, at least during the later 1930s.⁶⁶⁵ To these he subsequently added other species.⁶⁶⁶ JEII revelled in observing these creatures and their



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Hugh Cudlipp, 1st
Baron Cudlipp.*

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Portrait Gallery:
Sir Alister
Clavering Hardy.

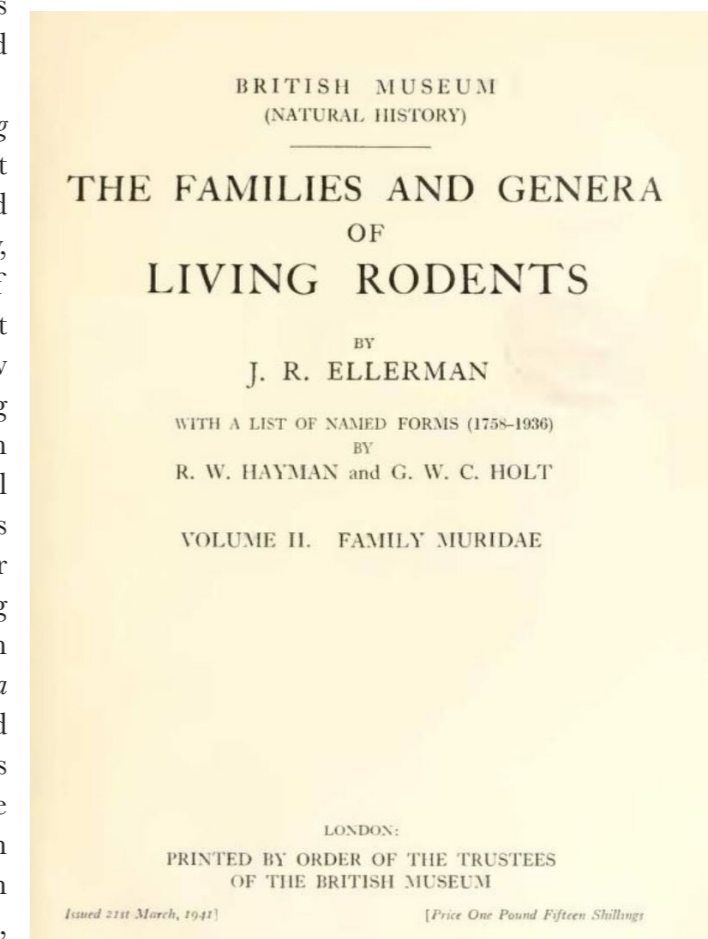


practices. Writing to the zoologist Sir Alister Clavering Hardy (1896–1985) in 1936, JEII relished describing the ‘amusing’ animals, especially the ‘most entertaining’ sand hamsters he had recently purchased, whose intelligent females contrasted with the ‘most stupid’ males.⁶⁶⁷ JEII was himself responsible for looking after these rodents, and his letters reveal the travails and difficulties of any rodent owner, ranging from the deaths of certain key specimens (his only male porcupine dying in early 1936), the over-frequent copulation of others (particularly, in this case, the sand hamsters), and the difficulties involved in maintaining some species in captivity (his pet porcupine, ‘Billy’, needed potentially-fatal monthly operations to correct its overgrowing incisors).⁶⁶⁸

JEII’s curiosity in the habits and behaviour of small mammals and rodents matches those of many zoological researchers, who — to this day — are motivated to enter the field because they view the species as ‘beautiful and fascinating creatures that show physiological, structural, and behavioural adaptations to an amazing array of lifestyles’.⁶⁶⁹ It has proven difficult to trace in detail the development of JEII’s scientific expertise or chart precisely the moment at which the hobby of keeping pet porcupines transformed into a genuine drive to make an academic contribution to zoological research. Previous accounts of JEII’s interest in this field have dated his involvement in zoology to 1937, when, it is reported, Guy Dollman (1886–1942) introduced him to ‘natural history through an introduction to the British Museum’.⁶⁷⁰ However, this post-dates the commencement of JEII’s serious scientific work and his connections to the world of academic research, both of which were already considerable by 1936, when JEII was already recognised as an authority. In 1936, Hankey’s private secretary, Lawrence Burgis (1892–1972) noted that JEII’s ‘one hobby is a study of the habits of rodents’, and he is ‘an expert on’ porcupines.⁶⁷¹ JEII was also becoming increasingly known in zoological circles. In addition to his correspondence with contemporary authorities like Alister Hardy, then Professor of Zoology at the newly-founded University College of Hull, he was also elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London in December 1936.⁶⁷² By 1938, he had approached the Trustees of the National History Museum to help — as an anonymous benefactor — in the acquisition of Tring Park and its mansion adjoining the Walter Rothschild Museum. The discussions were suspended only by the onset of war in the following year.⁶⁷³

Hardy appears to have played a key role in helping JEII to transform his interest in animals into a genuine scientific endeavour. The correspondence following their first meeting in late 1935 reveals JEII’s wide-ranging curiosity in the natural world, ‘spending all [his] spare time at the zoo or the museum’, and eagerly asking for Hardy’s recommendations regarding books on bats, whales, and other creatures as he deepened his study of mammals.⁶⁷⁴ It was in this context that JEII was disappointed but unsurprised that there existed no textbook on the order of rodents: ‘I was afraid there might be no text book — the trouble is they are such a huge order. According to my calculation there are at least two hundred and fifty genera, probably more’. The absence of such a work kindled JEII’s ambition. He later exclaimed that he would ‘love’ to fill this lacuna, which constituted ‘a real job to get ones [sic] teeth into’.⁶⁷⁵ Although at this point JEII readily recognised his limits by acknowledging to Hardy that he did not yet know enough about rodents to ‘even think of starting’, it is evident JEII began planning a concerted research project. In the letters that follow, one can glimpse his considerable and rapid progress on the project that would ultimately lead, in 1940 and 1941, to the publication of the first two volumes (totalling approximately 1,400 pages) of his three volume *The Families and Genera of Living Rodents* (1940–9).⁶⁷⁶ In the context of this reassessment of JEII’s early career as a scientist, the role played by Dollman might be said to rest in facilitating ready access to collections in the British Museum that would form the basis of JEII’s work.⁶⁷⁷

The Families and Genera of Living Rodents, like JEII’s subsequent scientific studies, was chiefly addressed to the study of rodent taxonomy, which is to say the classification of species and subspecies of rodents. It proposed to offer a sweeping review of all the named genera of living rodents and a description of each genus, including a complete list of all the species and subspecies of rodents that had been described in a near two-hundred year period, stretching from the publication of the tenth edition of Carl Linnaeus’s *Systema Naturae* (1758) to 1936. This era had witnessed considerable developments in knowledge of taxa (groups of one or more populations of an organism that are taken by taxonomists to form a unit), owing to two reasons.⁶⁷⁸ First,



JEF Archive: *The Families and Genera of Living Rodents*.

there occurred a near-exponential increase of information regarding diversity in nature based on new discoveries. Second, there occurred a rise of so-called ‘taxonomic inflation’, the multitude of purportedly additional taxa in any given context. In attempting to classify and provide a ready key to this vast amount of available information, JEII used the British Museum’s collections to study and catalogue in minute detail the physical characteristics of its specimens via their careful measurement and description in order to test whether the purported differences between given genera were supported by ‘characters which appear constant through the various groups’.⁶⁷⁹ JEII’s findings were supported by a vast range of illustrations. While JEII’s artistic wife, Esther, designed many of the working drawings, most of those included in this first publication were completed by the Italian artist Amedeo John Engel Terzi (1872–1956).

JEII’s work was widely praised on its appearance. Donald F. Hoffmeister (1916–2011), then of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, celebrated it as constituting ‘one of the most important, if not the most important book, that has appeared on mammalogy in the last ten years’.⁶⁸⁰ The doyen of contemporary zoological classification, George Gaylord Simpson (1902–84), described it as a ‘monumental work’, which was ‘beyond praise’ in its provision of ‘a practical aid for quick identification of specimens in this very difficult group’.⁶⁸¹ Simpson’s account of the work did include some reservations, which are important for shedding light on the limits of JEII’s scholarship and the broader place of his work in the history of mammalogical classification. In particular, as Simpson highlighted, JEII’s work was principally concerned with describing and evaluating the observable characteristics of given genera, without making detailed or extensive novel claims regarding their historical or phylogenetic (that is, genealogical) relationships to one another. Simpson himself put this in somewhat hyperbolic terms, suggesting that in classifying characters, rather than animals, JEII failed to make a contribution to the search for ‘a natural *classification* of rodents’ and consequently ‘his work might have been written by an eighteenth-century naturalist, given equally good collections’.⁶⁸²

There are grounds for reaching a more balanced judgment regarding JEII’s work, especially the manner in which it represented a continuation of much earlier twentieth-century classificatory practice. While taxonomists recognised the value of the theory of evolution and, with it, the principle of descent, they were slow to integrate this into the classification of taxa, which were instead determined largely on the basis of similarity and common characteristics. Common descent, in this sense, provided a post-hoc explanation of why organisms shared the characters they did, rather than an overriding criterion for determining classificatory schemes.⁶⁸³ JEII’s work was an exemplary instance of this procedure, and its tendency to use shared characteristics to ‘lump’ together genera that had been ‘split’ in the nineteenth century meant that it was very much in tune with contemporary trends, and potentially, in this way, less dated than Simpson implied.⁶⁸⁴ Simpson’s harsh verdict, no doubt, was connected to his own research, and especially the significant contribution it would make to the reformulation of the concept of a ‘species’ associated with the New Systematics of the Modern Evolutionary Synthesis.⁶⁸⁵ The field would, however, only be transformed in

the era of — and subsequent — to the end of JEII’s academic career, when the so-called ‘cladistic revolution’ insisted on the need to organise classifications according to phylogenetic relationships, rather than similarities, determined on the basis of locating a group’s single common ancestor.

The subsequent decades would see JEII complete many additional publications addressed to mammalian taxonomy. For the most part, JEII continued to focus on the study of rodents. This was evidently by design. As JEII explained to Hardy shortly following the publication of the second volume in 1941: ‘I don’t think I shall tackle any more Mammalian Orders. I feel I couldn’t face the spade work, months and years, again. But what I do want to do if the war is ever over is to concentrate and specialize further on Rodents, particularly Asiatic ones which interest me specifically and on which very little general work has been done’.⁶⁸⁶ JEII did not entirely confine himself to this field. A particular example were the publications co-authored with Terence Morrison-Scott (1908–1991), a figure of considerable importance at the British Museum who ultimately rose, from his initial appointment as Assistant Keeper in the Department of Zoology in 1936 to Director of the Natural History Museum, London from 1960 through 1968. Their *Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals 1758–1946* (1951, second edition 1965) presented a systematic revision of all the 809 species and subspecies found in that geographic region. In coherently treating given specific mammalian populations, it was lauded by Simpson as a ‘major work’ of ‘great and obvious importance’ for the ‘whole subject of systematics’, since it constituted a ‘great stride toward getting the morphological data into a form that *does* have biological meaning’.⁶⁸⁷

As JEII continued to research and publish, so too did he become involved with professional circles of zoological research, especially those connected to the Natural History Museum, London. In part, this related to JEII’s recognised expertise: one can readily find him thanked for his advice in research papers addressed to subjects in which he was an acknowledged authority.⁶⁸⁸ It would also extend to his participation in learned societies and their governance. In addition to the Linnean Society, JEII was a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London from 1926. (His father was elected a Fellow in 1893.⁶⁸⁹) JEII was also elected to the Royal Society of South Africa in 1954.⁶⁹⁰ JEII played an active role in the Zoological Society, notably donating animals to its menagerie, and pledged support for the construction and maintenance of the elephant house at London Zoo.⁶⁹¹ He also contributed to its organisation, serving on its Council from 1938 to 1942,⁶⁹² and he was numbered among those who strongly supported Julian Huxley (1887–1975) during his controversial period as its Secretary, when he led a campaign for its modernisation.⁶⁹³ JEII also contributed in numerous concrete ways to contemporary research and research institutions. He aided the Museum of Natural History during the Second World War by keeping a considerable number of cabinets and storeboxes at his estate.⁶⁹⁴ He directly funded several new scientific publications in zoology and a range of related fields, including the edited collection, *Control of Rats and Mice* (1954), whose publication was directed by the celebrated ecologist Charles Elton (1900–1991).⁶⁹⁵ Finally, he offered direct support for research in the field, including financial support for collecting tours in Asia and those of Cecil S. Webb in Madagascar.⁶⁹⁶ It

was particularly fitting that in honour of JEII's achievements in zoological research a newly discovered species of rat endemic to eastern Madagascar would be posthumously named after him, the *Eliurus Ellermani* or tufted-tailed rat.⁶⁹⁷

Much like Huxley, however, JEII did not enjoy a harmonious relationship with the whole of the scientific establishment. In the later 1940s, there was a move led by Hinton to propose JEII for the Royal Society, an election, Hinton noted in correspondence with Hardy, that would be 'completely justified' considering the scope of JEII's achievements in the field.⁶⁹⁸ Yet JEII's candidature was unsuccessful. Despite Hinton's pledges to pursue the matter, it was ultimately broken off.⁶⁹⁹ This failure mattered all the more to JEII since he was already disaffected with how he believed others in the field viewed his work. As he indicated to Hinton in April 1945: 'one gets little encouragement in this country in zoological circles'.⁷⁰⁰

JEII's frustrations were directed to Hinton because of the latter's connections to the Natural History Museum, London. JEII was especially dismayed by the length of time it was taking to publish the third volume of *Families and Genera*. This was distressing, he explained, since he had previously helped the Museum in all the ways he could, which had apparently led to him 'paying money out indefinitely' without ever having 'anything to show for it by way of return'.⁷⁰¹ JEII's concerns went beyond merely expecting reciprocity for the money and time he had invested. As other letters to Hinton from this period indicate, JEII was aware of his unusual relationship to contemporary scientific research, and wary of being treated as a dilettante. His annoyance about the delays to the printing of the third volume stemmed from this anxiety: although he had been willing to offer considerable patronage to others, he was concerned that he would pull '[his] weight as a "worker"'. As he reminded Hinton, there was always the danger that 'if one can never publish anything one gets the status of an "amateur"'.⁷⁰²

Once more, this apprehension derived from JEII's unease over press coverage. The concern was abiding: he refused to contemplate a visit to the United States to consult museum collections there, in fear 'the American press would make my life intolerable'.⁷⁰³ JEII's acts of patronage and financial support from this period were made anonymously.⁷⁰⁴ Yet he had published under his own name, and his involvement in the field continued to lead journalists intermittently to write articles highlighting his peculiar vocation. Although he was perturbed at a personal level, he was also, as we have seen from his conversation with Cudlipp, wary of how this coverage affected his status as a scientist. This was exemplified by a series of articles published in August 1948, on the cusp of the publication of the third volume of *Families and Genera*. *The Daily Express* ran a derisive summary of his life and work, including a picture of a beaming young JEII.⁷⁰⁵ International media were also dismissive, with *Time Magazine* running a sneering survey of his work under the headline 'Dr. Johnson of the Rats'.⁷⁰⁶ Although Hinton and others tried to insist that few people would take notice of these reports, JEII was adamant: 'It puts me at a disadvantage with my colleagues and I am better off out of it'.⁷⁰⁷ The fact that JEII's significance and research were subsequently underappreciated might confirm some of these fears.⁷⁰⁸

List of Scientific Publications by JEII

- *The Families and Genera of Living Rodents*, three volumes (London: British Museum, 1940–1949).
- 'Further Notes on Two Little Known Indian Murine Genera and Preliminary Diagnosis of a New Species of *Rattus* (Subgenus *Cremnomys*) from Eastern Ghats', *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, 13 (1946), pp. 204–208.
- 'Notes on Some Asiatic Rodents in the British Museum', *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 117 (1947), pp. 259–271.
- 'A Revision of the Genus *Merioes*', *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 117 (1947), pp. 478–504 (with J. L. Chaworth-Musters).
- 'A Key to the Rodentia Inhabiting India, Ceylon and Burma (Based on a Collection in the British Museum)', *Journal of Mammalogy*, Part I, 28 (1947), pp. 249–278; Part II, 28 (1947), pp. 357–387.
- 'Key to the Rodents in South-West Asia in the British Museum Collection', *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 118 (1948), pp. 765–816.
- 'On the Prior Name for the Siberian Lemming and the Genotype of *Glis Erxleben*', *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, 2 (1949), pp. 893–894.
- Articles on rodentia in *Chambers's Encyclopedia* (London: George Newnes, 1950).
- *Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals, 1758 to 1946* (London: British Museum, 1951).
- 'Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals — New Name', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 33 (1952), p. 399 (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).
- 'The Technical Name of the African Muishond (Genus *Ictonyx*)', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 34 (1953), pp. 114–116.
- 'Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals — Amendments', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 34 (1953), pp. 516–518 (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).
- *Southern African Mammals 1758 to 1951: A Reclassification* (London: British Museum, 1953) (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott and R. W. Hayman).
- 'Die Taksonomie van die Soogdiere van de uni van Suid Afrika', *Annale van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch*, 30 (1954), pp. 1–125.
- '*Ictonyx* Kaup, 1835, the Correct Generic Name, and *Ictonyx striatus* (Perry), 1810, the Correct Specific Name for the African Stinkmuishond', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 35 (1954), pp. 130–131 (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).
- *Supplement to Chasen (1940). A Handlist to Malaysian Mammals Containing a Generic Synonymy and Comprehensive Index* (London: British Museum, 1955) (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).
- 'The Subterranean Mammals of the World', *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa*, 35 (1956), pp. 11–20.
- *The Fauna of India, including Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. Mammalia. Vol. 3, Rodentia* (Calcutta: Zoological Survey of India, 1961).
- Status of the Generic name *Zorilla* I. Geoffroy, 1826 (Mammalia)', *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*, 19 (1962), pp. 286–288 (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).
- *Checklist of Palaearctic and Indian Mammals 1758 to 1946*, 2nd edn. (London: British Museum, 1966) (with T. C. S. Morrison-Scott).

5.3 South Africa and Final Years

South Africa was a haven for JEII. Where England was frequently associated with a ‘horrible climate and its stupid and challenging life’, South Africa represented warmer, drier climes and the sort of freedom, especially from press intrusion, that JEII was denied in his country of birth.⁷⁰⁹ The turn to regular trips to South Africa at the end of the 1940s coincided with a particularly grim period for JEII’s relationship with the press and their scornful coverage of his third volume of *Families and Genera*. This reached a climax in the early 1950s, when JEII and Esther had a series of lunch meetings, convened by Sir Ian Fraser, with representatives of Lord Beaverbook’s press empire. These negotiations with Hugh Cudlipp and Herbert Gunn were for the most part fruitless. Both journalists painted a damning picture of a ‘haunted man’ who was unable to deal with the interest in his life. As Cudlipp recalled in a letter to Lord Beaverbrook, in June 1950:

Ellerman is unquestionably a haunted man. Sick mentally and physically. He was, throughout the meeting, on the verge of an emotional collapse, and his wife frequently looked at him with a maternal concern. (She is uninhibited, and has a sense of humour: he has none.) [...] [S]moking a four-inch cigarette, he spoke disjointedly, but without stopping. “Why am I plagued by the Press? Why am I persecuted by you? [...] I am followed. Driven from house to house. Every hiding place is discovered. Last week you had reporters and cameramen outside this hotel. Why, why, why? I had to lock myself in my room for three days. I couldn’t eat, couldn’t work. And always it is the Beaverbrook Press — just because he quarrelled with my father. Nobody is interested in me. Whenever you mention me I get thousands of begging letters. Etc.” His condition is one of near-hysteria.⁷¹⁰

Cudlipp would work for an Ellerman entity as editorial director of *The Daily Mirror* from 1957, and he would later describe Beaverbook’s vendetta against the Ellermans as ‘despicable’.⁷¹¹ Yet his assessment in 1951 was mirrored by Gunn’s, presumably in sympathy with Beaverbrook’s contempt for JEII:

Ellerman, I must say, is a most extraordinary character. Physically he resembles a weedy type of bar lounge and throughout the meal he sat silent and morose [...] At the end of lunch Ellerman broached the real subject, which was a request, if not a plea, to me not to print any more stories about him. [...] He said, and I believe it to be true, that publicity makes him physically ill. [...] I told him, of course, he was wasting his time to ask an editor along and expect him to agree to such a ridiculous request. I explained at some length [...] that a man with his money must expect to excite the interest of the newspapers and the public. He then suggested it was a deliberate campaign of spite by the Express Newspapers, initiated on your [sc. Lord Beaverbrook’s] instructions. This I dismissed as an hallucination [...] He reiterated many times the hatred he has of publicity and his acute worry over it, the fact that he could not sleep at night, that he suffers from claustrophobia and that he felt hunted because he had not got a hiding place that was safe from the reporters. Over and over again he said “Why must you publish my addresses. [sic] No matter which house I buy where I hope to have seclusion the address appears in one of your newspapers.” [...] I told him there was only one thing he could do and that was to give his money away. He said he wished he could but it was tied up. I expressed some scepticism about that reply and he admitted that, of course, he could give away quite a lot, but he was afraid that even that would not cure his trouble with the newspapers.⁷¹²

The Daily Express had fitfully chronicled JEII’s life since 1933, when it had described him as a ‘shy, nervous young man’.⁷¹³ In September 1936, it recorded that JEII ‘spends most of his time pottering about the garden’: ‘England’s Richest Man’, the headline read, ‘Has Hedgehog Pets’.⁷¹⁴ More generously, the newspaper noted in August 1937 that JEII was ‘secretly a great philanthropist’: ‘he has devoted himself to helping people who need help’.⁷¹⁵ Yet the reportage was typically insinuating and discourteous: recalling the death of Lord Southwood (1873–1946), the proprietor of Odhams Press, the newspaper noted in June 1950, shortly before JEII’s meeting with Cudlipp and Gunn, that Southwood had served as JEII’s ‘anti-publicity man’: ‘The routine was simple. Immediately on publication of any reference to Ellerman the editor of the journal concerned would receive a call. A plea for sympathetic understanding of Sir John’s feelings would eloquently be made. “If one only realised the distress it causes him...etc...etc.”’⁷¹⁶

In circa 1962, Raphael de Sola, JEII’s brother-in-law, gave an interview to the journalist Tudor Jenkins, which focused largely on de Sola’s heroic activities during the evacuation of Dunkirk and his familial connection to JEII. The exchange merits quotation at length:

‘It is remarkable,’ I say, ‘that so little is known about your brother-in-law.’ Few are the authenticated facts about that strange man. His entry in Who’s Who barely fills seven lines. There Sir John gives only his date of birth, his parentage and his marriage. His address is given as his business headquarters in Moorgate. Now past fifty years old, Ellerman lives chiefly at Seven Gables, his secluded home at Eastbourne. He has a suite at the Dorchester which he rarely uses. Sometimes his relations give a party at the hotel. He never goes. Once he agreed to go to the Maple Leaf Ball at the Dorchester, of which his Canadian-born wife was part organizer. He came downstairs to join his wife’s party. But when he saw the crowd Ellerman took fright. He stepped back into the lift and spent a lonely evening in his suite. Of friends he has few. [...] What else is known about him? Nothing. Many stories have been printed about him. But his brother-in-law describes them as canards. Here is a catalogue of some of these:

1. *During the war there was a report that Sir John Ellerman was engaged in secret work and had visited Moscow. ‘Entirely untrue,’ says de Sola.*
2. *A report was published—and is still being printed—that de Sola gave a million pounds to Turkey after the earthquake there.⁷¹⁷ I understood at the time that the real donor was Ellerman. ‘I don’t know how that story started,’ says de Sola. ‘I am comfortably off, but not in that class. In fact, I gave five guineas to the Turkish fund.’*
3. *Sir John was reported to have taken a cottage on Brownsea Island in Poole Harbour to study the rats and mice that live in thousands on this privately owned sanctuary. ‘Untrue,’ says de Sola. ‘My brother-in-law has never been there.’*
4. *De Sola’s other sister, Mrs de Pass [sc. Jessica Elvira de Sola], was recorded as having bought an aeroplane to fly Sir John as her passenger. ‘Untrue,’ says de Sola. ‘My sister has never owned an aeroplane. She cannot fly one. In fact, she does not like flying, but takes to the air occasionally as a necessity.’*
5. *A picture published not long ago showed a man walking up the gangway of a ship. According to the caption, the man on the gangway was Sir John Ellerman. ‘It was not,’ says de Sola. ‘It was a professor from Johannesburg.’*

How do these stories get about? De Sola says he does not know. 'But they give us a laugh, so we do nothing to refute them.' He relates that one day he and his brother-in-law were out walking at Sunningdale. During the walk, de Sola bought a newspaper. 'That gave me a great laugh,' he says. 'For in the paper was a story that my brother-in-law and I had flown off to Paris together that morning.'

*He did not show the report to Sir John because 'my brother-in-law hates publicity of any kind. He does not like to see his name in a paper.'*⁷¹⁸

(It should be noted that several news reports from 1940 document Raphael de Sola's activities on behalf of Jewish refugees.⁷¹⁹ JEII's name is not mentioned in this connection, but it is conceivable that he subsidised these efforts.) Coverage of JEII's life and his eccentricities was not limited to England. In February 1967, *Der Spiegel* published an extended profile of JEII under the title 'As Shy as Garbo', in reference to the famously reclusive actress:

*Sir John Reeves Ellerman, 57, a British shipowner of German descent, is the shyest, least known and strangest [spleenigste] multi-millionaire in Europe. Sir John [...] is not in any telephone book, he is entered under a pseudonym in the British voters' list, and even his servants hardly know him: when entering his numerous country houses, he sometimes has to identify himself.*⁷²⁰

The profile continued by identifying JEII's places of residence, his interest in rodents, his youthful directing of theatrical productions, and Esther's practice as a pseudonymous artist.

JEII's failure to exert control over the press in England and Germany was in sharp contrast to his comparative success in South Africa. While an important role in this regard was played by Fraser, who wrote directly to editors of South African newspapers, the key figure was Piet Beukes, the journalist and, from 1950, editor of the Afrikaans newspaper *Die Landstem* in Cape Town. Beukes was a considerable figure in the South African political and media establishment, having previously worked as press secretary of General Jan Smuts (1870–1950), leader of the United Party and Prime Minister of South Africa from 1939 to 1948 when the Nationalist Party came into power and implemented apartheid.⁷²¹ JEII and Beukes apparently first met in 1948. They subsequently became firm friends who engaged in a regular correspondence, frequently met in person, and even saw JEII offer Beukes financial support when faced with a struggling pineapple farm. Beyond their friendship, however, Beukes also provided an essential service to JEII by endeavouring to limit press coverage of JEII's presence in South Africa. (In a letter of 27 May 1958 to Beukes, JEII asked Beukes to 'arrange that the Landstem ignores us [sc. JEII and Esther] during their impending visit to Cape Town. 'I am', JEII added, 'deeply grateful for your kindness and co-operation in this matter in bygone days'.⁷²²) Aside from nixing coverage in *Die Landstem*, Beukes proactively wrote to the editors of other leading South African newspapers, such as *Argus* and *Die Burger*, to ensure they did not publicise JEII's presence. Unlike in England, these efforts were effective. JEII and Esther enjoyed a personal freedom in South Africa that was — they felt — unknown to them in England.

JEII and Esther embarked on a series of lengthy exploratory trips through swathes of

the country. This adventurous spirit marked their first visit, when, having stayed in Cape Town a week, they enjoyed a 2,300 mile round trip through Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Queenstown, King Williams Town, and Port Elizabeth. Many of the subsequent holidays included these ambitious tours. In 1952, having finished his and Morrison-Scott's *Checklist*, JEII wrote to Hardy, reporting how he had indulged himself in a 'really long holiday in this fascinating part of the world'.⁷²³ Having travelled from the Kruger National Park to the southern tip of the Kalahari and Namaqualand, every district of the Cape Province, the Orange Free State, and Basutoland, there was, he could boast, 'not much left of the Union now!'⁷²⁴ One of the evident attractions for JEII was the chance to observe the remarkable and diverse range of animals and habitats in the country. Writing to Beukes, in 1958, the same year the Ellermans purchased a flat in Cape Town,⁷²⁵ JEII provided a wide and extensive list of the fauna they had recently seen in the game reserves of Zululand, encompassing black and white rhinos, warthogs ('my favourite animal', JEII added), buffalos, monkeys, baboons, zebras, impalas, wildebeest, reedbuck, kudu, bushbuck and more.⁷²⁶ This array of wildlife was complemented by the remarkable scenery: in the same trip they had been able to visit the Oribi Gorge, a canyon in southern KwaZulu-Natal, which offered a 'magnificent natural theatre of forests and mountains'.⁷²⁷ These trips allowed JEII and Esther simultaneously to pursue their own interests, with Esther painting while JEII studied local wildlife. As he put it, writing to Bridget D'Oyly Carte from Namaqualand in early 1962, where he was recuperating from a bout of influenza: 'Esther is busy on three paintings, and I wander about and watch several species of small animals which disport themselves between 5 and 6 p.m. every day on the rocks'.⁷²⁸

South Africa initially seems to have promised new avenues for JEII's research, especially by provoking his curiosity in South African specimens. 'This trip has given me', he wrote to Hinton during his first visit in 1948, 'a colossal interest in South African rodents'.⁷²⁹ As much as he was inspired by the animals he encountered, a considerable list of which he detailed for Hinton, this interest was also fostered by the contacts he made in the country. His and Esther's first trip, and the itinerary they had followed, owed a good deal to JEII's desire to forge connections with zoological specialists in South Africa, as a number of their stops were punctuated with visits to eminent scientists. In Pretoria, they met the ornithologist and mammologist Austin Roberts (1883–1948). In King William's Town, they spent two days with the museum director Captain Guy Chester Shortridge (1880–1949), with whom JEII attempted to broker an exchange of some rodents.⁷³⁰ While the deaths of Roberts and Shortridge in 1948–9 prevented lengthier collaborations, the spur the trip gave to JEII's zoological research would be seen in the vigour with which he revised the entries in his and Morrison-Scott's *Checklist*, and in his own article, published in Afrikaans in 1954, dedicated to South African mammals.⁷³¹

It would be wrong, however, to overstate how closely JEII and Esther's visits to South Africa were related to JEII's scientific work. Although their first trip was intertwined with JEII's research, later trips had a different impetus. As JEII noted to Hardy in October 1956: 'I have given up working on mammals and don't feel the slightest desire to do any more

of that work'.⁷³² JEII's only considerable publication following this date, a volume covering mammalia in the *Fauna of India* series (1961), had been completed by 1946.⁷³³

The pleasure JEII and Esther took in visiting and admiring South African flora and fauna was an end in its own right, and a welcome respite from the anxiety provoked by life in England. It was accompanied with their ever-increasing attachment to the country itself, a link that was cemented with their purchase, in 1963, of a Cape Edwardian-style mansion overlooking Bantry Bay, at 150 Kloof Road, constructed in 1912, originally known as 'Mount Florida', and later known as 'Ellerman House'. The house provided a base to host local friends and indulge in music. JEII entertained personnel from Ellerman Lines' South African branch, Ellerman and Bucknall, joined the Kelvin Grove Country Club, and served as a pianist in a musical group, The Ragamuffins, which gave concerts at old-aged homes and residences for the disabled. In 1970, he and Esther became South African citizens. Their annual pilgrimages involved the use of a specially-chartered Ellerman Lines vessel, which carried a variety of the couple's guests, who reportedly kept to an apparently enjoyable but fastidious routine on board: guests were advised to avoid the subject of their children, sport, business, or politics.⁷³⁴ Musicians often benefitted from JEII's free passage to South Africa; the pianist Ivor Newton (1892–1981) and soprano Winifred Lawson (1892–1961) were occasional guests on board JEII's charter, with Newton later describing JEII's love of playing the piano: 'he seemed to lose the reserve for which he was famous and the anxieties which apparently were part of his everyday life'.⁷³⁵

Throughout her marriage to JEII, Esther pursued painting as an avocation. Her artwork was principally figurative, in portraiture, still life, and landscape. One example is characteristic of her subject-matter and bright palette: a portrait of a bust of JEII. In 1939, she had arranged to exhibit her oil paintings under the name Ellen de Streuve. On learning

JEF Archive:
Undated photos of
Esther Ellerman.



of the proposed exhibition in 1939, *The Daily Express* had planned to out Esther as de Streuve and the exhibition was cancelled: 'Lady Ellerman's Secret Show Closed' was the report in July. Esther distributed work under the name or her own — a painting signed 'E de S, formerly preserved in the RAF collection, was sold in 2008⁷³⁶ — and she painted a number of scenes and portraits in Ellerman House.⁷³⁷

By 1969, JEII and Esther were spending as many as six months per year in South Africa, one month at sea, three months in England, and two months in the south of France, where they began to keep a home, and ultimately planned to purchase a villa at Cap-Martin on the Côte d'Azur.⁷³⁸ JEII's death on 17 July 1973 was sudden: he suffered a coronary thrombosis while staying at the Dorchester, forty years and one day after JEI's death. He was cremated in London, with a funeral at Putney Vale and a parallel ceremony in St Stephen's Church, Cape Town, reportedly attended by a multi-racial congregation of 200 guests, and presided over by the blind clergyman, the Reverend Michael Norman.⁷³⁹

JEII's obituaries re-emphasised his aversion to publicity. *The Times* described him as 'extraordinarily shy'⁷⁴⁰ and 'something of a mystery figure'. *The Sunday Telegraph* labelled him 'Britain's answer to America's Howard Hughes'.⁷⁴¹ *The Guardian* added on this theme: 'there are reputed to be fewer pictures of him in existence than of the American recluse, Howard Hughes'.⁷⁴² *The Daily Telegraph* noted that he was a 'recluse', who had 'spent hundreds of thousands of pound shutting himself off from people': 'He was hardly ever photographed and shunned every attempt at a personal interview. His only public utterance always was: "I have no statement to make"'. *The Daily Telegraph* continued by reporting, without attribution, the following anecdote of JEII's preferences while cruising at sea:

*Only half a dozen hand-picked officers were permitted to speak to him during his sea trips which he always made in one of his own liners. Every day he would lie in a deck chair wrapped in blankets, even in the tropics and seldom moved excepting for a 15-minute visit to the bridge, which he reached by a special staircase. Then he spoke only to the captain.*⁷⁴³

The accuracy of the reportage was questionable.⁷⁴⁴ *The Daily Express* noted that JEII 'rarely smoked' and 'avoided all contact with the outside world'.⁷⁴⁵ *The Financial Times* recorded that



JEF Archive:
Portrait of a bust
of JEII by Esther
Ellerman.

JEII ‘[he] lived the life of a recluse, refusing all visitors and seldom going out’.⁷⁴⁶ *The Sunday Telegraph* recorded that JEII declined to attend the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, ‘because one of his most important specimens — a mouse — was expecting a litter’.⁷⁴⁷

Other reporting was more considerate. In an account of JEII’s funeral service in Cape Town, *The Times* recorded that ‘Sir John succeeded almost completely in avoiding personal publicity’. ‘However’, it continued:

*journalists gathering material for obituary notices have been able to piece together some details of an extraordinary life which went far beyond an impersonal cheque book philanthropism [sic]. It emerged today that Sir John took enormous pains to learn the Afrikaans language and succeeded in becoming fluent. He also taught himself to read and write in Braille so that he could correspond with blind ex-servicemen at St Dunstan’s.*⁷⁴⁸

These divergent assessments evidently reflected the contending loyalties of the Beaverbook press with titles that were partly owned by JEII. However, where newspapers directly recorded the reminiscences of JEII’s friends, one acquired a clearer view of his personal character. In *The Cape Times*, anonymous friends were quoted as noting that JEII ‘was a true, practising Christian’, with ‘a great love for South Africa and its people’: ‘He loved nothing more than travelling around the Karoo or in Namaqualand. He [sc. JEII] had a great affinity with Afrikaners, particularly those in the country areas, because he shared with them their love of nature’.⁷⁴⁹ In a letter to *The Times*, Ivor Newton recalled the ‘almost frightening punctiliousness’ that JEII brought to ‘[w]hatever he did’. Yet he observed, warmly: ‘Sir John’s circle may be small, but those within it were devoted to him. To be admitted to his friendship was not only a rare privilege; it was also to experience a great old fashioned but quite unstudied courtesy and a simple, unforgettable kindness’.⁷⁵⁰ In another letter, addressed to *The Times* by Terence Morrison-Scott, JEII was described as ‘severe and uncompromising in the way he drove himself’: ‘his brain had a formidable computer-like retrieval system which rarely made mistake’. Morrison-Scott added, with fondness: ‘those who worked with him in the Mammal Room will always remember his thoughtfulness and loyalty towards them, and his great generosity of spirit — and also the charm of his shy fleeting smile’.⁷⁵¹ The theme of loyalty recurred in Dennis Martin-Jenkins’s posthumous tribute to JEII, delivered at Stellenbosch University in 1979:

His [sc. JEII’s] family motto was “Loyale jusqu’à la mort”. That word “loyalty” John understood through and through and he practised it meticulously and assiduously throughout his life at all levels of society. He never let anyone down from the highest to the lowest who had done him a kindness or service and that attitude of his towards people meant that he had a large number of devoted followers who gave of [sic] their utmost to him just because they really liked him and admired his character and his beliefs.⁷⁵²

6 JEII and Philanthropy

As we have noted, during his lifetime JEII was known for his generosity. *The Daily Express* itself had acknowledged in 1937 that JEII was ‘secretly a great philanthropist’. The secretiveness to JEII’s philanthropy can be exaggerated: he was an active presence in St Dunstan’s, a charity

for the blind that we discuss below, and he was the frequent object of letters from colleagues soliciting funds for zoological research. The impetus for his philanthropy — political, ideological, religious, personal — is difficult to identify unambiguously. However, there are a number of important indications of JEII’s views on the subject in his correspondence.

While JEII was reticent regarding his political views, and never expressed his views publicly, they were evidently conservative. In domestic politics, he favoured the Conservative party, on one occasion dismissing the Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson (1916–1995), as a ‘twerp’. In international politics, he expressed admiration for Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970). More notably, considering his many visits to the country, he did not — in any extant document — criticise or praise apartheid in South Africa.⁷⁵³ In a specially-drafted response to the Inland Revenue, prepared out of concern that JEII should be considered non-domiciled for tax purposes, Esther observed that she and JEII rarely voted in England or South Africa. JEII had ‘always kept away from politics in both countries’ and in South Africa specifically had found that ‘it is possible to shut out of one’s life the controversial issues which divide that country and thus maintain happy relations with all communities and political persuasions’. As JEII’s Afrikaans tutor Inez Gretton recalled in 2019, JEII was interested in ‘everything’ about South Africa, ‘except politics’.⁷⁵⁴

It is difficult to assess JEII’s judgement of apartheid, which he never expressly endorsed in any extant document. Instead, he adopted an attitude which is best described as ‘indifferent’. In a letter to Beukes of 6 July 1966, JEII noted that he was ‘very happy to hear that the International Court of Justice’s verdict was in favour of South Africa in regard to the South West’, in reference to the Court’s judgement on South Africa’s rule over Namibia, over which it had imposed the apartheid system.⁷⁵⁵ ‘I am sure that the everyone in S.A. will be very happy about this matter, and it is just what everyone hoped’.⁷⁵⁶ In a letter to Beukes of 20 May 1963, JEII adopted a condescending register when referring to the Black inhabitants of South Africa, joking that ‘I am sure you [sc. Beukes] will make the right arrangements for all the natives and coloured of the area to not live in the house yet before we return to Cape Town’.⁷⁵⁷ More problematically, it is evident that JEII did not object to segregation on Ellerman Lines vessels in South Africa, but treated the matter glibly. In a letter of May 1964, he apologised that Beukes would be unable to bring a ‘coloured’ (*kleurlinge*) servant on board an Ellerman Lines ship:

*I am incredibly sorry, but not surprised at all, that you [sc. plural] can’t get on the boat from Durban; not surprised because I told you when I was in the Cape that I think we cannot take coloured servants; I am so sorry about this, but I was afraid this would be against the law, and that we have no rooms for such people, and just before our departure, Mr. Cannan said to me that we don’t have servant rooms. On some of the boats (the big boats) I think we have girls or young women especially there to look after young children.*⁷⁵⁸

When Beukes evidently raised the issue again, JEII responded in the same month: ‘I am very glad you can take your Corlien [sc. Beukes’s servant] with you on the Union Castle boat, and terribly sorry our boats could not do this. But I told you, I think we can’t. We don’t have any rooms for coloured servants! Our company is second class I know!’⁷⁵⁹

Left:
JEF Archive:
Piet Beukes and
JEII, 1952.



Right:
JEF Archive:
Esther Ellerman
and JEII, 1952.

JEII's strongest and most direct political utterances, in letters to contemporaries, conveyed an abhorrence of fascism and the 'irreparable' evil of Hitler and Mussolini.⁷⁶⁰ In the mid-1960s, when JEII encountered a neo-Nazi newspaper in a French bookstore, he expressed his revulsion: 'it depresses me and makes me sick [... that] these stinking people are here'.⁷⁶¹ JEII explicitly connected his loathing of fascism to a moral and spiritual outlook. This outlook had as a dominant feature a concern with worldly sin and suffering. Although JEII did not hold a specific theological view regarding the forgiveness of sins — writing to Beukes that 'I don't fully understand the teaching that God grants forgiveness of sins' — he did believe that 'everyone has to pay for their own sins'.⁷⁶² While he conceded that it might appear 'very unorthodox', JEII believed the only answer for 'all the injustice in this life' was reincarnation based on a type of 'karma', through which a person has to 'pay for their sins'.⁷⁶³ As he explained in a subsequent letter: 'Why else would people suffer? I am convinced one reaps what one sows [...]. And this is where my belief in reincarnation comes from. If you make somebody else suffer, you will have to suffer, and if not in this life, then in another, later life. Also the good that you do for somebody else, will come back to you, maybe also in another life.'⁷⁶⁴ Absent this, JEII reasoned, '[i]f our sins would be forgiven too easily, why wouldn't somebody always do the wrong thing?'⁷⁶⁵ JEII's desire to help others was presumably rooted in a distinct sense of the karmic implications of his conduct.⁷⁶⁶

In advocating these views, JEII also directed his ire against the 'mechanical views coming from a lot of scientists'.⁷⁶⁷ This distrust of purely material explanations of human action was a common cause between JEII and others in his circles of scientific researchers, particularly Alister Hardy. In addition to being a noted zoologist who specialised in plankton, insects, and evolution, Hardy dedicated considerable energy to studying the relationship between science and religion, especially the scientific investigation of religious experience.

After retiring from his professorship in Oxford, Hardy founded and then became director of the religious experience research unit at Manchester College, Oxford. In the mid-1980s, shortly before his death, Hardy would be awarded a Templeton Prize for his outstanding contribution in affirming life's spiritual dimension. While JEII and Hardy may well have differed on given specific spiritual issues, they both believed in the need to study and reflect on this aspect of human life. In 1951, Hardy gave an Essex Lecture on 'Science and the Quest for God' in which he called for a 'progressive theology' based on religious experience that could 'become part of the advancing scientific front' by investigating the non-material realm, which was supposedly accessible via extra-sensory perception.⁷⁶⁸ Without capturing this dimension of existence, he wrote, 'the safety of our civilization' would be 'at stake before the advance of materialism'.⁷⁶⁹

JEII read Hardy's work soon after its publication in June 1951 and he was immediately taken with it, writing that he thought it was:

of the greatest importance and seething with common sense. It impressed me as much as anything I have read for years. I get so tired of modern materialism and scientists who think that body is the beginning and end of all, the soul non-existent; and who think evolution is the complete answer to everything in creation. Your work is really most important and most inspiring.⁷⁷⁰

Hardy himself believed that telepathy and related phenomena had been scientifically demonstrated, if not yet scientifically explained, and JEII was sympathetic: he highly recommended *The Imprisoned Splendour* (1953) by Raynor C. Johnson (1901–1987), which purported to investigate scientifically the phenomena of parapsychology and the experience of mysticism.⁷⁷¹ The association between JEII and Hardy's joint interests in this area did not end with JEII's death. In the 1980s, the Moorgate Trust continued to donate annual sums to Hardy's research unit on religious experience.⁷⁷² (Notwithstanding her Orthodox Jewish upbringing, Esther appears not to have practised observant Judaism, and reportedly never spoke of Jewish matters to her circle.⁷⁷³ However, she observed Yom Kippur, retained a seat in a synagogue, and preserved a star of David necklace at her death.⁷⁷⁴)

The extent to which JEII practised philanthropy in conscious imitation of his father, or sister, is difficult to establish. However, it is clear that shortly after JEII's death, JEII continued to offer support to the causes which his father had patronised: £10 10s to the Council of the Chelsea Hospital for Women in May 1934,⁷⁷⁵ £20 to Guy's Hospital in October 1936,⁷⁷⁶ £5 to the National Advertising Benevolent Society in the same month.⁷⁷⁷ JEII's philanthropy was varied,⁷⁷⁸ but a particular focus was on helping individuals with physical disabilities. St Dunstan's — now known as Blind Veterans UK — was founded in 1915. In 1921, Ian Fraser was appointed chairman of the charity, the same year in which its Hostel in London obtained a lease for St John's Lodge, formerly occupied by the Sir John Ellerman Hospital for Disabled Officers (I.7 above), and Fraser remained in the position until his death in 1974. Fraser had been blinded by an injury during the Battle of the Somme in 1916. He became close friends with JEII, joining him, as we have noted, on his first trip to South Africa in 1947. A South African branch of St Dunstan's had existed since 1918, and became an autonomous

charity in 1938. JEII supported both entities with charitable donations. He made his home in Eastbourne, Seven Gables, available to the charity after 1968 and he leased 1 South Audley Street to the charity for a nominal sum from 1947. In an obituary of JEII, published in *The St Dunstan's Review*, Ian Fraser recalled the origins of JEII's interest in the charity:

During the last war [sc. the Second World War], he was deeply moved by the news that young men and women, especially one or two young stage personalities whom he had admired before the outbreak of war were blinded by enemy action. He came to see me at St Dunstan's to enquire if he could help.

Fraser noted that JEII and Esther were 'frequent visitors to our war-time training establishment at Church Stretton in Shropshire and, ever since, he has been an extremely generous contributor to St Dunstan's'. According to Fraser, JEII 'made friends with many individuals' at St Dunstan's and he 'would take them for long walks and read to them'. Finally, Fraser, who also served as a Director of Ellerman Lines, observed that JEII '[o]n a number of occasions [...] asked me to pass on substantial donations to organisations of various kinds, always provided that his name was not mentioned, even to the heads of Societies he was benefiting'.⁷⁷⁹ (This insistence on anonymity reportedly extended to JEII's investments: when the film producer Filippo Del Giudice (1892–1963) revealed to *The Evening Standard* that JEII was a pledged investor in Pilgrim Pictures, JEII reportedly withdrew his financial backing.⁷⁸⁰)

An important exception to this policy of self-effacement was JEII's role in the formation of the Rachel Swart Fund in South Africa. The fund was named for Rachel Swart (1923–1955), a South African woman, born without arms or legs. Piet Beukes had met Swart by chance at an agricultural show, where Swart had encouraged him to try her homemade jams. Beukes was so impressed by Swart that he interviewed her for a profile in *Die Landstem*. JEII read the article, and resolved to help Swart. He subsequently provided her with a car and electricity for her home.⁷⁸¹ On Swart's unexpected death during childbirth in 1955, JEII was reportedly devastated. With the assistance of Beukes, he established the Rachel Swart Fund for the assistance of disabled people. As JEII noted in a letter to Beukes:

*I have always had the idea in this life that if with one's money one can salvage (so to speak) a few blind and crippled individuals whom one knows personally, and with whom one can up to a point share one's life, much more good is done than by giving large amounts of money to somewhat impersonal institutions, and one gets much more reward personally too.*⁷⁸²

JEII extended his support to another charity in 1965, when, with Beukes, he created The Houmoed Trust, named for the farm where a young woman, Ria de Wet lived: de Wet had become paralysed from rheumatoid arthritis, and she was eventually left blind. The Trust supported other individuals, anonymously. However, JEII was close to de Wet, and gave her away at de Wet's wedding, in the place of her deceased father.

In addition to his support for disabled individuals, JEII donated money to the Department of Zoology at Stellenbosch University, which named its Zoological Museum in his honour, and continues to endow an annual lectureship in his name.⁷⁸³

7 The Origin of the Moorgate Trusts

During their marriage, Esther resided with JEII in several homes: a mews house in Culross Street, Mayfair, 20 Kensington Palace Gardens, Weston House in Bagshot, Seven Gables in Eastbourne, the Charlecombe Estate in Sunningdale, The Pennings in Wiltshire, a suite of rooms on the sixth floor of the Dorchester Hotel, Roughwood Park in Little Chalfont, Buckinghamshire, and Ellerman House in Cape Town. The comfort that her marriage to JEII secured stood in contrast with JEII's reported preparedness, during negotiations to nationalise Ellerman Lines in 1937, to live on £3,000 per annum indefinitely, in lieu of the £500,000 which he was then estimated to earn each year. The couple's actual expenditure would vastly exceed £3,000 per annum. For example, the cost of residing in the Dorchester for the year ending 5 April 1973 was £34,998. JEII's annual expenditure in South Africa in the same year was £65,854.⁷⁸⁴ For the remainder of their marriage, save for the disruption of the Second World War, JEII and Esther lived in unostentatious luxury: their homes were attended by a butler and maids, they made use of a chauffeur in England and South Africa, and they were generous to friends.⁷⁸⁵ The question of Esther's financial security in the event of JEII's death was thus a matter of concern. Owing to the structure of JEII's finances, the implications of estate duty in Britain required careful attention, as it affected the future viability of Ellerman Lines and other entities in which JEII was a substantial shareholder.

In comparison with his father, who had preserved £6 million in anticipation of estate duty,⁷⁸⁶ JEII was illiquid: his cash reserves were insufficient to meet any prospective estate duty, which was as high as eighty percent in 1969. Dennis Martin-Jenkins proposed a solution in that year: transferring JEII's shares in Ellerman Lines into a charitable trust, as a mechanism to insulate the shares from the effects of any estate duty, pre-empting the exigency of selling the company, if JEII should die suddenly.

Martin-Jenkins and others procured the advice of a leading barrister, Raymond Walton QC (1915–1988), which JEII assessed in a lengthy letter of 12 October 1969, written aboard his regular charter to Cape Town, the Ellerman vessel *The City of Oxford*. JEII reasoned that his estate was split, in percentages, into five tranches: twenty percent in shipping, twenty percent in breweries, twenty-five percent in Moorgate investment companies, twenty-five percent in his own investments, and ten percent in South Africa. He attributed approximately eighty percent to estate duty, leaving the remainder to Esther and a small number of friends and charities as beneficiaries. In a later letter to the Inland Revenue, Esther would observe that JEII was prepared to meet a high tax burden in Britain, given his sensitivity to 'the anomalous character of the Ellerman fortune created by his father of which he felt himself to be a trustee, and he thought that it was fair that Britain should recover taxation on his fortune because it had been made there by British people'.⁷⁸⁷ (This statement, it should be noted, was produced in support of the contention — advanced by JEII's executors — that JEII had become domiciled in South Africa for tax purposes, by default instead of design; as his solicitors would observe to the Inland Revenue in March 1978, 'Sir John never allowed his actions to be dictated by fiscal considerations'.⁷⁸⁸)

JEII was self-conscious about his health. An inveterate smoker,⁷⁸⁹ he would complain in

1969 of a ‘filthy tendency to bronchial trouble’: ‘I cannot see myself living into the far distant future’.⁷⁹⁰ JEII was thus concerned by the fate of the employees of the varied Ellerman entities, in the event of an exigent sale, and he was perhaps more anxious to protect Esther from an impecunious future. As he noted in his letter on *The City of Oxford*: ‘It is of little value to me to salvage the Ellerman Lines if when I die my wife is to be left bankrupt, and I MUST be reassured somehow on this point before I could agree to what is suggested’.⁷⁹¹

The proposed scheme requires familiarity with the structure of JEII’s assets, which were shaped by the provisions in JEI’s will. JEII explained the arrangement in a submission to the Court of Chancery in 1970:

My father made his Will on the 3rd [sic] June 1930. After appointing executors and trustees thereof he gave various pecuniary and specific bequests and devises and gave directions concerning the Company Ellerman Lines Limited of which he was the controlling shareholder. Amongst the said pecuniary legacies there was one of £600,000 in my favour contingently upon my attaining the age of 21 years and a further legacy of £2,000,000 which was settled upon protective trusts in my favour and upon further trust that if as happened I should attain the ages of 25 and 30 years without incurring a forfeiture first one half and then the balance of the settled legacy should vest in me absolutely. By Clause 30 of his said Will my father gave his residuary real and personal estate to his trustees on common form administrative trusts with certain variations not directly material hereto. By Clause 31 of the said Will the investments from time to time representing my father’s net residuary estate were called “the Trust Fund” [...] I was given a protected life interest in the income of the Trust Fund by Clause 32 of the said Will if I attained the age of 21 years and survived my father.

The Trustees of the ‘Trust Fund’ were the Audley Trust Ltd., which was held privately, and three ‘quoted’ or publicly traded investment trust companies, the London General Investment Trust Ltd., the Debenture Securities Investment Company Ltd., and the Brewery and Commercial Investment Company Ltd. In order to dispose of the underlying assets in the Trust Fund, JEII required the Court of Chancery to remove the ‘protective’ provisions of the trust. The effect of the arrangement was as follows: the greater part of JEII’s wealth was owned by will trusts which JEI had established; JEII’s interest was a ‘protective life interest’, which restricted his ability to dispose of the capital in his lifetime; the capital which remained after JEII’s death would, in accordance with JEI’s will, pass to JEII’s wife for her lifetime; if she should predecease Bryher, the capital would pass to Bryher, members of JEI’s sisters’ families, and two charities which JEI had established, which are discussed below (IV.2). Removing the protective trust would permit JEII to control the allocation of the capital, including the transfer of Ellerman Lines Ltd. shares to charitable trusts.

Raymond Walton’s advice about the proposal to move JEII’s assets into a charitable trust explained the contorted implications of JEI’s will

The structure of the Will is odd. Sir John [sc. JEII] is entitled to appoint himself the following fractions of the Trust Fund, in each case by Deed or Will:

(a) 1/3 [...] This is an absolute appointment which will take effect in any circumstances. If he has no son or daughter who attains 21, then the fraction of 1/3 goes up to 1/2.

(b) Subject to his power to appoint among issue, and subject to his having no more than one child who attains 21, he can appoint an additional 4/15ths [...] If in fact he had no son or daughter who attained 21, and did not appoint to any further issue (if any) he could appoint (having already appointed 1/2 under (a) above) 2/5ths of the remaining 1/2, i.e. 1/5.

(c) He has a further residuary power of appointment [...] of 1/2 of so much of the fund as has previously not been appointed. This would be a further 1/5th, or 3/20ths, as the case may be.

JEII could appoint 1/3 of the Trust Fund without the consent of the Court, and potentially a further 4/15ths if he could ‘insure against’ having further children; if this insurance were possible, and if he had Bryher’s concurrence, who preserved an entitlement under the terms of JEI’s will, JEII could deal with a further 1/5th of the Trust Fund. JEII was aware that applying to alter the terms of the trust would affect its other beneficiaries, ‘with whom’, JEII noted in his letter on *The City of Oxford*, ‘I am not on speaking terms’. Bryher, he observed, might object ‘for the sheer hell of it’.⁷⁹²

Walton noted that JEII’s shares in Ellerman Lines, ‘if nothing is done’, would ‘fall to be valued on an assets basis, by virtue of Section 29 of the Finance Act 1954, as amended by Finance Act, 1968, Section 35 and Schedule 14’. Moreover, ‘since Sir John, either directly or indirectly via the chain of Trusteeship interests in the various interlocking companies is entitled to more than one half of the “dividends and debenture interest” paid by Ellerman Lines Ltd. the provisions of Section 55 of the Finance Act 1940, importing an “assets valuation” would apply’. Walton confirmed that the ‘charitable settlement which would deprive Sir John of any direct or indirect interest in shares producing as much as 50% of the dividends paid by the Company would, on the expiration of one year from its date result in [...] no duty payable on his death in respect of the shares so settled’.

These complex arrangements are not susceptible of easy summary, but a simplified explanation was provided by Walton:

(i) The Residuary Estate whereof the present Sir John R. Ellerman Bt. [sc. JEII], is the tenant for life on protective trusts is of an estimated value of between £50 and £55 million;

(ii) [...] such Residuary Estate includes directly or indirectly nearly all the issued shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. which are difficult to value;

(iii) [...] under existing Estate Duty law these shares will, on the death of Sir John Ellerman Bt. [sc. JEII], if no steps to meet this situation are taken in his lifetime, be valued on an assets basis as distinct from an open market basis.

This could mean that the shares might be valued for duty at £32 million instead of a figure nearer £4 million. As matters now stand, with Death Duties at a maximum of 80%, on the most favourable basis, on the death of the present Sir John duty of approximately £31 million will have to be paid.

This would present the ultimate inheritors of the estate (who cannot be ascertained for the moment) with problems which could only be solved by a sale (possibly a forced sale) of the assets of Ellerman Lines Ltd. followed by a Liquidation of the Company. It is possible that some liquidated entity might be salvaged from the wreck of Ellerman Lines Ltd. but this is problematical.

[...] In my view, it would be possible to devise [...] a Scheme, which would incidentally have immediate present advantages for Sir John. The constituent parts of the Scheme would, simplifying somewhat for the moment, be:

(i) Sir John would need to make himself absolute master of a certain proportion of the residuary estate of his father;

(ii) Sir John would then need to accept in consideration of this interest in his father's estate deferred shares in the Company which would of course represent a very considerable slice of the equity thereof;

(iii) Sir John would then need to settle these Shares upon trust from which he and any wife of his were entirely excluded.

The net effect of the Scheme would be that:

(a) Sir John would retain his protected life interest in the remaining assets forming part of the residuary estate of his father; having regard to the high levels of surtax he has been paying, the diminution (by reason of the Settlements) in his net income after deduction of tax and surtax would be comparatively small;

(b) Since the residuary estate would, as a result of the scheme, only contain something less than one half of the shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. after a period of some seven years from the date of Scheme being put into operation there would be no possibility of an assets valuation of these shares on Sir John's death; the valuation would then revert to a normal "open market" valuation;

(c) Control of the Company would remain in the hands of the Trustees of the residuary estate (where it is at present) plus the Trustees of the Settlements to be made by Sir John. He will be perfectly at liberty to decide who these Trustees should be.

(d) The Residuary Estate would for the purposes of death duties be reduced to manageable proportions, (say) £24 million, out of which £4.8 million would be retained by the Trustees after the payment of duties, and this would enable all the remaining shares (valued on an open market basis) and a substantial block of outside investments as well to be retained.

Walton identified the 'necessary steps' as follows:

The first step is to make Sir John absolute master of a proportion of his father's residuary estate – to be precise, of 1/3 thereof. The structure of the Will is such that, no matter how many children the present Sir John may have (and the law will presume that a man is never too old to have a child, and that, even if his present wife is too old, there is no guarantee that she will not die and the man marry again) he can always appoint one third of the Trust Fund to himself absolutely.

[...] The result would be that this one third of the Trust Fund would be held upon a protected life interest for Sir John during his life, and after his death for himself absolutely [...] The remaining two thirds would continue to be held upon trust for him for a protected life interest. In such circumstances, I have no doubt but that if an application were to be made to the Court under the Variation of Trusts Act 1958, the parties being Sir John as Plaintiff and the Trustees and his Wife as Defendants, the Court would "lift" the protection, and change Sir John's protected life interest into a straight life interest. This is a course which the Court is entitled to, and normally will take, without any difficulty whatsoever, the only essential being to demonstrate that the "protection" no longer serves any useful

purpose. I am informed — and this is, of course, indeed obvious — that the sole reason for the protection having been imposed in the first place was that Sir John was, at the date of the Will, a very young man, and in such circumstances the Testator could not easily tell how the possession of great wealth will affect him. In the circumstances of today, when Sir John has amply demonstrated that he is quite capable of handling great wealth with discretion, and that there is not the slightest danger of him squandering his inheritance and going bankrupt, the protection is pointless.

[...] The Trustees would then hand over to Sir John in satisfaction of his absolute one third interest in the Residuary Estate deferred shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. to this value, or partly such deferred shares and partly other assets. It is of the essence of the Scheme that the result of this transfer to Sir John should leave the Trustees with less than half of the shares in the Company.

[...] The next step would be for Sir John to settle these shares. [...] If [...] Sir John were to settle all — or part — of these shares upon charitable trusts, there would be very considerable benefits. First, there could thereafter never be any question of Estate Duty becoming payable: all the shares so settled would thenceforth be retained as a compact block untouched by any claim, unless Sir John were to die within a year from the Settlement. Secondly — and highly important from Sir John's point of view — the income of this Trust, which would suffer neither income tax nor surtax, could be used to discharge Sir John's existing Charitable Donations which he is accustomed to make himself out of his own taxed income. In this way, the Charitable Trust could easily add very considerably to Sir John's income, whilst enabling him in effect to distribute even more than he does at the moment to Charity.⁷⁹³

An order to alter the terms of the protective trust was granted in 1970,⁷⁹⁴ with no objection from Bryher. Subsequently, Nicholson Graham and Jones, JEII's solicitors, set about the complex task of establishing the structures of the charitable trust. For the purpose of reducing stamp duty, which was nominally one percent of the transferred value but would vary according to whether the shares transferred would confer control of Ellerman Lines Ltd., it was decided to create two trusts, dividing equally the shares they possessed to avoid conferring control of Ellerman Lines Ltd. on either: one trust was named The Moorgate Trust Fund, and the other trust was named The New Moorgate Trust Fund. The New Moorgate Trust was barred from investment in South America, as a nominal restriction to distinguish its charitable purposes from those of The Moorgate Trust. The Trustees included JEII, Esther, and other members of their close business circle — as we will note in the following chapter (IV.2). Finally, the transfer of shares to the Trusts, which constituted approximately eighty percent of JEII's shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd., was accompanied by the transfer of approximately twenty percent of JEII's shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. to a trust in Esther's name.

The exemption of the Trusts' shares from estate duty depended on the survival of the settlor of the trust for one year from the date of registration: JEII's death in July 1973 avoided this difficulty. Immediately following his death, a message was flashed to the Ellerman fleet, noting that 'Sir John had made arrangements that the line and its employees would not be affected by his death'.⁷⁹⁵ Another difficulty was created unforeseeably. The non-Ellerman Lines Ltd. shares which composed a significant proportion of the remainder of JEII's estate were assessed at their 'mid-market' value for estate duty at the time of his death, when they

*Bellmoor
Investment Trust
Limited, 1972.*



were trading at unprecedented highs. The ensuing collapse in the value of the shares left JEII's estate with a significant tax liability, which was avoided only by a provision in the Finance Act of 1973,⁷⁹⁶ reportedly put into effect only eight days after JEII died, allowing for the sale of shares in listed companies to occur within a year of the death of the owner, provided they were not repurchased. Esther's inheritance under JEII's will was nonetheless jeopardised by the lack of a buyer for the shares held in JEII's name — and the insistence, discussed further below (IV.2) that her shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd., which were also subject to estate duty, would not be sold. Only via the creative use of unit trusts — transferring the four principal investment trust companies which remained to JEII into a unit trust, and selling off the underlying assets — was the estate preserved from a liability that might have exceeded its realisable value.⁷⁹⁷ Separately, meeting the duty required the mass sale of JEII's property portfolio; the portfolio was entirely liquidated with the exception of 1 South Audley Street. Years of wrangling with the Inland Revenue followed, pertaining to JEII's domicile in South Africa for tax purposes at the time of his death. Yet Esther was ultimately provided for, in accordance with JEII's designs.

JEII's will, dated 27 July 1971, left to Esther the income of £8,000 per annum from two trusts settled by JEI, £100,000 in cash, and the residue of his estate, as an absolute gift, with the expressed wish that 'she should continue to support those Charities in which

we have been jointly concerned during my lifetime in particular St Dunstan's England'. Probate was granted, with JEII's estate valued at £36,484,216.⁷⁹⁸ Other beneficiaries, among several friends, godchildren, and former employees, included Ida Cox, Esther's sister Jessica, Ian Fraser, and Piet Beukes. In her correspondence with the Inland Revenue, Esther was adamant that JEII had never sought to avoid his liabilities in tax, as we noted above (III.6), but she conceded that a special exception was made for the 'Moorgate Trusts':

He [sc. JEII] had spoken to me of people he knew whose lives had been ruined because they had been ruled by tax considerations and he was very much against this sort of thing. I believe he never took any steps to avoid income tax or Estate Duty except once in relation to his shipping company where having been told that it was unlikely the Government would take over the Company for Estate Duty [sic] he consented to a scheme whereby it was given to a Charitable Trust and thus saved from break up on his death.⁷⁹⁹

Esther remarried in 1981. Her husband, George Sandbach Borwick (1922–1994), was the fourth child of Robert Geoffrey Borwick (1886–1961), 3rd Baron Borwick, a member of the George Borwick and Sons custard and baking powder family. The marriage was described by Borwick's contemporaries, including the actors Kenneth Williams (1926–88) and Christopher Biggins, as one of convenience for Borwick, but it is difficult to assess their anecdotal relationship.⁸⁰⁰ Esther's years with Borwick were spent partly at Ellerman House, partly in Monte Carlo, and partly in London, where she kept a flat in 21 York Terrace, Regent's Park, and participated in the activities of the Moorgate Trusts — as we will see in the next chapter (IV.2). Esther's personal benefactions after JEII's death included gifts to the Royal College of Music, which elected her as a Fellow in 1976.

Esther died from cancer in Cape Town on 10 March 1985. Her estate, comprising £28,896,415 in assets, was principally divided between her sister Jessica Mellor, then married to Sir John Mellor, 2nd Bt. (1893–1986), and George Borwick. However, charitable institutions numbered among her beneficiaries, including St Dunstan's, which received £10,000 in England and 10,000 Rand in South Africa, the Rachel Swart Fund, which received 20,000 Rand, and the John Ellerman Museum of Zoology at Stellenbosch University, which received 10,000 Rand.

THE MOORGATE TRUSTS AND JOHN ELLERMAN FOUNDATION, 1971–2023

When JEII created the Moorgate Trusts, he had hoped to achieve three objectives. First, he wanted to ensure the financial security of Esther Ellerman during her widowhood, if JEII should predecease her, as he rightly predicted he would. Second, he wanted to create a new mechanism to disburse funds to charitable causes. Third, he wanted to protect Ellerman Lines from an exigent sale, which he succeeded in doing. As the *Evening Standard* noted in JEII's obituary, it was believed in business circles 'that the sprawling Ellerman empire [would] not be able to remain intact'.⁸⁰¹ This belief was held only because the creation of the Moorgate Trust and New Moorgate Trust was not yet widely publicised.

One can ask how JEII would have continued to administer the Trusts, if he had not died so shortly after their creation. Our knowledge of the early operations of the Trusts suggests that he would have continued to support St Dunstan's, the Rachel Swart Fund, and other charities devoted to individuals with disabilities and to institutions promoting the natural sciences. This conformed with his testamentary instruction that Esther use her inheritance from JEII to 'support those Charities in which we have been jointly concerned during my lifetime in particular St Dunstan's England'. Esther's own estate was left principally to her second husband and sister. As Esther observed in her will, she had decided to make 'no substantial gifts to charities because the charitable organisations with which I am concerned benefit adequately from arrangements made by me and my first husband'.⁸⁰²

The evolution of the Trusts, their consolidation into John Ellerman Foundation in 1992, and the fate of Ellerman Lines Ltd. is the subject of this final chapter. The events described below developed largely without JEII's direct involvement. However, JEII left a significant imprint on the history and direction of the Trusts, and Esther Ellerman played a fundamental role in their early history.

1 Archive

Only limited archival materials are available for the early years of the Moorgate Trusts and less is available pertaining to the administration of JEII's investments in the period 1933–1973; it appears that these materials were either not systematically preserved before 1973 or they were destroyed after 1973. The principal exception is Ellerman Lines Ltd., for which a significant volume of material is preserved, as noted above (I.1). No archive of the Moorgate Trusts' grantmaking decisions or correspondence is extant; only chance survivals of minutes and the Trusts' accounts are available. Furthermore, only a limited body of legal documentation pertaining to the Trusts is preserved by K&L Gates, the successor entity to Nicholson, Graham and Jones. The archival record is richer for the period 1992 to 2023, but it is lacunose in several respects for the first decade. No systematic record of correspondence

for the Foundation during this period (1973–2000) is extant, either in a digital form or in a physical form. These absences limit a reconstruction of the history of the Trusts and the Foundation. However, an oral history programme, conducted by the Foundation with the help of Dr Katharine Haydon, has helped immensely in gathering material about the activities of the Trusts and the Foundation, especially in the past two decades.

2 JEII and the Moorgate Trusts, 1971–1973

In an interview for an obituary of JEII in *The Sunday Telegraph*, Dennis Martin-Jenkins responded to claims that JEII was indifferent to business. 'It is true he was no expert', Martin-Jenkins conceded. Yet Martin-Jenkins was eager to 'explode' the myth of JEII's 'lack of knowledge about the shipping industry': 'he picked it up through what he was told'. When asked about a future without JEII, Martin-Jenkins responded: 'We just carry on as before... touch wood'.⁸⁰³ However, an obvious change had occurred in the architecture of Ellerman Lines Ltd. as a business prior to JEII's death: where previously JEII was its single largest shareholder, after 1970 this role was assumed by two charitable trusts.

A commissioned valuation of JEII's assets, dated 31 December 1970, assessed their combined value at £39,865,899, divided into seven components:

1.	<i>United Kingdom investments (excluding Ellerman Lines Ltd.)</i> — £26,114,886
2.	<i>Canadian investments</i> — £252,300
3.	<i>Freehold properties</i> — £3,023,800
4.	<i>Loans</i> — £5,000
5.	<i>Bank balances</i> — £590,022
6.	<i>Ellerman Lines Ltd.</i> <i>Preference and Preferred Ordinary Stocks</i> — £261,722 <i>Deferred Ordinary Stock</i> — £12,004,431
7.	<i>Liabilities, actual, estimated and notional capital gains tax</i> — £2,386,262

The Trusts had acquired approximately eighty percent of JEII's shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. in equal proportions, item 6 on the list above, with the remaining approximately twenty percent transferred to Esther.

Since the assignment of JEII's shares in Ellerman Lines to the Trusts was effected prior to his death, JEII had an opportunity to oversee the Trust structures as vehicles for charitable disbursement, while remaining — through the shares intended for Esther — a shareholder with notionally distinctive interests and inclinations to those of the Trusts. While JEII lived, this notional distinction was nugatory. Yet with JEII's death, and Esther's remarriage, the distinction became more important, since the decisions of the Trusts — refusing to contemplate the sale of Ellerman Lines Ltd., for example — would affect parties whose interests and inclinations were no longer identifiable with JEII's: Esther Borwick, George Borwick, and the prospective beneficiaries under Esther's will. This was important *a fortiori*

because the non-Ellerman Lines Ltd. assets which JEII possessed on 31 December 1970, and which Esther inherited, were significantly depleted by the effects of estate duty. Where other assets were liquidated to meet the duty, Esther's shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. were left undisturbed, on the same ostensible basis which had underpinned the creation of the Trusts: to avoid the effects of an exigent sale of the business or a considerable volume of its shares. Indeed, the protection of Esther's shares from sale was considered of greater priority than protection from sale of her other entitlements as the beneficiary of JEII's residuary estate, effectively items 1–5 and 7 of the list above. This problem was created because the transfer of shares from JEI's will trust to Esther, effected with the transfer of shares to the Trusts in 1970, was not exempt from estate duty, as seven years had not elapsed between the transfer and JEII's death. As a consequence, a large proportion of Esther's wealth was tied up in Ellerman Lines Ltd. shares, seemingly 'for eternity', as Michael Jacobs, the Trusts' legal adviser, would later observe.⁸⁰⁴ The illiquidity of Esther's assets in her widowhood would expose the firm to considerations which JEII had never had to confront. Nonetheless, the sale of Ellerman Lines Ltd. was a decade away; when it was executed, the Trusts would come into possession of approximately £37 million as an endowment. In the interim, however, the Trusts began a limited programme of charitable giving, at first with JEII's direct involvement.

2.1 *JEII's Involvement in the Moorgate Trusts*

The Moorgate Trust was settled on 7 October 1970 (Charity Registration No. 261834). The New Moorgate Trust was settled on 9 June 1971 (Charity Registration No. 263207). The Settlement for the Trusts noted that there would be 'no more than Nine nor less than Three trustees' at any one time; the Settlements were also crafted to ensure that the Trustees could function without JEII or Esther Ellerman's oversight.⁸⁰⁵ However, the power to appoint and remove Trustees was reserved to JEII until October 1982, when the Trustees amended this provision.⁸⁰⁶

The Settlement permitted the purchase of 'such shares[,] stocks[,] funds[,] securities or other investments or property of whatever nature and in whatever part of the world' which the Trustees thought fit. The only distinction between the Trusts was that the New Moorgate Trust could not make charitable gifts to any object in South America. The original Trustees of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust were JEII, Esther Ellerman, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, and two other executives from Ellerman entities, Frederick Hitch and Charles Pratt. Nicholson, Graham and Jones were appointed solicitors to the Trusts and Richard Henry Steadman was appointed Secretary. The early minutes of the Trusts are not preserved systematically for the period prior to JEII's death. However, an indicative record survives of some of the Trusts' activities. For example, a meeting of the Moorgate Trust was held on 22 July 1971 at the Dorchester Hotel. The minutes of the meeting record that £5,699 was awarded in grants in the first half of 1971. 129 recipients are identified in the minutes, with £2,600 awarded directly in two tranches to the Rachel Swart Fund and £1,000 for PDSA (People's Dispensary for Sick Animals). The other grants were typically smaller: £5 or £10 to causes such as the King George's Fund for Sailors, the Royal Blind

Asylum and School, and the Actors' Charitable Trust. Meetings were held approximately every six months prior to JEII's death, with Dennis Martin-Jenkins acting as *de facto* Chair.

2.2 *The Moorgate Trusts, 1973–1983*

With JEII's death, the Trusts continued to operate on a similar basis for the ensuing decade before the sale of Ellerman Lines Ltd. (1973–1983). The membership of the Board of Trustees of the Moorgate Trust and New Moorgate Trust was broadened. In November 1974, Ian Fraser, by then Lord Fraser of Lonsdale, was appointed as a Trustee, in recognition of his decades' long friendship with JEII. In February 1975, shortly after Fraser's death, Ion Hunter Touchet Garnett Orme (d. 1991), Chairman of St Dunstan's, was appointed as a Trustee; Richard Henry Steadman resigned as Secretary and he was replaced by Dennis Parry, another significant executive in an Ellerman entity. In February 1976, the Trusts' office was moved from 21 Moorgate to 1 South Audley Street. From April 1976, New Cavendish Street Investment Co. Ltd. provided accommodation and management services for the Trusts. In May 1977, Charles Pratt resigned from the Trusts owing to his advanced age, and he was replaced as a Trustee by Dennis Parry in July. In the same year, Esther Ellerman gave the Trusts £130,000 to purchase 1 South Audley Street from the executors of JEII's estate.

Since the foundation of the Trusts in 1970, its Trustees were provided with a stipend for their services of £400 per Trustee per annum. In May 1977, this amount was increased to £1,000. In July 1979, the Trusts chose Sir David Scott (1919–2010) as a Trustee. Scott, a former UK Ambassador to South Africa, was soon to become Chairman of Ellerman plc, as noted below (IV.4). In April 1982, Frederick Hitch resigned as a Trustee and he was replaced by Alastair Lloyd, the nephew of Dennis Martin-Jenkins, and recently retired Chairman of Ellerman City Liners,⁸⁰⁷ an entity also discussed below (IV.3.2).

The charitable gifts made by the Trusts between 1973 and 1983 are difficult to reconstruct owing to the loss of relevant archival materials. However, evidence survives of the Trusts' continued support of several causes in South Africa: the Rachel Swart Fund, the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust,⁸⁰⁸ the Ian Fraser Memorial Bursary Fund,⁸⁰⁹ the Colin Gohl Scholarship Fund,⁸¹⁰ and the St Giles Association for the Handicapped.⁸¹¹ In 1977, the Trusts provided financial support to Stellenbosch University in its construction of a Museum of Zoology which, as noted above (III.6), it named in honour of JEII; the grant was made towards the salary of the first Museum Curator, Alan Channing, with a pledge from the Trusts that the 'donation would continue on an annual basis so long as the Trust is in a position to make such payments'. Dennis Martin-Jenkins officially opened the Ellerman Museum on 15 February 1979, with Esther Ellerman in attendance. Outside South Africa, the Trusts continued to support a variety of causes in Britain. In 1975, for example, Esther presented a cheque for £2,000 to the Chief Constable of the Port of London Authority Police.⁸¹² In 1980–1, the Trusts offered grants to Sir Alister Clavering Hardy's research programmes (III.6 above).

One final additional change after 1971 involved the co-existence of the Moorgate Trusts with charitable trusts created by a provision in the will of JEI. The first charity was The Sir John

Ellerman Will Trust Necessitous Officers' Fund, which supported former employees of Ellerman Lines and their families. The second charity was The Sir John Ellerman Will Trust General Charitable Fund, which had generally charitable objects. The first charity was wound up in the 1990s after donating its funds to the Ellerman Lines Benevolent Fund (Charity Registration No. 255758), which continues to operate to this day, independently of John Ellerman Foundation. The second charity was wound up in 2002 and its assets of £939,000 incorporated into John Ellerman Foundation. Both charities were administered separately from the Trusts.

3 JEI's Estate, JEII, and the Fate of the Ellerman Fortune, 1933–1983

As we have noted above (III.4), JEI's sudden death forced JEII to 'grow up and face his huge responsibilities in a great hurry and before he had had a proper chance to become fully prepared to meet [them]'.⁸¹³ The recollections of the personnel who managed JEII's assets attest to his aloofness from the world of business. In a self-published memoir, Ulick Brown, Director of Ellerman Lines Ltd.'s sub-entity in South Africa, recalled that 'Sir John took no part in the running of his shipping empire'.⁸¹⁴ Nonetheless, the same personnel observed that JEII was kept abreast of important developments within Ellerman Lines Ltd. and within the Trusts that managed his investment portfolio. As Frederick Hitch, then Chairman of the 'Ellerman Financial Companies',⁸¹⁵ noted in testimony to the Inland Revenue in 1978:

*Throughout his life Sir John took a detailed interest in the workings of the financial side of the Ellerman fortune and no decision of any consequence could be taken without his approval. He was familiar with the staff situation in the office and fixed the salaries even of the minor employees. He did this by correspondence from abroad or meetings at the Dorchester Hotel but until recent years he never visited the office.*⁸¹⁶

When interviewed in 2016, David Martin-Jenkins, formerly an Ellerman Lines Ltd. executive, recalled that JEII was closer, 'much more so', to the personnel of the investment trust companies than those of the shipping entities; JEII trusted the former 'implicitly'. Another piece of testimony, provided to the Inland Revenue in 1978 by John Saywell (d. 1994), a solicitor for Nicholson, Graham and Jones, gives a clear sense of the attitude of the Ellerman entities' personnel to JEII:

No-one in this firm [sc. Nicholson, Graham and Jones] had ever met Sir John Ellerman, and one had the impression that he was secretive and autocratic, and that his staff were very much afraid of him, and in particular that he wished at all costs to avoid publicity and therefore concealed [...] information relating to his way of life and his affairs. In short, he was thought to be an "eccentric recluse" [...]

When Saywell finally met JEII in 1971, he observed that JEII 'appeared to me to be shy but intelligent and philosophical'.⁸¹⁷

It is clear from these accounts that JEII was content to allow the operations of the investment trust companies and Ellerman Lines Ltd. to continue in the hands of individuals he trusted. According to David Martin-Jenkins, 'by repute' JEII would have no hesitation in dismissing an employee if one of his trusted personnel had asked for his approval to do so.⁸¹⁸ The tendency of

the evidence is that JEII lived at a comfortable remove from the businesses which generated his income, except for the periodic interruption of decisions of 'consequence'. In their submission to the Inland Revenue in 1978, Nicholson, Graham and Jones provided a summary overview of JEII's income tax returns for the period 1962–1972, which revealed the extraordinary sums which JEII received merely by practising a diffident style of superintendence:

• 1962: £1,918,341 (Gross); £277,993 (Net).
• 1963: £2,018,197 (Gross); £260,005 (Net).
• 1964: £2,122,259 (Gross); £297,538 (Net).
• 1965: £2,293,940 (Gross); £359,836 (Net).
• 1966: £2,667,006 (Gross); £398,941 (Net).
• 1967: £2,282,065 (Gross); Net NA.
• 1968: £2,579,376 (Gross); £212,727 (Net).
• 1969: £2,423,980 (Gross); £127,718 (Net).
• 1970: £2,450,506 (Gross); £212,207 (Net).
• 1971: £2,497,903 (Gross); £218,930 (Net).
• 1972: £2,425,739 (Gross); £202,016 (Net).

For comparison, according to the Office of National Statistics, the mean gross weekly earnings of a full-time male manual employee in Britain in 1962 was £15.10 per week (£785.20 per annum) rising to £32.80 (£1705.60 per annum) in 1972.⁸¹⁹

The division in JEII's assets — Ellerman Lines Ltd. and the investment trust companies — was effected by a provision of the will of JEI, which had also conferred control over the residuary estate on a series of will trusts. The latter would hold JEI's controlling stake in Ellerman Lines Ltd., with inter-related but discrete trusts controlling the remainder of the residuary estate, comprising investments in property, quoted shares, and unquoted shares. The will's use of a protective life interest was discussed above (III.7), when JEII was permitted by the High Court to transfer his Ellerman Lines Ltd. shares to the Moorgate Trusts and to Esther. This division in JEII's assets was reflected in the different buildings in London from which each entity was run. Ellerman Lines Ltd. was located at 12–20 Camomile Street. The investment portfolio was located at 21 Moorgate. The personnel of each entity were also separate, although Directorships in the Trusts and Ellerman Lines Ltd. did overlap; Frederick Hitch, for example, was also a Director of Ellerman Lines Ltd.

Both entities evidently fostered a practice of familial hiring, strengthening the loyalty which was said to be a particular characteristic of JEI's employees. The key personnel across the four decades (1933–1973) of JEII's life as successor to JEI were Thoby Prinsep, H. H. Heron, Hubert Stanley Holden, whose principal roles were with Ellerman Lines Ltd., and William Cox in the 1930s and 1940s, whose principal role was with the investment trust companies. In Ellerman Lines Ltd., E. Aubrey Lloyd (d. 1950) succeeded Holden as

Chairman in 1946 until his death in 1950; A. F. Hull (d. 1967) succeeded Lloyd in 1950 and remained Chairman until 1967, when he was succeeded by Dennis Martin-Jenkins, who held the role when JEII died. In the investment trust companies, the key managers were Charles Pratt (d. 1982) and subsequently Frederick Hitch. Pratt had lived with JEII and Esther as a billeted soldier at Weston House during the War, together with his son Peter, who would later play a significant role in the Ellerman businesses. Hitch (d. 1988) had commenced his career as a clerk in JEI's office, and would later serve as the main executor of JEII's will. Succeeding Hitch as principal investment adviser was Dennis George Parry (d. 2002), whom Michael Jacobs has described as JEII's 'principal private secretary', including as the holder of JEII's and Esther's powers of attorney.⁸²⁰ Finally, Peter Pratt (d. 2004) served as a Director of the quoted investment trust companies and continued to serve as an investment manager for the Moorgate Trusts after JEII's death, a responsibility which grew considerably with the sale of Ellerman Lines plc in 1983, when the portfolio of the Trusts was instantly diversified beyond its holdings in one company.

Finally, JEII also employed Hubert Davenport Price as his personal solicitor and the latter's son-in-law Richard Guy Ormonde Hudson (1920–1995) in the same role when Price died in 1958; Hudson noted to the Inland Revenue in 1978 that he surrendered his position as JEII's personal solicitor in 1970, shortly before JEII turned to Saywell and Nicholson, Graham and Jones for their guidance in the creation of the Moorgate Trusts.⁸²¹

3.1 *The Investment Trust Companies, 1933–1973*

No archival record for the investment trust companies at 21 Moorgate is extant; the entity consisted in The Audley Trust Ltd., The Ellerman Property Trust Ltd., Sir John Ellerman's Will Trust, the London General Investment Trust Ltd., the Debenture Securities Investment Company Ltd., the Brewery and Commercial Investment Company Ltd., and Bellmoor Investment Trust Ltd., among other entities. The reason for this archival loss was, in part, the liquidations of the Trusts' assets necessitated by estate duty on JEII's death. Documents generated by the 1973–4 liquidation of the property portfolio of The Audley Trust Ltd., Sir John Ellerman's Will Trust, and The Ellerman Property Trust Ltd., were evidently preserved by Nicholson, Graham and Jones in 1992, including a volume of advice from Jones Lang Wootton; when offered to John Ellerman Foundation in 1992, the documents were declined by its then Secretary because of a lack of storage space at the Foundation's offices.⁸²² Some evidence survives of the process of the sale of the property portfolio. In a study of the Rossminster partnership, a complex entity notoriously accused of tax avoidance, Michael Gillard has noted that Rossminster purchased the portfolio for £3.6 million in 1976. 'The Ellerman trustees had insisted that after the sale the Ellerman name should disappear; and instead of being bought by Rossminster itself the Ellerman Property Trust was acquired by the six ultimate owners or their offshore family trusts'.⁸²³

The absence of archival material complicates the reconstruction of the assets and investment practices of the investment trust companies at 21 Moorgate. Only limited evidence survives: a comprehensive list of JEI's residuary estate, that is, the assets inherited

by JEII, dated to 11 May 1940,⁸²⁴ and a list of the properties held by the 'Trustees of Sir J. R. Ellerman Bart.', dated to 13 November 1969.⁸²⁵ The 1940 list resists easy summary, but an indicative précis of its contents is revealing of the remarkable extent of JEII's inheritance. The list included dozens of freehold properties in central London, the Longhaven Estate, and 547 acres of farmland in Kent; investments in scores of limited companies; and significant holdings of sovereign and municipal debt.

The assets from this list which remained to JEII in 1973 were either liquidated to meet estate duty, gifted as legacies to friends in JEII's will, or transferred to Esther Ellerman. These assets were not, except through incidental gifts from Esther Ellerman after 1973, given to the Moorgate Trusts.

3.2 *Ellerman Lines Ltd. 1933–1983*

The archival record of Ellerman Lines Ltd. is considerably richer, since these materials were systematically preserved after 1933, and a significant proportion of these papers is accessible in the University of Glasgow Archives, as noted above (I.1). The history of Ellerman Lines Ltd. between 1933 and 1983 mirrored the vicissitudes of many rivals in the shipping industry. A full account of these vicissitudes is beyond the scope of the present history; a detailed account is provided in James Taylor's history, *Ellermans*, as noted above (I.1). Instead, what follows is a brief history of the firm, focusing on the major episodes prior to its sale in 1983. It is clear that Ellerman Lines Ltd. was considered by JEII as the jewel among his assets, despite its comparable — if not lesser — value to the other investments which he held in 1970, when the valuation listed above (IV.2) was completed. As Sir David Scott would later claim, noted below (IV.4), Ellerman Lines Ltd. was subsidised by JEII, evidently by drawing from funds generated by his other assets. The rescue of the firm by the use of the Moorgate Trusts reflected this pre-eminence in JEII's mind; in stark contrast, JEII was prepared to liquidate other assets without the same compunction.

Michael Jacobs has described the prospect of estate duty as a 'sword of Damocles' hanging over the firm during JEII's lifetime.⁸²⁶ An irony of JEII's solicitude for Ellerman Lines Ltd. was his refusal to part with shares which might, if tendered to the public, have removed this overhanging threat to its operations. As Taylor has noted, '[m]any times it had been said of Ellerman Lines, that, although technically a limited liability company, it was the most private public company in the country'.⁸²⁷ Whether JEII could have safely parted with his shares by public tender in the period prior to his death is impossible to establish. If he contemplated it or was dissuaded from it, his role as majority owner did not change, and it undoubtedly shaped the history of Ellerman Lines Ltd. after 1933.

There were two key developments during the ensuing four decades. The first was the Second World War. During the War, Ellerman Lines Ltd. entities lost ninety-five ships; Ellerman's Wilson Line lost twenty-six ships out of thirty-five in its fleet. These losses included *The City of Benares*, which was torpedoed by a German U-boat in September 1940, with the loss of 258 passengers and crew, including seventy-seven evacuated children, who were *en route* to Montreal. The targeting of Ellerman ships stemmed partly from the crucial role they

would play ‘in every operational zone of the war’.⁸²⁸

The effects on Ellerman Lines Ltd. as a business was profound. Government requisitioning of ships and control over the industry after February 1940 brought conventional business practices to a virtual halt. As Taylor notes, immediately after the war the government continued a so-called ‘cargo registration system’ through which cargo consignments were recorded in a central register and, as tonnage offered, were allocated to ships following a priority system based on the date of registration’.⁸²⁹ This had the effect of ensuring a degree of fairness among the rival firms which had survived the War, but it transformed the dynamic of competition which preceded it. After the War, Ellerman Lines Ltd. commenced a rebuilding programme. By 1946, Ellerman’s Wilson Line had replaced nine ships. By 1948, Ellerman and Papayanni had replaced five ships. By the early 1950s, Ellerman Lines Ltd. was in command of 129 ships.

Notwithstanding the success of rebuilding in the 1940s, new challenges swiftly emerged. By 1957, Ellerman Lines Ltd. had decided to dispose of nineteen vessels and commence an updating of the fleet; the projected cost was £20 million, to be completed by 1964, when ‘building costs were escalating alarmingly’.⁸³⁰ Reliance on colonial-era practices was also becoming more difficult, if not infeasible. With the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, the Conference system, a protectionist cartel which controlled the operation of specified routes, was challenged by the emergence of Indian-based lines. As Taylor observes, ‘[i]t is probable that the Indians were encouraged in their point of view by the frequently stated American principle that American cargo should be carried in American ships in the proportion of at least 50 per cent’.⁸³¹ Exacerbating this change was the immediate decline of demand for passage by British Forces personnel and imperial administrators to India. The Indian passenger trade was thus ‘gradually abandoned’, in favour of a new focus on the South African passenger trade, where the Conference system was also challenged by the emergence of South African-based shipping lines.⁸³² In Burma, more strikingly, the post-war decolonised government made the continuation of Ellerman Lines Ltd.’s rice businesses ‘impossible’.⁸³³

A significant example of the challenging business environment was provided by Ellerman’s Wilson Line, which suspended its service to the United States in 1961, after having operated since 1875. The principal cause was the use by rivals of unemployed liquid cargo tankers for the movement of grain. This reconfiguration infused the market with new competition, particularly from the west coast of Britain, which was favoured over the circuitous location of Hull.

The second key development during the period 1933–1973 was containerisation and cargo unitisation. Taylor’s judgement of the firm’s response to this development is trenchant, and worth quoting at length:

The thirties were still the period of the industrial slump, so that it may have been understandable if Ellerman’s successors tended to ignore development or risk by following a policy of safety-first, sticking slavishly to well-tried Ellerman principles, and even types of ships. This influence may have been discernible throughout the thirties and not totally discarded until the fifties, according to whether those concerned had come into personal contact with their former chief [sc. JEI]. That it would be unwise to abandon a well-tried system or model became a frequently used argument, which tended to make

*experience and knowledge of well-worn operating methods the principal criterion of judgement in operations and promotions.*⁸³⁴

The process of containerisation and cargo unitisation necessitated the retrenchment of dockyard labour, which provoked a national dock strike in 1972, and what Taylor describes as ‘labour problems’ in the decade preceding it.⁸³⁵ Although containerisation and cargo unitisation was initially handled deftly by Ellerman Lines Ltd. for shorter journeys, including the Mediterranean and Scandinavian trade, greater challenges were posed by deep sea shipping, which required ‘an extensive organisation of bases, depots and terminals in each of the countries involved’, generating an expense and logistical challenge ‘beyond the ability of a single line’.⁸³⁶

The possibility of merging Ellerman Lines Ltd. into a larger consortium was contemplated, reportedly at the urging of Dennis Martin-Jenkins. As Taylor notes, in paraphrase of Martin-Jenkins’s enjoinders, an ‘impersonal decision [...] was needed — one totally uninhibited by tradition — in order to submerge historically famous names and pride into a freshly named consortium, whose sole function would be to run specially designed ships carrying boxes of a uniform basic size of 20 feet by 8 feet by 8 feet’.⁸³⁷ When P&O, British and Commonwealth Company, Furness Withy, and Ocean Steamship Company created a consortium, Overseas Container Lines Ltd., in 1965, Ellerman Lines Ltd. pursued the same strategy by the creation of Associated Container Transportation Ltd., in conjunction with Ben Line, Blue Star, Harrisons, and Port Line.⁸³⁸ The consortium functioned creditably in the later 1960s, but the costs necessitated became ‘unbelievably’ high.⁸³⁹

By 1971, ‘Ellermans’ results from both conventional shipping and the new containerised services remained unsatisfactory’.⁸⁴⁰ JEII himself offered £7 million to support the firm at this juncture, in its commitment to defray twenty percent of the expense of constructing new container ships for the trade between Europe and East Asia. The offer was not taken up, but it illustrated JEII’s preparedness to support the early stages of containerisation. As Dennis Martin-Jenkins informed *The Sunday Telegraph* after JEII’s death: ‘it was on Sir John’s orders that the Ellerman Lines embarked on a £30 million diversification plan into container shipping in 1965 and 1966, a time when the industry was experiencing its worst slump’.⁸⁴¹ In early 1973, JEII agreed further to the restructuring of the Ellerman Lines entities into five ‘divisions’: a consolidation of the Ellerman shipping entities into Ellerman City Liners; the creation of a travel and leisure entity, Ellerman Travel and Leisure; the creation of a transport, clearing and forwarding division, Ellerman Wilson Lines; and two investment entities, Investment Services (Camomile Street) and Investment Services (Moorgate). This ‘thoroughly comprehensive reorganisation’⁸⁴² involved the consolidation of the individual Ellerman Lines Ltd. entities — Ellerman and Papayanni in Liverpool, City Line in Glasgow, Ellerman’s Wilson in Hull, Westcott and Laurance and Bucknalls in London — into a single organisational structure, with their administrative headquarters fixed in London alone, save for branch offices in Glasgow and Liverpool. More remarkably, Ellerman’s Wilson Line was to shift its activities from shipping to inter-continental heavy goods vehicles.

The restructuring which occurred in 1973 inaugurated the final decade of Ellerman Lines Ltd. before its sale. In 1974, the firm purchased a twenty-seven percent interest in J. W. Cameron Ltd. for £10.5 million from JEII's estate.⁸⁴³ In 1977, it paid £6 million for Tollemache and Cobbold Brewers. This diversification was initially successful. In 1976 alone, J. W. Cameron Ltd. accounted for a quarter of Ellerman Lines Ltd.'s £12.44 million of pre-tax profits. As *The Economist* noted in August 1977, it was a 'sore point with the present Ellerman executives (not an Ellerman amongst them)' that JEII had progressively sold off most of the brewery interests he had inherited from JEI.⁸⁴⁴ By 1983, when Ellerman Lines plc, as it had become known, was tendered for sale, the firm's press release noted that its 'main activities' consisted of 'shipping – through Ellerman City Liners with shipping related activities in South and East Africa', its fleet comprising seven ships,⁸⁴⁵ and 'brewing – through J. W. Cameron and Co. Limited in the North East and Tollemache and Cobbold Breweries Limited in East Anglia', which included as many as 850 pubs and 120 off-licences.⁸⁴⁶ In addition, the firm owned a chain of 70 travel agencies and an eighty-seven percent share of a hotel in Sutton Coldfield, The Belfry, with adjoining land, slated for development into two golf courses.⁸⁴⁷ In the year ending 31 December 1982, Ellerman Lines plc had made a loss before tax of £9.3 million on a turnover of £249 million. *The Times* provided an extract of the firm's annual accounts for the preceding two years.⁸⁴⁸ The circumstances of the ensuing sale are discussed below (IV.4).

DIVISION	TURNOVER 1982 £M	TURNOVER 1981 £M	PROFIT BEFORE FINANCE CHANGES 1982 £M	PROFIT BEFORE FINANCE CHANGES 1981 £M
<i>Shipping</i>	86	82	(3.1)	2.4
<i>Brewing</i>				
– <i>J. W. Cameron</i>	55	51	0.5	4.3
– <i>Tollemache and Cobbold</i>	26	23	1.4	1.0
<i>Travel and Leisure</i>	70	75	(2.9)	(0.8)
<i>Insurance</i>	-	8	-	(0.1)
<i>Other subsidiary and associated companies</i>	12	14	1.7	2.8
	249	253	(2.4)	9.5
<i>Corporate expenses and net profit on treasury operations</i>	-	-	(1.9)	(2.4)
	249	253	(4.3)	7.2

3.3 *Ellerman Lines Ltd. and Apartheid*

Throughout this period, Ellerman entities continued to operate in South Africa, a fact which was decried by proponents of a boycott of the successive apartheid regimes.⁸⁴⁹ In their history of Ellerman Lines Ltd. and plc's presence in South Africa, Payne and Brown observed of the boycott campaign in the 1980s that 'the firm stance of the Conservative Government in Britain' prevented the boycott from 'unduly affect[ing] the cargo liner trades for which the key point was Mrs Thatcher's refusal to embargo South African fruit exports'. As Payne and Brown note, the 'principal impact on Ellermans' trade was the informal consumer resistance in Britain, fanned by the anti-apartheid movement; this devastated canned fruit exports, traditionally one of Ellermans' major northbound commodities'.⁸⁵⁰ It is apparent that Ellerman Lines Ltd. operated in South Africa in conformity with the segregationist policies of the apartheid regime, and it did not register an objection to these policies on moral or other grounds in any extant document. As noted above (III.6), JEII was evidently indifferent to apartheid and never articulated a criticism of it in any other extant document, including in his extensive correspondence with Piet Beukes.

4 **The Sale of Ellerman Lines plc, 1983**

The sale of Ellerman Lines plc in 1983 was the result of a complex series of decisions. A full account of the process is difficult to provide: the documentary record is exiguous, and only one key figure, Sir David Scott, then Chairman of Ellerman Lines plc during its sale, has provided a published recollection of the events.

Scott paints a critical picture of the company when he took the helm in 1982. His account begins by recalling the difficulty presented in 1981, in his 'dual role' as Trustee of the Moorgate Trusts and Non-Executive Director of Ellerman Lines plc. (He would become Chairman in January 1982.) Scott was 'struck' by the 'the extremely delicate state of the company's finances', 'the extent to which the Martin-Jenkins family dominated the board', and 'the extent and depth of criticism, some of it vitriolic, expressed both openly and in private about the way in which the company was run'.⁸⁵¹ In Scott's judgement, financial difficulties had flowed from three sources: foreign competition, Britain's declining role in world trade, and 'unwise investment' in 'unsuitable tonnage at a time when too many ships worldwide were chasing too few cargoes'.⁸⁵² According to Scott, the company after JEI's death had been run in a way that 'divorced' its finances from its 'day-to-day management':

*This led to a dangerous fallacy being built up in the minds of those running the company — that at the bottom of the garden there was a well filled with gold. If, for example, new ships were required, all that was necessary was to seek Sir John's [sc. JEII's] permission to put down a bucket and bring up a few ingots. There was no question of borrowing money outside, nor was the possible return on capital a major consideration.*⁸⁵³

The creation of the Trusts prompted a 'fundamental change' to this mode of operation. The Trustees, which included Dennis Martin-Jenkins, notwithstanding his resignation as Chairman of Ellerman Lines plc, became 'worried by the fact that the trusts' income from divi-

dends had declined to a point where it bore little relation to the book value of the Group's assets'.⁸⁵⁴ As Scott observes:

So long as Dennis [sc. Martin Jenkins] was Chairman [...] he regarded it as a matter of pride to maintain Ellermans as a going concern. Now that he was no longer in that position, he came to regard the disposal of the Group as not only possible but urgent.

Scott himself 'had never been under any illusion that my own appointment was other than a caretaker one, and my loyalties related more to the success of the charitable trusts than to that of the Group'.⁸⁵⁵ Another important consideration was Dennis Martin-Jenkins's attitude to the firm's new Managing Director, James Stewart, with whom he had reportedly had a serious conflict. The morning after Martin-Jenkins's retirement party, he had phoned Scott: 'telling me that Jim [sc. James Stewart] had grossly insulted him the night before and that he was seeking the board's agreement to sack him forthwith'.⁸⁵⁶ (Scott rejected the suggestion.)

The ensuing history of the sale of Ellerman Lines plc was fraught. Timothy Martin-Jenkins, Dennis Martin-Jenkins's son, had prepared with colleagues an offer to purchase Ellerman Lines plc in 1981. A motive for their offer was Timothy Martin-Jenkins' familiarity with concerns, expressed by Frederick Hitch in his capacity as a Trustee of the Moorgate Trusts, that Ellerman Lines plc had not yet paid a dividend to the Trusts.⁸⁵⁷ A divergence had emerged between the interests of its eighty percent shareholder and the interests of Ellerman Lines plc, which had ostensibly withheld the dividend for capital expenditure. Morgan Grenfell was asked by the Trustees to assess Timothy Martin-Jenkins's offer for Ellerman Lines plc, and it encouraged the Trusts to reject it as an undervaluation. According to Scott, Morgan Grenfell had valued Ellerman Lines plc at £77 million. In an interview in 2016, Timothy Martin-Jenkins observed that he and his colleagues had hoped to preserve Ellerman Lines plc as a single entity, but he conceded that the firm would have been broken up, with parts sold or retrenched.⁸⁵⁸ Three other offers were made for the company prior to 1983: Ted Arison (1924–1999), the cruise line magnate, and Lord Cayzer (1910–1999), the shipping magnate, made offers which fell short of Morgan Grenfell's valuation; Anthony Cooke, Managing Director of the Ellerman City Liners division, had proposed a management-led bid for the Ellerman City Liners shipping interests. In response, the Trusts insisted on the sale of Ellerman Lines plc *en bloc*.

The eventual sale of Ellerman Lines plc to David and Frederick Barclay in 1983 for £47 million was the result of a tortuous series of negotiations. The sale was reportedly facilitated at first by George Borwick. As Scott reports, 'George Borwick (whom Esther Ellerman had unexpectedly just married) [...] had been approached in Monte Carlo' by the Barclays, who had business interests in the city.⁸⁵⁹ *The Guardian's* account of the subsequent events observes that '[i]n a sealed bid process', the Barclays' offer 'was accepted, although well short of the seller's target price'. The Barclays paid £47 million and ultimately 'sold off the ships and travel company'; six years later, 'the pubs and breweries alone brought in five times as much', referring to the brothers' sale of these assets in 1989 to Brent Walker Group for £239 million.⁸⁶⁰

A profile of the brothers in 2004 describes the circumstances of the sale in similar terms:

In 1982, the shipping unit lost almost £8 million, reeling from a decline in world trade. When Morgan Grenfell [...] failed to find a buyer, the Barclays stepped in. Anthony Cooke recalls the brothers negotiating with Ellerman's widow, Esther, a friend from Monaco, before presenting their offer. "It was a very good deal for them [sc. the brothers]," says Cooke [...] "There had been very little interest from everyone else, which was very odd".⁸⁶¹

Although highly simplified, this summary captures the nub of the transaction. Esther Ellerman and the Trusts sold their shares in Ellerman Lines Ltd. to the Barclay brothers for £47 million. The impetus for the sale of the shares to the Barclay brothers was a mixture of the Trusts' dissatisfaction with the failure of the Lines to deliver a dividend for charitable distribution; the disinclination of Dennis Martin-Jenkins, after his departure from the firm as Chairman, to preserve the Lines from break-up, possibly motivated by a personal antipathy; the perceived failure of the firm to generate a profit in recent years; and the desire of Esther Ellerman to access a significant but illiquid component of her assets.

At the time of the sale (September 1983), the Moorgate Trusts each held £1,608,464 deferred ordinary stock of Ellerman Lines plc. The holdings were converted into £1,608,464 of new deferred stock and £16,084.64 of new deferred ordinary stock by resolution of the firm on 11 November 1982. Each £1 nominal deferred stock was sold at par (£1) and each £1 nominal of the deferred ordinary stock was sold for approximately £1,004.07. Each Trust also owned preference stocks. The Moorgate Trust owned £108,356 4.5 percent guaranteed preference stock; £153,394 5.5 percent non-cumulative preference stock; and £209,717 6.25 percent non-cumulative preferred ordinary stock. The New Moorgate Trust owned £108,356 4.5 percent guaranteed preference stock; £153,395 5.5 percent non-cumulative preference stock; and £209,157 6.25 percent non-cumulative preferred ordinary stock. Each Trust accepted the public offers made for the preference stocks, which were listed on the stock exchange: 60 p cash for each £1 nominal of 4.5 percent guaranteed preference stock; 78 p cash for each £1 nominal 5.5 percent non-cumulative preference stock; and 90 p cash for each £1 nominal 6.25 percent non-cumulative preferred ordinary stock. In aggregate, each Trust received £17,758,549.12 cash for its holding of deferred ordinary stock, with £373,406.22 to the Moorgate Trust and £372,903 to the New Moorgate Trust for the listed stocks. Esther Ellerman received the same terms for her shares.⁸⁶²

The sale transformed the endowment of the Moorgate Trusts, but its immediate aftermath was not uncomplicated. 5,500 employees of Ellerman Lines plc were affected by the sale.⁸⁶³ The sale elicited a complaint to the Charity Commission from Edward Leadbitter (1919–1996), Labour MP for Hartlepool, who was particularly concerned about the effects on J. W. Cameron and Co. Ltd., which was based in his constituency.⁸⁶⁴ The Charity Commission communicated Leadbitter's concern that Ellerman Lines plc had been sold at 'undervalue'.⁸⁶⁵ As the Commission noted in a letter of March 1984:

The information put to us [...] is that the Moorgate Trusts and another private stock-holder [sc. Esther Ellerman] sold Ellerman Lines for £45 million to [...] David and Frederick Barclay[.] The

*Brewery assets alone were valued at £90 million. Barclays have sold the Ellerman Travel subsidiary in three parts for a total of more than £4 million. They have agreed to sell Cameron's (the Hartlepool Brewery) for £44 million to Scottish and Newcastle Breweries who are apparently quoted as saying that they tendered a similar bid to the Moorgate Trusts in 1983. So far, we are told, Barclays have raised £48 million from the sale of former Trust property and still hold all of Tolly-Cobbold with assets of over £20 million — and the Ellerman Shipping Line itself. I shall be grateful if this could be put to the trustees.*⁸⁶⁶

In response, Dennis Parry, then Secretary of the Trusts, observed to the Charity Commission that the Trustees:

*owned shares in a group of companies which was technically very valuable but which made large capital and trading losses year after year. They had a choice between selling up and investing their money elsewhere or trying to resolve the problems themselves. Bearing in mind that they were charitable trustees, they took advice: the advice was to sell. When they found a buyer after a well-publicised search, they took more advice: you have seen the advice; they sold. Now they have a broadly based investment portfolio producing a substantial income for charity far in excess of the income for previous years.*⁸⁶⁷

In response to the specific claim that Scottish and Newcastle Breweries had tendered an offer to the Trustees, Parry noted that '[t]he fact that Scottish and Newcastle [...] were prepared to pay £44 million for Camerons has been shown to be an unrealistic basis of valuation as it was referred to the Monopolies Commission and the sale did not go through. The Trustees had been advised on such possibilities before and made their judgement on the sale in the light of such advice'.⁸⁶⁸

Other parties were aggrieved by the sale. A letter to Dennis Martin-Jenkins from John Cameron — a former Director of J. W. Cameron and Co. Ltd. — was extremely critical. Evidently characteristic of the vitriol which Scott had encountered, Cameron's letter attacked Martin-Jenkins personally: 'I have no doubt that, when you look back, you realise that this fawning on Esther that you indulged in has been of no avail as far as you are concerned', referring to the rejection of Timothy Martin-Jenkins's offer for the firm and the departure of David Martin-Jenkins shortly after. Cameron castigated the management style of 'Camomile Street', and alleged that Ellerman plc 'had been running downhill for years'. 'I am only too glad that old Sir John, a most able man, is not here to see the disintegration of the firm that he built up so successfully'.⁸⁶⁹ More emotively, Cameron claimed that he had been 'STABBED IN THE BACK' [sic] by the Trustees.

This criticism was countered forcefully by Martin-Jenkins. (As he responded: 'I have never stabbed anyone in the back in peacetime'.⁸⁷⁰) Yet its grievances were now extraneous to the Trustees, whose sole task was to administer a significant endowment for charitable purposes. The fate of Ellerman Lines plc and the decisions which led to its sale had no bearing on the future of the Trusts, but it led gradually to the disappearance of the Ellerman name in public life, as the former constituent firms disused 'Ellerman' in their marque and products.⁸⁷¹

5 The Moorgate Trusts and John Ellerman Foundation, 1983–2023

In October 1984, Peter Pratt, Charles's son and a former Ellerman plc executive, was chosen as a Trustee and appointed Assistant Secretary to both Trusts. Peter Pratt and Dennis Parry subsequently oversaw the investments of the Trusts, through the New Cavendish Street Investment Co. Ltd., while an administrative assistant chose applications from suitable charities for periodic consideration by the Trustees.⁸⁷² In May 1985, the minutes of the Trusts record the death of Esther Ellerman: 'We shall miss her greatly as a true friend', the Trustees recorded in the minutes, 'and a wise fellow trustee and we are grateful to her for the several generous gifts she made to buttress the charitable trusts founded by her first husband'. Esther Ellerman's passing marked the end of the Ellerman family's direct association with the Trusts, but the Trustees remained friends and personnel of Ellerman family entities until 2011, when the final Ellerman-associated Trustee resigned.

Over the next six years, 1985–1991, the Trusts experienced several changes. In July 1988, Peter Algernon Strutt MC (1924–2007), a member of the Tollemache brewery family, who was Chairman of Tollemache and Cobbold Ltd., and Angela Rosemary Boschi, Dennis Martin-Jenkins's secretary, were chosen as Trustees. In December 1989, the Trusts resolved to restore and refurbish 1 South Audley Street, which it would ultimately sell in 1992–3. In 1990, having purchased a 999 year lease on Suite 10 of Aria House, 23 Craven Street, in May for £1.32 million, the Trustees noted the resignation of Dennis Parry as Secretary and his replacement by Peter Pratt; Parry would remain a Trustee and Director of New Cavendish Street. In September 1991, Dennis Martin-Jenkins resigned as a Trustee, effective from April of the following year. In his place, the Trustees elected David Martin-Jenkins, his son, whose appointment was effective from October 1991. Dennis Martin-Jenkins would die that December, shortly after the Trustees resolved to reorganise and rename the Trusts.

5.1 John Ellerman Foundation, 1992–2000

On 19 November 1991, the Trustees passed a resolution to change the name of the New Moorgate Trust to The John Ellerman Foundation (which used the same Charity Registration No. 263207),⁸⁷³ with effect from 1 February 1992. The Trustees were incorporated pursuant to the Charitable Trustees Incorporation Act 1872 and the Charities Act 1960, using the name 'The Trustees of The John Ellerman Foundation Incorporated', on 2 April 1992; the incorporation of the Trustees was a then-unusual manoeuvre, recommended by Michael Jacobs. The Moorgate Trust was separately merged into The John Ellerman Foundation, with effect from 6 April 1992; its assets at that date were valued at £28,484,430. The rationale for merging the Trusts was principally administrative. The impetus for the creation of two Trusts in the first place was merely to avoid stamp duty and its retention as an organisational structure was now otiose and inconvenient.⁸⁷⁴ The re-naming of the Trusts was more complex, given its tension with JEII's obsessive reluctance to publicise his activities as a philanthropist. A full set of minutes and accounts for the 19 November 1991 meeting is extant, but the decision to rename the New Moorgate Trust is only minuted, without any substantive justification recorded.

In its annual report for 1992, The John Ellerman Foundation recorded that it had made £2,378,000 in donations in the previous year; £2,199,000 had been donated in the reporting year 1990–1991. In 1992, the list of recipients of charitable grants ran to in excess of one hundred charities, with the largest grants given to the Breakthrough Trust (£56,000), RPMS Hammersmith Hospital (£20,000), the English National Opera (£20,000), the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (£18,000), the YMCA (£34,000), St Dunstan's (£20,000), and the Rachel Swart Fund (£60,000).

In May 1992, Peter Pratt, as Secretary, developed a strategy of donation, and asked the Trustees to consider its future approach to donation. In September 1992, the strategy was discussed and approved by the Trustees: support for individual hospices would be suspended in favour of a block donation to Help the Hospices of £100,000 each year for three years; support for charities solely committed to the promotion of religion would not be given; appeals from cathedrals would be considered, but not churches, save for exceptional circumstances; support would not normally be provided to schools and education, other than those which catered exclusively for the disabled; the granting of three-year cycles of donations was confirmed as the preferred approach in the future. Finally, causes supported by JEII would not be guaranteed subventions in perpetuity but would move to the three-year cycle, with triennial review. These included the Rachel Swart Fund, the John Ellerman Museum of Zoology at Stellenbosch University, the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust, the Ian Fraser Memorial Bursary Fund, the Colin Gohl Scholarship Fund, the South African National Council for the Blind, and the St Giles Association for the Handicapped.

In the recollection of Michael Jacobs, the renaming and consolidation of the Trusts were part of a comprehensive overhaul and modernisation of the Trusts by Peter Pratt.⁸⁷⁵ In January 1994, the Trustees resolved to use outside investment managers, suspending the role of New Cavendish Street, and formally transferring the management and administration of the Trusts from New Cavendish Street to the Foundation. In April 1994, the Trustees resolved that they did not wish the annual total of donations to diminish in real terms of £3.5 million per annum, necessitating the possible liquidation of its capital base. Nonetheless, the Trustees observed their desire for the Foundation to have a 'long term future' and recorded their preference that disbursement would be made as far as possible to avoid such a liquidation.

In June 1994, Peter Pratt was appointed as Director of the Foundation, resigning his role as Trustee, with an accompanying stipulation from the Trustees that he would be expected to reassume the role when his tenure as Director ended. In August of the same year, the Foundation developed a proportioned donation strategy, with forty percent set aside for medical causes; twenty percent to disability; ten percent each to community development and social welfare; arts, culture and heritage; and overseas activities; five percent to conservation; one percent each to education and religious causes; and three percent for contingencies. The Foundation suspended its three-year cycle policy and resolved that £5,000 would be the normal minimum annual donation. In September 1995, the Trustees resolved to suspend donations to educational and religious causes.

In October 1996, Dr Christopher Hanvey, formerly Chief Executive Officer of the

Thomas Coram Foundation, was appointed as Director in the place of Peter Pratt, who resumed his role as a Trustee. In February 1997, the Trustees resolved to appoint a Chairperson of the Foundation for a maximum period of five years; Sir David Scott was appointed as the first Chairman. During the same meeting, the Trustees resolved that recruitment of Trustees in the future would occur only by personal recommendation of the existing Trustees, in lieu of outside recruitment firms or advertisement.

In June 1997, the Trustees passed a series of significant resolutions. They resolved that medical causes would continue to constitute the largest proportion of their giving, with a target of thirty percent, followed by disability, with a target of twenty percent, and community and social welfare, with a target of twenty-five percent. Overseas giving would have a target of ten percent, focused principally on Central and South America. In addition, the Trustees resolved to launch a small grants programme, permitting individual Trustees to donate £20,000 each to a charity of their preference. The Trustees reiterated a preference to support national instead of local bodies, except where the latter satisfied a series of conditions, including their being based in a deprived area, 'promoting self-help', and having fifty percent representation of local residents on the management committee. The Trustees identified a number of excluded categories of funding, including deficit funding, and observed that recipients of funding had welcomed the Foundation's willingness to fund 'core costs'. The Trustees also noted their preference for minimum grants of £10,000. Finally, the Trustees resolved to visit at least once per year the recipients of grants of £25,000 and above. At the same meeting, the Trustees chose Surgeon Vice Admiral Anthony Revell CB (1935–2018), former Surgeon General of the British Armed Forces (1994–1997), as a Trustee. In December 1997, the Trustees resolved that a retirement age of 70 would be mandatory for Trustees recruited subsequently, but present Trustees would observe a retirement age of 75.

In May 1998, the Trustees chose Dr John Hemming, former Director of the Royal Geographical Society (1975–1996), as a new Trustee. In a later interview, Hemming would recall that he was particularly attracted by the Foundation's preparedness to support 'core funding' for charities.⁸⁷⁶ In October 1998, the Trusts resolved to establish a Finance Subcommittee and reconfigured its preferred annual allocation of grants: forty percent would be allocated to medical causes and disability, in combination; thirty percent to community and social causes; and ten percent each to conservation, arts, and overseas causes. The Foundation further resolved only to fund research from operating charities which adopted a peer review system. The Trustees also reconsidered their support for overseas entities, and stipulated that it would only support overseas causes with a presence in the United Kingdom, with the exception of the charities supported by JEII, which would be 'reconsidered for renewed funding as part of the regular review process'. Finally, the Trustees resolved to maintain future levels of donation at the same level in real terms; the commitment required the Foundation to use its accumulated distributable income in the first instance, before making use of its capital base.

In September 1999, Peter Algernon Strutt retired as a Trustee. In December, Peter Pratt was chosen as Chairman of the Board of Trustees to succeed Sir David Scott. In June

2000, the Trustees adopted their first formal conflict of interest policy, requiring Trustees to withdraw from meetings where a conflict of interest arose between an applicant and the Trustee. In the following month, Dennis Parry resigned as a Trustee, after having served in the role since 1977.

In September 2000, the Foundation made the significant decision to suspend further funding for medical research, motivated principally by the concern that the Trustees lack sufficient expertise to evaluate applications for medical research.⁸⁷⁷ The allocations for grants were thus reconfigured: the arts increased from fifteen to twenty percent; community development and social welfare increased from thirty to thirty-five percent; the medical and disabled causes decreased from forty-five to thirty-five percent; and conservation remained at ten percent. Support for overseas grants was subsumed within the other categories. The Trustees separately resolved to fund only ‘medium-sized’ charities, in the place of larger charities which could more securely attract funding. Finally, the Trustees reconfirmed their commitment to operate in perpetuity. In November 2000, the Trustees agreed to adopt a policy of socially responsible investment, with filtrations in its choice of investments, such as the exclusion of tobacco companies and a preference for a consideration of ‘environmental issues’ by their investment managers.

In December 2000, Lady (Sarah) Riddell was appointed as a Trustee, on the recommendation of John Hemming.⁸⁷⁸ Lady Riddell had formerly served on the research ethics committee of the Board of The Hammersmith Hospital.⁸⁷⁹ In February 2001, Richard Edmunds was also appointed as a Trustee. Edmunds had formerly served as an investment manager for Ellerman Lines plc, and was invited by Peter Pratt to become a Trustee on this basis, and latterly his experience running institutional funds in the Public Trust Office.⁸⁸⁰ In October 2001, Christopher Hanvey departed as Director of the Foundation. In December, Tim Glass, formerly Director of the National Career Guidance Council, was appointed as Director in Hanvey’s place. In the same month, Sue MacGregor, the BBC journalist, was also appointed as a Trustee, again on the recommendation of John Hemming.⁸⁸¹

5.2 *John Ellerman Foundation, 2000–2023*

The ensuing administrative history of the Foundation is more richly documented and more accessible to the public via the creation of a website for the Foundation. In many aspects, the operations of the Foundation conformed with the principles of allocation and investment which were formulated over the previous decade. In respect of visits to recipients of grants, Trustees could be expected to visit as many as fourteen charities a year.⁸⁸² In March 2002, the Trustees effected the incorporation of Sir John Ellerman’s Will Trust into the Foundation, which necessitated the procurement of a Certificate of Incorporation for the merged charity from the Charity Commission, a process which required assurances to the Commission about the validity of the Foundation’s use of remuneration for Trustees. In March 2003, the Foundation reconfirmed its decision not to fund medical research. The categories of grant allocation remained the same, with minor changes to the proportions: medical and disabled causes (thirty-five percent); community and social welfare (thirty-five percent); the arts (twenty

percent); conservation (ten percent). In April 2003, Sue MacGregor visited South Africa on behalf of the Foundation, focusing particularly on the five charities which the Foundation and the Moorgate Trusts had supported since 1971. By 2003, the Foundation had granted approximately £300,000 to the John Ellerman Museum of Zoology, by then renamed as the Ellerman Resource Center; it had granted approximately £1 million to the Rachel Swart Fund; £460,000 to the St Giles Association for the Handicapped; £1 million to the John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust; and £250,000 to the Ian Fraser Memorial Bursary Fund. By 2015, the Foundation would cease to support these charities, with the exception of the Rachel Swart Fund.⁸⁸³

In September 2003, the Trustees announced a collaboration with The Baring Foundation for the support of overseas charities, particularly in Africa, which would continue for a further five years.⁸⁸⁴ Changes in the composition of the Trustees occurred. Angela Boschi retired in April 2004. Peter Pratt, then in office as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, passed away in May 2004. The minutes record that Trustees ‘drank a champagne toast to Peter [...] to acknowledge formally their appreciation of the huge contribution he has made to the Foundation as Director, Trustee and Chairman over so many years’.

In July 2004, Richard Edmunds was chosen as the Foundation’s new Chairman of the Board of Trustees; in September, David Martin-Jenkins was appointed as Deputy Chairman. In 2005, the Trustees directed support towards the reduction of loneliness in the elderly, and other initiatives which had not attracted ‘popular’ support.⁸⁸⁵ A Risk and Audit Committee was created in the following year.

Lady Riddell would later recall that she and Sue MacGregor had encouraged the Trustees to accept that future Trustees would not be recruited on the basis of their association with JEII or the Ellerman entities.⁸⁸⁶ Recruitment agencies were subsequently used, in the place of personal recommendation by existing Trustees. A new emphasis would be placed on Trustee specialisms, with Trustees assigned specific competences, such as service on the Finance and Investment Committee, in response to the demands of application assessment, which the Trustees would continue to perform in concert with the Director and office staff.⁸⁸⁷ Between 2009 and 2013, several new Trustees joined the Foundation: Professor Brian Hurwitz, D’Oyly Carte Professor of Medicine and the Arts in the Department of English, King’s College, London; Dominic Caldecott, former UK chief investment officer, Morgan Stanley; Vivien Gould, an investment management executive and consultant, and a Trustee of the Stroke Association; Hugh Raven, a former Chair of the Marine Conservation Society; and Diana Whitworth, a former board member of the Big Lottery Fund.⁸⁸⁸ In tandem, other Trustees resigned: David Martin-Jenkins, Richard Edmunds, Sue MacGregor, and John Hemming.

In 2010, Timothy Glass retired as Director, and became a Trustee in May 2011. In August 2011, Lady Riddell became Chair of Trustees, coinciding with the appointment as Director of Nicola Pollock, formerly Director of Grantmaking at The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The handover dovetailed with a revisiting of whether the Foundation would operate in perpetuity or in the ‘long term’, with the Trustees now expressly favouring the latter.⁸⁸⁹ In 2013, the Foundation’s annual report described the implementation of new policies, ‘the culmination

of almost two years' examination of our overall strategy'.⁸⁹⁰ Grantmaking categories had been reduced to three: Arts, Welfare, and Environment, with Welfare to be accorded the highest allocation of grants, and Arts and Environment accorded an equal proportion of the balance.⁸⁹¹ The amount spent on grants, £3.4 million for 43 grants, reflected the consistency of the Foundation's commitment to maintaining disbursements at above a rate of return of the endowment of four percent per annum; by the end of March 2014, Lady Riddell could report that the endowment had reached its 'highest ever value' of £124 million.⁸⁹² In the same year, Peter Kyle OBE, former Chief Executive of Shakespeare's Globe among other appointments, was chosen as a Trustee; and the Foundation issued its first grants to a new Regional Museums and Galleries Fund. In the following year, the Trustees reaffirmed their aim of 'operating in the long term, which we now define as 30-plus years'.⁸⁹³ The endowment reached another all-time high of £135 million; 54 grants totalling £4.3 million were made in the year ending 31 March 2015.

In 2015–16, the Foundation increased its grants budget to £4.8 million, awarding 62 grants of £4.75 million in the year ending 31 March 2016. The year coincided with the death of Diana Whitworth and the retirement of Dominic Caldecott as a Trustee. In their place, the Trustees appointed Geraldine Blake, Chief Executive of Community Links, and Gary Steinberg, former head of the International Monetary Fund's investment unit. In 2016–17, the endowment reached another all-time high of £142 million; 71 grants of £5.38 million were made in the year ending 31 March 2017. During the same year, Vivien Gould resigned as a Trustee.

In 2017–18, the Trustees reaffirmed their commitment to spend 4.5 percent of the Foundation's endowment; 67 grants of £5.55 million were issued in the year ending 31 March 2018. The year was marked by the resignation as a Trustee of Tim Glass, the resignation as Chair of Lady Riddell, and the death of David Martin-Jenkins, who had succeeded in recording an interview with Dr Katharine Haydon shortly after the Trustees launched an oral history project. Three new Trustees were appointed in the same year: Tufyal Choudhury, Associate Professor of Law at Durham University; Keith Shepherd, formerly Chief Investment Officer with the Railways Industry Pension Schemes; and Annika Small OBE, formerly CEO of Nominet Trust. Finally, Hugh Raven was chosen to succeed Lady Riddell as Chair.

In 2018–19, the Foundation inaugurated a new grants strategy, renaming the Welfare category 'Social Action'. Becca Bunce, co-Director of IC Change, was chosen as a Trustee. Once again, the endowment reached an all-time high of £144 million; 55 grants of £5.1 million were made in the year ending 31 March 2019. In 2019, Nicola Pollock departed as Director. Sufina Ahmad, formerly of the City of London Corporation, was appointed as Pollock's successor.

In the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation continued its grantmaking, awarding 57 grants of £5.6 million. In 2020–21, as the effects of the pandemic continued to be felt, the Foundation saw the resignation as Chair of Hugh Raven and as Trustee of Brian Hurwitz. Jonny Hughes, WCMC Chief Executive Officer at the UN Environment

Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, was chosen as a Trustee; and Peter Kyle was appointed to succeed Hugh Raven as Chair. 64 grants of £5.6 million were made in the year ending 31 March 2021.

In October 2021, the Foundation commissioned the present history. The commission coincided with the Foundation's fiftieth anniversary, which the Foundation marked with a celebration at the Royal Geographical Society in November 2021, alongside Protea, an international curatorial exchange programme between South Africa and the UK, the inaugural round of the UK Overseas Territories Fund (run as a collaboration with other funders led by the Foundation), and the Conference of Equals, which the Foundation commissioned the Centre for Knowledge Equity to deliver. 72 grants of £6.6 million were made in the year ending 31 March 2022. In February 2023, Gary Steinberg stepped down from the Board, and a new Trustee, Lily Tomson, Senior Research Associate at Jesus College, Cambridge, was appointed.

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During Richard Edmunds's and Lady Riddell's tenures as Chair, the Foundation had made a concerted effort to engage with JEI's legacy — by visiting the Natural History Museum to inspect his collection of rodent species, acquiring an Ellerman Lines Ltd. advertisement poster, paintings by Esther Ellerman, and purchasing Sir Luke Fildes's portrait of Bryher, as discussed above (II.7).⁸⁹⁴ These tokens — procured for the Foundation — testify to the complexity of the Foundation's past and the unusual nature of its present. John Ellerman Foundation is a charity which has had to discover its own history.

CONCLUSION

As noted in the Preface, the purpose of this work was to provide an overview of the history of the Foundation, its antecedent charitable trusts, and the lives of John Reeves Ellerman, 1st Bt., C. H. (1862–1933), Annie Winifred (Bryher) Ellerman (1894–1983), and John Reeves Ellerman, 2nd Bt. (1909–1973). The work was commissioned by the Trustees of John Ellerman Foundation, in part to familiarise themselves with the moral and political views of the Ellerman family, as well as the conduct of the Ellerman family businesses. With these objectives in mind, we provide here a short summary of the key findings of the work.

1 The Practice of Philanthropy

JEI, Bryher, and JEII were philanthropists for significant parts of their adult lives. JEI's philanthropy was publicly reported and widely-known; he supported a variety of charitable causes, focusing particularly on funding for hospitals and on the suffering caused by the First World War. His philanthropy was also practised in a private capacity; it was reported that he was averse to publicity, and that his gifts in private were intended never to be made public. Our judgement is that this may exaggerate JEI's disinclination to publicise his charitable activities. Moreover, we conclude that JEI's known philanthropy was modest, even trivial, by the standards of his wealthy contemporaries (I.7).

Bryher practised philanthropy in conscious imitation of her father. Her philanthropy was wide-ranging. It encompassed patronage for literary and artistic activities, direct support for necessitous acquaintances, and her personal involvement in humanitarian relief for the victims of persecution by the Nazi regime and its allies, particularly the Jewish victims of this persecution, whom she helped escape Nazi Europe by acts of considerable bravery (II.9).

JEII was obsessively private, but there is significant evidence of his philanthropy prior to the creation of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust in 1971. Most notably, JEII was passionately supportive of the blind. He learned braille, and he actively supported St Dunstan's, now known as Blind Veterans UK, in both South Africa and in England. In addition, JEII provided direct support to necessitous acquaintances, especially to Rachel Swart, and he established The Rachel Swart Fund, which continues to operate today, for the relief of individuals with similar disabilities. The extent of JEII's philanthropy is difficult to establish owing to the privacy with which he pursued it (III.6). However, the origination of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust lay with an acknowledgement by JEII's advisers that the trust structures would permit JEII to continue his philanthropic activities without jeopardising the financial standing of his prospective widow, Esther Ellerman, and the viability of Ellerman Lines (III.7). Esther Ellerman herself was demonstrably sympathetic to her husband's philanthropy, which she practised in concert with him and which she maintained after his death, by her co-ordinated superintendence of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust (IV.2, IV.5).

2 Rationale for Philanthropy

The impetus for JEI's, Bryher's, and JEII's philanthropy is complex, and it requires sensitivity to their distinctive personalities and contexts. JEI has left no extant rationale for his philanthropic gifts. In the judgement of Bryher, JEI practised philanthropy in the mode of a Victorian paternalist: an individual who believed himself more capable of identifying deserving causes than the impersonal structures of government (II.9). JEI was undoubtedly involved in tax avoidance, but he was simultaneously an incomparable taxpayer, before and after his death (I.7).

Bryher consciously devoted her life to 'service' (II.2). Her published rationale for her philanthropy was aligned with the paternalism which she attributed to her father. However, philanthropy formed a part of Bryher's personality and 'self-fashioning'. It did not flow exclusively or principally from an aversion to the structures of government or the incipient welfare state (II.9). To many of her acquaintances, Bryher primarily embodied a source of financial patronage, and she appears to have embraced this role. It is clear that Bryher practised tax avoidance; her long-term residence in Switzerland was partly motivated by this consideration (II.3). Moreover, Bryher was not obviously self-abnegating or embarrassed in any way by her considerable wealth, which she preserved at her death largely for bequests to friends and family members, and not to charity.

JEII was unusual for his formulation of a religious rationale for his philanthropy (III.6). JEII evidently believed that one's positive activities in this life would redound to their benefit in their other lives, and their negative activities would have the opposite effect. The extreme implications of this view — blaming an individual's present suffering, including their physical disabilities, on misconduct in a prior life — were expressly endorsed by JEII. For example, he reportedly informed a disabled person that her suffering was caused by karmic retribution.

3 Taxation and the Two Moorgate Trusts

JEII's generally uninterested stance towards the businesses he inherited have made it difficult to identify his attitude to tax avoidance. However, his involvement in the creation of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust provide some illumination. JEII established the Trusts in anticipation of the effects of estate duty. He sought to insulate his taxable estate primarily by moving his shares in Ellerman Lines — which constituted a significant proportion of his wealth — into trusts with nominally charitable purposes. The disbursements of the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trusts were not obviously intended to exceed the typical amounts JEII donated in any given year. Furthermore, JEII did not intend to re-orientate Ellerman Lines into a business focused restrictedly on generating profits for charitable disbursement. Instead, JEII was evidently content for the company to devote its profits to capital expenditure for the maintenance of the underlying businesses (III.7, IV.2).

Prior to JEII's death, the Trusts did not receive a dividend from Ellerman Lines. There was no apparent discomfort at this state of affairs; JEII's express motivation in creating the Trusts was to permit Ellerman Lines to continue as a going concern, without the effects

of estate duty necessitating its sudden ‘break-up’. By creating the Trusts, JEII hoped to secure the continued employment of the personnel of the business, and thus protect them from the vicissitudes of an exigent sale. However, JEII’s most important concern was the financial security of his wife, whom he hoped would receive a significant proportion of his taxable estate for her personal use (III.7, IV.2). Esther Ellerman subsequently insulated her inheritance from taxation in Britain by availing herself of overseas residency for tax purposes, in addition to the use of a Luxembourg-based tax shelter (IV.4). At her death, she would leave only limited funds to charity. This decision stemmed from her belief that JEII had benefited charities sufficiently in his lifetime. The principal beneficiaries of Esther Ellerman’s estate — her second husband and her sister — received in excess of £18 million, which constituted approximately sixty percent of the endowment possessed by the Trusts at the time of her death (III.7, IV Introduction).

On this account, it is difficult to associate the Moorgate Trust and the New Moorgate Trust with programmatic philanthropy. JEII was unquestionably philanthropic, but the Trusts could have persisted for decades without receiving a dividend for disbursement from Ellerman Lines, and this outcome would have conformed with JEII’s intentions. The sale of Ellerman Lines by the Trust, which it effected in co-ordination with Esther Ellerman, arose by the particular conjunction of four developments: first, the Trusts’ dissatisfaction with the failure of the Lines to deliver a dividend for charitable distribution; second, the disinclination of Dennis Martin-Jenkins, after his departure from the firm as Chairman, to preserve the Lines from break-up, possibly motivated by a personal antipathy; third, the perceived failure of the firm to generate a profit in recent years; and fourth, the desire of Esther Ellerman to access a significant but illiquid component of her assets. It is true that concerns were expressed about the failure of Ellerman Lines to generate a dividend for charitable disbursement by the Trusts, but the significance of this concern to the Trustees was not clearly weightier than the three other considerations (IV.4).

As such, the conclusions one can reach about the origins of the Moorgate and New Moorgate Trusts are complex. JEII would have objected to a charity operating publicly in his name, but he was a committed philanthropist, who had no hesitation to devote considerable sums to causes in which he believed. It is unclear from the surviving evidence whether he would have favoured the perpetual operation of the Moorgate Trust or the New Moorgate Trust, except by the incidental hope that they could protect Ellerman Lines and its employees indefinitely from the effect of estate duty or the incidence of a comparable tax. Once the Trusts were decoupled from Ellerman Lines — an event which JEII never expressly contemplated prior to his death in any extant document — their purposes changed fundamentally in character. The management of a liquid endowment, detached from any underlying business, was not alien to JEII’s understanding of philanthropy. He had established charities, such as the Rachel Swart Fund, and he had supported St Dunstan’s. However, JEII’s attitude to the present iteration of John Ellerman Foundation is far more difficult to assess, particularly in the light of the idiosyncratic religious views which he held.

3 The Conduct of the Ellerman Businesses

JEI, Bryher, and JEII never articulated an ‘ethics’ of business; that is, a set of rules to ensure that firms in their control acted in conformity with the dictates of ‘morality’. Moreover, JEI, Bryher, and JEII did not direct their investments to firms which acted in accordance with particular ethical standards, in a manner similar to the principles of Environmental, Social, and Governance-focussed investing. This absence is unsurprising. Twentieth-century industrialists and wealthy individuals were not generally prone to the imposition of ostensible ethical controls on their businesses. Exceptions did exist, typically where an industrialist inculcated religious views to their employees or practised a form of moral paternalism, which required employees to abstain from certain conduct within and outside their place of business. In their indifference to this form of programmatic ethical control, JEI, Bryher, and JEII fell within the norm of behaviour demonstrated by most of their wealthy contemporaries. Although JEI was intimately involved in the management of his businesses, he, Bryher and JEII were evidently uninterested in practising what might be called ‘benevolent capitalism’. They did not campaign for elevated wages or profit-sharing for the employees of their own businesses; they were not known for advocating abatements in rent for necessitous tenants; and they did not publicly or privately express concerns about improved working conditions for the labourers in their collieries or rice mills.

One must be alert to applying anachronistic or exceptional moral standards to individuals in the past. However, this should not inhibit an assessment of whether the conduct of JEI, JEII, Bryher, and their respective businesses would satisfy the requirements of morality today. JEI’s businesses were undoubtedly involved in activities which their modern equivalents would reject. One example is the voluntary use of Ellerman vessels for the transportation of prisoners during the Boer War (I.4). In JEII’s case, it is clear that he was indifferent to the apartheid system in South Africa and Namibia, and he did not intervene to effect an anti-apartheid policy of desegregation on Ellerman Lines businesses or vessels in apartheid and segregated jurisdictions. Ellerman Lines itself did not boycott the apartheid regime and there is no indication that JEII was sympathetic to the Anti-Apartheid Movement, even after the signal injustices which motivated it — the Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960, for example. More importantly, in JEII’s case, there is a disturbing intimation that he supported the imposition of apartheid in Namibia (III.6).

JEII’s personal attitude towards Black individuals, like Bryher’s, has an objectionable element (II.9, III.6). Although no evidence survives of their personal antipathy to particular Black individuals, and unambiguous evidence survives of their acquaintance and generosity to particular Black individuals, it is clear that the siblings shared attitudes which were dismissive and condescending.

4 The Ellerman Companies and the British Empire

On a related basis, it is important to emphasise that the source of JEI’s wealth, and the wealth which Bryher and JEII inherited, was tightly bound to the British Empire in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The shipping routes which JEI controlled

were instrumental in the administration of British colonialism in this era. JEI's interests in South Africa, India, and the Gulf closely mapped the imposition of British rule in those areas and undoubtedly facilitated it. JEI was in no sense embarrassed by the association. In *The Development of British Shipping* (1924), he celebrated it, and presented himself as a modern Francis Drake: a cynosure for the extension of British rule across the globe. The decline of the Ellerman shipping businesses undoubtedly reflected changes in the industry which were unrelated to the twilight of the British Empire, but it would be misleading to suggest that JEI's successes were not closely tied to the vibrancy of British colonialism prior to the decolonisation movement. JEI's rice mills in Burma exemplify his possession of an interest which would not have existed in the absence of colonial rule. It bears re-emphasis that one cannot detach JEI's wealth — and the wealth of JEII and Bryher — from the operation of the British Empire (I.6).

5 Personal Character

The personal character of JEI, Bryher, and JEII differed significantly. It is clear that JEI was enigmatic to the individuals he encountered, but it is equally clear that the surviving accounts of his character are prepossessed, and evidently overawed by the considerable wealth he commanded when the accounts were committed to paper (I.6.4). There is not the slightest indication that JEI was concerned by the possession of extreme wealth. JEI practised a type of discretion in exhibiting his wealth which impelled contemporaries to allege that he was parsimonious, but the evidence for genuine parsimony is slight: JEI gifted Bryher £500,000 of property as a birthday present in circa 1932, for example (II.8).

Bryher was evidently interested in business, but excluded from it by contemporary attitudes, especially JEI's prejudiced judgement of the ability of women to participate in industry (II.7). Bryher applied herself with brio to the administration of several enterprises, and contemporary assessments of her character reflect the impression of her indefatigable qualities as an impresario. The enthusiasm for psychoanalysis in Bryher's circle is partly responsible for the wide range of candid reflections on Bryher's character in the circle's memoirs and correspondence. These assessments resist easy summary, but it is clear from them that Bryher approached her wealth conscious of a responsibility to disburse it effectively.

JEII's character is more difficult to assess, given the limited accounts which survive of it from disinterested parties. There can be no doubt that JEII was consumed by anxiety about his personal wealth and the importunities which it carried, such as 'begging' letters from members of the public (III.5.3). It is evident from his early novel, *Why Do They Like It?*, that his parents feared JEII would fall victim to kidnapping, and this anxiety must have affected his attitude to publicity in later life (III.2). His attempts to avoid military service during the Second World War are hardly worthy of censure from modern historians without military experience. However, it is clear that he exercised his influence to avoid service in a way which was unavailable to the vast majority of individuals in Britain. This exemption from service was criticised as an example of neurotic cowardice by the individuals who orchestrated it (III.4). If one credits Bryher's account, which must be interpreted through the prism of her later resentments, JEII

never intended to remain in Britain during the war (II.4). Yet JEII would later express visceral hatred for fascism; and his attempt to nationalise Ellerman Lines was inspired, in part, by a desire to aid a prospective war effort (III.4, III.6, III.7).

JEII was undoubtedly an intelligent person: capable of working with extraordinary diligence on studies of an unusually technical character, reportedly possessed of a photographic memory, and a consummate expert on Gilbert and Sullivan. Yet his accomplishments were trivialised by contemporaries who felt that he ought more closely to have followed in his father's footsteps as an industrialist and financier. JEII was remarkably resistant to this pressure. He practised his passions without deference to the judgement of contemporaries or his family. In many ways, JEII was a generous and humane individual, who 'proved—unlike so many with ample means to satisfy every temptation—to be a decent and constructive human being'.⁸⁹⁶

6 Future Study

John Ellerman Foundation exists today because of the philanthropic inclinations of JEII, which he shared with his sister, and which they inherited from their father. These activities merit praise and deserve the commemoration of honest historical study. We hope our work has provided a step towards a still richer account of the Ellermans.

**List of Trustees of the Moorgate Trusts
and John Ellerman Foundation, 1971–2023**

** Denotes a current Trustee (2023)*

Sir John Ellerman, 2nd Bt.	Alastair Lloyd
Lady Esther Ellerman	Sue MacGregor
Geraldine Blake*	David Martin-Jenkins
Angela Rosemary Boschi	Dennis Martin-Jenkins
Becca Bunce*	Dennis Parry
Dominic Caldecott	Charles Pratt
Tufyal Choudhury*	Peter Pratt
Richard Edmunds	Hugh Raven
Ian Fraser, Baron Fraser of Lonsdale	Surgeon Vice Admiral Anthony Revell
Tim Glass	Lady (Sarah) Riddell
Vivien Gould	Sir David Scott
Dr John Hemming	Keith Shepherd*
Frederick Hitch	Annika Small*
Jonny Hughes*	Gary Steinberg
Professor Brian Hurwitz	Peter Algernon Strutt
Ion Hunter Touchet Garnett Orme	Lily Tomson*
Peter Kyle*	Diana Whitworth

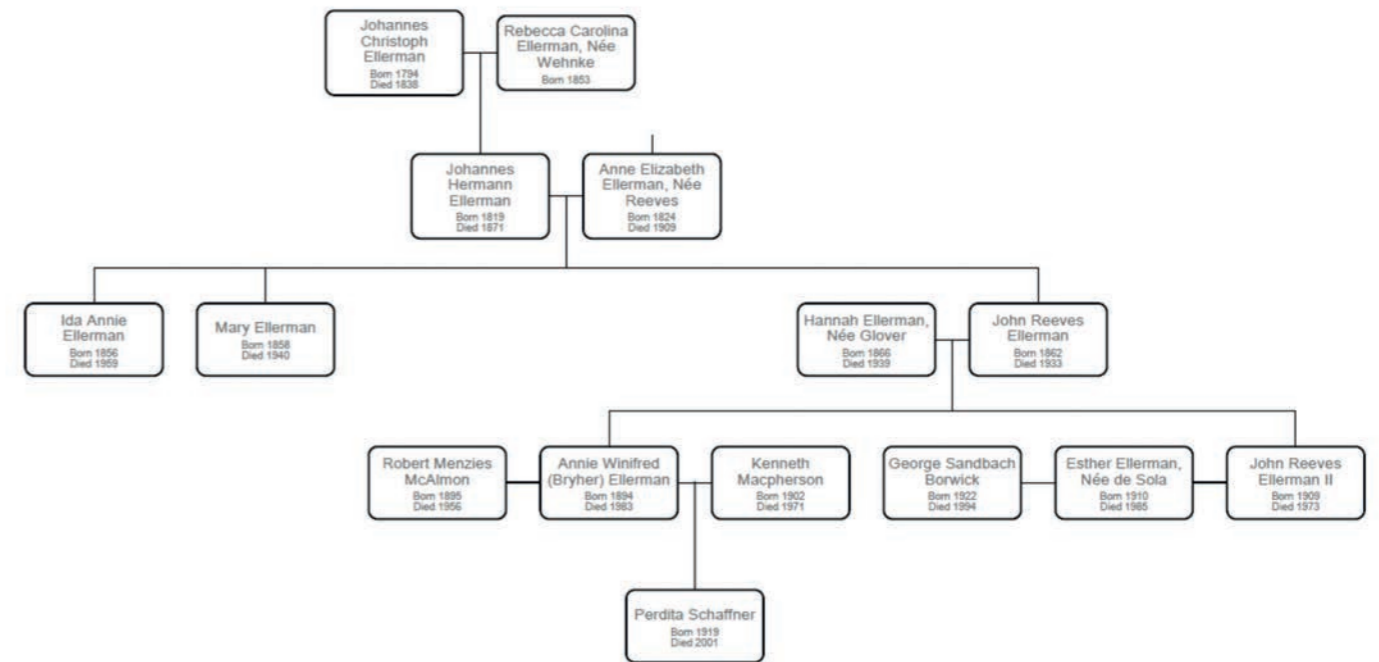
Chairpersons of John Ellerman Foundation, 1997–2023

- Sir David Scott (1997–1999)
- Peter Pratt (1999–2004)
- Richard Edmunds (2004–2011)
- Lady (Sarah) Riddell (2011–2018)
- Hugh Raven (2018–2021)
- Peter Kyle (2022–present)

Directors of John Ellerman Foundation, 1994–2023

- Peter Pratt (1994–1996)
- Christopher Hanvey (1996–2001)
- Tim Glass (2001–2010)
- Nicola Pollock (2010–2019)
- Sufina Ahmad (2020–present)

APPENDIX I — ELLERMAN FAMILY TREE



The family tree above includes only the members of JEI’s immediate family: his father and mother; his two sisters; his grandfather and grandmother; his son and daughter; and the spouses of his son and daughter. JEII did not have any issue. Bryher adopted Perdita Schaffner, who subsequently married and had issue; Perdita’s descendants are omitted from the family tree. Perdita’s biological parents are not included in the family tree. Bryher’s de facto relationship with H. D. is also not included in the family tree, which lists only formalised marriages. JEI’s uncles and aunts are not listed in the family tree. The spouses and children and the descendants of JEI’s sisters are also not included in the family tree. Both of JEI’s sisters had issue. Finally, the family tree uses ‘Ellerman’ in lieu of ‘Ellermann’ when referring to JEI’s ascendants, who evidently used the German form.

ENDNOTES

- 1 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1933.
- 2 JEI *DBB*.
- 3 For a memorable comment on this fact see Leslie Hannah, ‘Entrepreneurs and the Social Sciences’, *Economica*, 51 (1984), p. 229: ‘the man who is arguably Britain’s most successful businessman has no central place in the national consciousness’.
- 4 For an additional study of JEI and his children by Professor Rubinstein see ‘Beyond the Dreams of Avarice’, *History Today* (October 2008), pp. 34–40.
- 5 Taylor retired in 1974 as Deputy Chairman of Ellerman Lines, reportedly after five decades of employment with the firm.
- 6 Peter Richard McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman: Entrepreneur or Empire Builder?’, MLitt thesis, University of Glasgow (2003).
- 7 Ian Collard, *Ellerman Lines: Remembering a Great Shipping Company* (Stroud, 2014).
- 8 For a reference to the archive see Lesley Richmond and Alison Turton, *The Brewing Industry: A Guide to Historical Records* (Manchester, 1990).
- 9 The Hull History Centre preserves the records of Ellerman’s Wilson Line. The records include the archive of the antecedent company, Thomas Wilson Sons and Co. Ltd.
- 10 Glasgow University Archives preserves the records of Ellerman and Bucknall (Steamships) Co., Ellerman and Papayanni Ltd., Ellerman City Line Ltd., Ellerman’s Arracan Rice and Trading Co. Ltd., and components of the records of Thomas Wilson Sons and Co. Ltd.
- 11 National Museums Liverpool, Archives Centre, Maritime Museum preserves material deriving from Ellerman and Papayanni Ltd. Ellerman City Line Ltd., Associated Container Transportation Ltd, and Ellerman-Hall Line Ltd.
- 12 National Maritime Museum, Greenwich preserves L BK/84/1–14, a letterbook containing correspondence between Ellerman and Frederick Lewis (1870–1944), 1st Baron Essendon. Other materials in the Museum are cited directly below.
- 13 Library of Congress, Washington D. C., MSS38265, box 40, Kermit Roosevelt and Belle Roosevelt Papers, preserves a letter from Ellerman to Kermit Roosevelt (1889–1943).
- 14 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 152, f. 5144–5.
- 15 Bryher, *HA*, p. 8. For an Argentinian relative, Henry Clarence Ellermann, also descended from Johannes-Jürgen Ellerman see Narciso Binayan, *Historia genealógica argentina* (Buenos Aires, 1999), p. 454.
- 16 In her invaluable genealogical research, KH identified Johannes Hermann as a passenger arriving at Hull from Hamburg on 1840 on the ship *Tyee* and again arriving at Hull from Hamburg in 1845 on the ship *Helen McGregor* (AC: England, Alien Arrivals register).
- 17 ‘F. Von Roy’ is identified as merchant, based in Hull, in *The Law Advertiser* (28 January 1830), p. 69; he appears to be the same individual identified as a merchant originally from Danzig in Hermann Kellenbenz, ‘German Immigrants in England’, in *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society*, ed. Colin Holmes (London, 1978), p. 73. Bankruptcy proceedings were issued against von Roy in April 1826 (*London Gazette*, 1826, p. 2337). The reported association between Johannes Hermann and von Roy is provided in Yale, Bryher Papers, b. f. 5144–5.
- 18 In an application to Gray’s Inn of 1897, discussed below, JEI identified his father’s name as ‘John’ instead of Johannes or Johann, perhaps revealing discomfort with his German ancestry; by the time of the First World War, Ellerman’s supposed association with Germany by descent would become a subject of comment among his critics, as we also note below.
- 19 AC: Census of 1851.
- 20 *Christie’s Shipping Register, Maritime Compendium, and Commercial Advertiser* (Newcastle, 1858), s.v. ‘Hull’, ‘Ellerman and Co’.
- 21 AC: Census of 1861.
- 22 James Grant, *A Treatise on the Law to Bankers and Banking* (London, 1865), p. 135.
- 23 *The Exchequer Reports: Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Courts of Exchequer & Exchequer Chamber* (London, 1862), vol. 6, p. 608.
- 24 *Gentleman’s Magazine* (December 1862), p. 766.
- 25 F. de H. L., ‘C. F. Ellerman’, *Notes and Queries* (21 August 1915), pp. 141–3, in response to Russell Markland, ‘C. F. Ellerman’, *Notes and Queries* (12 June 1915), p. 452. For further information about Abraham Ellerman see Charles Poplimont, *La Belgique depuis mil huit cent trente* (Brussels and Leipzig, 1852), p. 238; [Philippe Ville], *Guide des étrangers dans la ville d’Anvers* (Anvers, 1834), p. 81; *Examiner* (6 June 1813), p. 357; *The Gentleman’s Magazine* (June 1818), p. 561; *Reports and Cases Argued and Determined in the English Courts of Common Law*, ed. Thomas Sergeant and John C. Lowber (Philadelphia, 1823), vol. 6, pp. 11–14; The National Archives, Kew, PROB 11/1798/183 (19 April 1832); Robert Demoulin, ‘La correspondance des consuls anglais en Belgique, pendant la Révolution de 1830’, *Bulletin de la Commission royale d’Histoire*, 8 (1934), p. 418; Jan Rüger, *Heligoland: Britain, Germany, and the Struggle for the North Sea* (Oxford, 2017), p. 251; Stuart Weems Bruchey, *Robert Oliver, Merchant of Baltimore* (Baltimore, 1956), p. 354; Clive Trebilcock, *Phoenix Assurance and the Development of British Insurance* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 163.
- 26 Barbara M. Robinson, *The Hull German Lutheran Church 1848-1998* (Beverley, 2000), p. 15. This reference is owed to KH. JEI was buried with Anglican rites, and there is no indication that he identified as a Lutheran.
- 27 AC: Census of 1871.
- 28 For this information see Stafford Reeves’s obituary in *The Times*, 30 July 1909, which mentions that JEI was Stafford’s nephew.
- 29 For this overview of the Reeves family see <https://friendsofhullgeneralcemetery.com/the-new-information-board/> (website accessed 20 February 2023).
- 30 AC: Church of England Marriage and Banns, 1754–1921.
- 31 For this overview of JEI’s paternal ancestry see Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 152, f. 5145; William Innes Addison, *The Snell Exhibition, from the University of Glasgow to Balliol College, Oxford* (Glasgow and London, 1901), p. 157.
- 32 AC: Census of 1861.
- 33 *The Newcastle District and Hull Commercial List* (London, 1877), p. 22, under ‘Dissolution of Partnerships’ lists ‘Ellerman J. H. and Co. – Merchants. Johannes Hermann Ellerman, Walter Reynolds. 3rd January 1868’.
- 34 AC: Census of 1871.
- 35 AC: Census of 1871.
- 36 AC: England and Wales, National Probate Calendar. Johannes Hermann’s estate reportedly amounted only to £600; his executor was William Charles Prescott, described as a ‘merchant’ in probate records.
- 37 Bryher, *HA*, p. 97.
- 38 For a history of the school in this period see Thomas Winter Hutton, *King Edward’s School, Birmingham, 1552–1952* (Oxford, 1952); Anthony Trott, *No Place for Fop or Idler: The Story of King Edward’s School, Birmingham* (Birmingham, 1992).
- 39 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 40 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 41 AC: England and Wales, National Probate Calendar. JEI *DBB* notes that Reeves’s estate was valued at approximately £20,000, but the itemised legacies in Reeves’s will exceed this amount.
- 42 AC: Census of 1881. For this reference see Susan McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher: An Untold Love Story of Modernism* (Oxford, 2022), p. 30.
- 43 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 44 For this information see *The Accountant* (1 December 1934), p. 791; Richard Brown, ‘William Thomas Smedley (1851–1934)’, available at: <https://www.victorian-cinema.net/smedley.php> (website accessed 20 February 2023); William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, PA, 2008), p. 170. The ‘Mutoscope’ was a ‘rotating cylinder that displayed a series of photographs in quick succession, giving the impression of movement’ (Sherman, *Used Books*, p. 172).
- 45 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 46 Robert McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together, 1920–1930*, rev. Kay Boyle (New York, 1968), p. 83.
- 47 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1933.
- 48 This amount was to be made available to JEI on attaining the age of 21. McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 31 reports that JEI inherited £14,000 (fourteen thousand) but we have not identified evidence for this claim.
- 49 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 50 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98. Bryher’s anecdote is difficult to reconcile with the date at which JEI acquired his legacy (circa 1883) and the known dates of his employment by Smedley; McCabe silently amends the anecdote to refer to JEI’s later employer, Quilter, Ball and Co., instead of Smedley.
- 51 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.

- 52 *The Alpine Journal* (November 1882), p. 120.
- 53 *The Alpine Journal* (May 1883), p. 197.
- 54 AC: Census of 1881; McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 30.
- 55 Zentralbibliothek Zurich, A Ms 2003.27. These letters pertain strictly to mountaineering inquiries; the letters are written from 54 Francis Road, Birmingham on 27 August, 9 September, 19 October, and 30 December 1882.
- 56 *The Accountant* (6 January 1883), p. 1 lists JEI as the first-placed candidate for Final Examinations (a merit acknowledged in *The Accountant* (7 July 1883), p. 13); whether he received ‘the highest possible marks’ is not stated.
- 57 Alexander S. Rosser, ‘Businessmen in the House of Commons: A Comparative Study of the 1852–1857 and the 1895–1900 Parliaments’, PhD dissertation, University of Kansas (2009).
- 58 *The Accountant* (24 March 1883), p. 6. The entry notes that JEI was then employed by Quilter, Ball and Co., which must correct McCabe’s claim that JEI joined the firm only in 1886 (McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 31). For other references to JEI’s activity as a student see *The Accountant* (10 December 1882), p. 12 and (1 October 1883), p. 124; *The Accountants’ Students’ Journal* (1 June 1883), p. 34.
- 59 *The Accountant* (9 June 1883), p. 7.
- 60 *The Accountant* (30 June 1883), pp. 7–12.
- 61 *The Accountant* (10 May 1884), pp. 13–14.
- 62 *The Accountant* (3 May 1884), p. 8 published a letter from JEI which explained his rationale for the proposal: ‘The effect of the resolution, if carried, will be, that in future the Council, instead of being, as they are at present, practically self-elected, will really be chosen by the general body of members’; *The Accountant* (10 May 1884), p. 15.
- 63 Bryher, *HA*, p. 98.
- 64 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 151, f. 5108.
- 65 T. S. Blakeney, “‘Failed A.C.’”, *Alpine Journal* (1963), p. 271.
- 66 *The Railway Times* (3 April 1886), p. 438.
- 67 *Kelly’s Post Office London Directory* (London, 1891), p. 23.
- 68 *The Engineer* (9 July 1886), p. 39. This advertisement must correct McCabe’s claim that JEI only established J. R. Ellerman and Co. in ‘1888’ (McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 31).
- 69 *The Statist* (18 June 1887), p. vi. JEI’s continued involvement in this form is evident from *The Saturday Review* (28 March 1896), which lists J. R. Ellerman and Co. as auditors of the ‘Humber Company (Extension) Ltd.’, which was intended to extend the firm’s business to the United States, Japan, Spain, and Portugal. For further evidence of JEI’s activities as an accountant in this period see *St Stephen’s Review* (26 November 1887), p. 21 and *The Photographic News* (25 November 1887), p. xii; *The Law Times* (18 May 1889), p. 57; *The Solicitors’ Journal* (26 November 1892), p. 69; *The Electrician* (6 April 1894), p. xiii; *Livestock Journal* (21 April 1891),
- 70 Walter R. Skinner, *The Mining Manual* (London, 1888), p. 528. JEI continued to serve as the agent for this firm until (at least) 1896: *The African Review* (21 March 1896), p. 600 includes a declaration of a dividend for the firm signed by ‘J. R. Ellerman and Co., London Agents’, dated 14 March 1896. For another mining firm for which JEI served as auditor, Santa Elena Nitrate Company Ltd. see *The Mining Journal, Railway and Commercial Gazette* (4 November 1893)
- 71 *The Telegraphic Journal and Electrical Review* (1 June 1888), p. 606.
- 72 Gordon Boyce, *The Growth and Dissolution of a Large-Scale Business Enterprise: The Furness Interest, 1892-1919* (Liverpool, 2017), p. 36.
- 73 David Kynaston, *The City of London: 1: A World of its Own, 1815–90* (London, 1994), p. 148.
- 74 David Kynaston, *The City of London*, p. 148.
- 75 According to O’Hagan *ODNB*, in 1895, O’Hagan received a ‘typica[I]’ commission of £40,000 for his role in the flotation of International Tea Stores for H. E. Kearley (1856–1934).
- 76 Mira Wilkins, *The History of Foreign Investment in the United States to 1914* (Cambridge, MA, 1989), p. 493.
- 77 O’Hagan, *Leaves from My Life* (London, 1829), vol. 1, p. 242.
- 78 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 32.
- 79 Boyce, *Growth and Dissolution*, p. 36.
- 80 Boyce, *Growth and Dissolution*, p. 36.
- 81 For these details see Boyce’s authoritative account in *Growth and Dissolution*, p. 36, which draws on O’Hagan’s memoir, *Leaves from my Life*, vol. 1, pp. 183–85.
- 82 Boyce, *Growth and Dissolution*, p. 37.
- 83 McLeave, ‘Ellerman’, p. 49.
- 84 Boyce, *Growth and Dissolution*, p. 37.
- 85 James Taylor, *Ellermans: A Wealth of Shipping* (London, 1976), pp. 13–15.
- 86 For this citation see JEI, *ODNB*.
- 87 O’Hagan’s memoir, *Leaves from my Life*, vol. 1, p. 384.
- 88 *London Gazette*, 19 May 1896, p. 3011; *The Railway Times* (30 May 1896), p. 708 lists ‘Charles Eves and Co. (late J. R. Ellerman and Co.)’ as auditor of ‘The Artificial Silk Spinning Limited, operating at 12 Moorgate Street, the same address as J. R. Ellerman and Co. J. R. Ellerman and Co. evidently employed clerks by 1893: *The Accountants’ Journal* (January 1893), p. 212 lists ‘Watt, H. J.’ as an employee of the firm, who had completed their Intermediate Examination as a Chartered Accountant.
- 89 *Graya: A Magazine for Members of Gray’s Inn*, 3 (1933), p. 23. We are grateful to Katherine Gwyn, Archivist at Gray’s Inn, for this information. By 1897, Gray’s Inn was apparently struggling to attract new members, having emerged from a period of financial crisis; the Inn was also comparatively unfashionable. Yet Mattinson’s association presumably explains why JEI alighted on Gray’s, in lieu of any other Inn of Court.
- 90 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 42 claims that JEI was already associated with Mattinson, but the evidence is circumstantial. Both Mattinson and JEI are listed as a ‘founder’ of the London and Chicago Contract Corporation Ltd. in October 1890 (*Truth* (9 October 1890), p. 751).
- 91 Bryher, *HA*, p. 156.
- 92 Miles Walker Mattinson and Stuart Cunningham Macaskie, *The Law Relating to Corrupt Practices at Elections and the Practice of Election Petitions* (London, 1883).
- 93 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 15.
- 94 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 43.
- 95 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 43.
- 96 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 20.
- 97 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 20.
- 98 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 44.
- 99 For these figures see McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 37.
- 100 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 46.
- 101 Quoted in Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 20.
- 102 *The Daily Mail*, 8 May 1901.
- 103 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 48, which does not refer to *The Daily Mail* editorial.
- 104 JEI *DBB*.
- 105 JEI *DBB*.
- 106 [Anne Elizabeth Ellerman], *Ingatherings* (London, 1897), pp. 1–50 is a story entitled ‘Liberator’, which portrays a magician performing ‘cabalistic’ incantations to the detriment of the Christian protagonist, who must free himself from the magician’s control, a conceit analogous to the plot of *The Prime Minister of Württemberg*.
- 107 *The Norfolk Chronicle*, quoted in William Andrews, ed., *Bygone Church Life in Scotland* (London, 1899), p. 300.
- 108 For studies of Süß Oppenheimer’s life and the reception of Hauff’s *Jud Süß* see Barbara Gerber’s *Jud Süß: Aufstieg und Fall im frühen 18. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg, 1990); Susan Tegel, *Jew Süß: Life, Legend, Fiction, Film* (London, 2011); Yair Mintzker, *The Many Deaths of Jew Süß* (Princeton, 2017).
- 109 [Anne Elizabeth Ellerman], *The Prime Minister of Württemberg* (London, 1897), p. 14.
- 110 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 41, group 1160, F-1, a letter from Bryher to Albert Charles Robinson Carter, 6 August 1933, removed from a copy of *Ingatherings*.
- 111 *The Times*, 1 July 1932; Sir Edward Beddington-Behrens, *Look Back Look Forward* (London, 1963), p. 80.
- 112 Keith M. Wilson, ‘The Protocols of Zion and the Morning Post, 1919–1920’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 19 (1985), p. 11.
- 113 ‘Lord Northcliffes Abstammung’, *Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus: Mitteilungen aus dem Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus*, 28 (1918), p. 24.
- 114 Cecil Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty* (London, 1941), p. 185; Irene Roth, *Cecil Roth: Historian Without Tears* (New York, 1982), p. 92.
- 115 Hugh Cudlipp, *Walking on the Water* (London, 1976), p. 191. For Beaverbrook’s other comments on JEI see Richard Cockett, *My*

Dear Max: *The Letters of Brendan Bracken to Lord Beaverbrook, 1925–1958* (London, 1990), p. 206.

116 Yale, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 1978 1623.

117 André Liebich, ‘The Antisemitism of Henry Wickham Steed’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 46 (2012), pp. 180–208.

118 Louise Morgan, ‘Ellerman, John Reeves’, *Dictionary of National Biography: 1931–1940*, ed. L. G. Wickham Legg (Oxford, 1949), p. 257.

119 JEF’s epitaph reads: ‘John Reeves Ellerman / Baronet – Companion of Honour / Son of the Above / Born 15 May 1862 – Died 16 July 1933 / Consider that I laboured not for myself only’, the latter being a quotation of Ecclesiasticus 33:17. It is apparent from her death record that Anne Elizabeth did not reside with her son in 1909, when she died, or presumably earlier, but maintained her own home at Colinette Road, Putney.

120 For these details see McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, pp. 32, 318.

121 AC: Census of 1881.

122 AC: Census of 1891.

123 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 151, f. 5113; Göran Lind, *Common Law Marriage: A Legal Institution for Cohabitation* (Oxford, 2008), section 11.1.

124 For example, *Burke’s Peerage and Baronetage* (1963), p. 847.

125 This quotation is transcribed by McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 32 and Diana Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians* (London, 2020), ch. 3 as ‘He keeps me in a glass case but I keep human’, where it is attributed to McAlmon (‘the first of Bryher’s gay ersatz husbands’). McCabe’s source is Ben Fenton, ‘Was This the Richest (and Most Secretive) Tycoon Ever?’, *Daily Telegraph*, 22 May 2006, which presumably draws on the use of the quotation in JEF *ODNB*. The latter identifies its source as the entry for JEF in Morgan, ‘Ellerman’, where the quotation on p. 257 is ‘He keeps me in a glass case but I keep him human’, without attributed authority.

126 Bryher, *HA* (1962), p. 114.

127 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 32.

128 Bryher, *HA*, p. 24.

129 *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 January 1900; *Illustrated London News*, 13 January 1900; John Holland, ‘The City of London Imperial Volunteers’ (29 November 1999), Papers of the Guildhall Historical Association, p. 35.

130 Colin Benbow, *Boer Prisoners of War in Bermuda* (Hamilton, 1962).

131 *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 January and 30 January 1900.

132 Bryher, *HA*, p. 24.

133 Bryher, *HA*, p. 25.

134 Richard Lewinsohn, *The Profits of War Through the Ages* (London, 1937), p. 209.

135 *London Gazette*, 29 November 1905, p. 8535; *The Times*, 30 July 1909; The National Archives, Kew, HO 45/15865. The warrant for the baronetcy, now preserved at JEF gives the date of conferral as 11 December 1905.

136 Arthur Charles Fox-Davies, *Armorial Families: A Directory of Gentlemen of Coat-armour* (London, 1910), p. 516.

137 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 41.

138 This summary is indebted to McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 31.

139 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 39.

140 For examples of J. R. Ellerman and Co.’s appointment as an auditor see *Pump Court*, 24 July 1889 (The Emerald and Phoenix Brewing Company Ltd.); *The Railway News*, 11 January 1890 (The Leeds and Wakefield Breweries Ltd.); *The Brewers Guardian*, 24 December 1889, p. 407 (Massey’s Burnley Brewery Ltd.).

141 Charles Lysaght, *Brendan Bracken* (London, 1979), p. 315.

142 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, pp. 35–7.

143 *The Economist*, 30 March 1895, p. 419.

144 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 42.

145 David M. Fahey, *The Politics of Drink in England, from Gladstone to Lloyd George* (Newcastle, 2022), pp. 249–54.

146 *The Daily Mail*, 11 March 1907.

147 *The Daily Mail*, 11 March 1907.

148 *The Daily Mail*, 11 March 1907.

149 *The Daily Mail*, 11 March 1907.

150 *The Daily Mail*, 27 March 1908.

151 *The Daily Mail*, 27 March 1908.

152 *Fairplay*, 9 May 1901; McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 49.

153 *The Financial Times*, 12 December 1901.

154 For this list, which derives from the *Directory of Directors*, see McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, pp. 157–8.

155 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, pp. 40–1.

156 For a helpful summary of the history of City Line Ltd. see http://www.oceanlinermuseum.co.uk/Ellerman_Group_history.html (website accessed 20 February 2023).

157 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 78.

158 University of Glasgow Archives, D131/2/1/1, p. 20.

159 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 52.

160 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 62.

161 University of Glasgow Archives, D131/2/1/1.

162 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 76.

163 *Fairplay*, 18 April 1907.

164 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 78.

165 University of Glasgow Archives, D131/1/2/9/1.

166 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 70.

167 Hull History Centre, U DEW 2/5/1–9, U DEW 2/5/16–17.

168 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 71, citing University of Glasgow Archives, D131/4/13/2.

169 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 100.

170 Kenneth Payne and Ulick Brown, *Ellermans in South Africa 1892–1992* (Cape Town, [1992]).

171 Walford Johnson, ‘The Development of the Kent Coalfield, 1896–1946’, PhD thesis, University of Kent at Canterbury (1972), p. 79 n. 408. ‘The firm had raised £14,159 of capital in cash — half of which was German — and, by means of raising mortgages on its property totalling £32,150, it had spent £45,798 on purchasing freehold land and buildings. The chief mortgagee of the company was [JEF], the shipowner who held over two-thirds of the mortgages. [...] Nearly half the share capital was held by Germans, but with the outbreak of war this passed into the hands of Ellerman, who after the war controlled just over half the equity’.

172 Johnson, ‘Development’, p. 169.

173 Johnson, ‘Development’, p. 166.

174 Johnson, ‘Development’, p. 184.

175 Reza Mortaheb, ‘Building the Petro-Polis: Oil Capitalism, Imperialism, and the Making of Abadan, 1908–1933’, PhD thesis, New Jersey Institute of Technology (2020), p. 50 n. 73.

176 Ronald W. Ferrier, *The History of British Petroleum: Volume 1, The Developing Years* (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 292, 469–70.

177 *The Financial Times*, 12 November 1969.

178 For JEF’s association with *The Financial Times* see David Kynaston, *The Financial Times: A Centenary History* (London, 1988), p. 77.

179 Kynaston, *The Financial Times*, p. 57.

180 John Grigg, *The History of The Times: The Twentieth Century Test* (London, 1947), p. 736; Frederick Harcourt Kitchin, *The London Times under the Managership of Moberly Bell* (London, 1925), p. 259; Paul Ferris, *The House of Northcliffe: A Biography of an Empire* (London, 1972), pp. 133, 279; Vincent Bignon and Marc Flandreau, ‘The Price of Media Capture and the Debasing of the French Newspaper Industry During the Interwar’, *The Journal of Economic History*, 74 (2014), Appendix IV.

181 Grigg, *The History of The Times*, p. 641

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183 British Library, Add. MS 62170, fo. 22r.

184 British Library, Add. MS 62170, fo. 23r.

185 British Library, Add. MS 62170, fo. 27r.

- 186 British Library, Add. MS 62170, fo. 48r.
- 187 Lord Northcliffe, *My Journey Round the World* (Philadelphia, 1923), p. 270.
- 188 Bryher, *HA*, p. 21.
- 189 AC: UK Incoming Passenger Lists 1878–1960 identifies JEI as a passenger arriving at Liverpool from New York on the ship *Catalonia* on 18 July 1894.
- 190 *The Times*, 19 December 1929.
- 191 Christopher Addison, *Four and a Half Years; A Personal Diary from June 1914 to January 1919* (London, 1934), vol. 2, p. 557.
- 192 The National Archives, Kew, CAB 24/24/63.
- 193 J. Russell Smith, *Influence of the Great War Upon Shipping* (New York, 1919), p. 263.
- 194 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 87.
- 195 Walton Newbold, *Solidarity Amongst the Shipowners* (Glasgow, 1918), p. 7.
- 196 Quoted in Maximilian Mügge, *The War Diary of a Square Peg* (London, 1920), p. 155.
- 197 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 110.
- 198 University of Glasgow Archives, D131/2/1/1.
- 199 McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 121.
- 200 This account is indebted to McLeave, ‘John Reeves Ellerman’, p. 119.
- 201 For a detailed account of the purchase see Taylor, *Ellermans*, pp. 71–3.
- 202 For the records of the firm see Glasgow University Archives, GB 248 UGD 131/5. For its activities during the First World War see Henry D. Barker et al., *Special Consular Reports No. 72: British India with Notes on Afghanistan, and Tibet* (Washington, D. C., 1915), p. 324.
- 203 University of Glasgow Archives, UGD131/5.
- 204 A. J. H. Latham, *Rice and Industrialisation in Asia* (London, 2021).
- 205 David J. Baillargeon, ‘“A Burmese Wonderland”: British World Mining and the Making of Colonial Burma’, PhD thesis, University of California, Santa Barbara (2018), p. 301.
- 206 Ian Brown, *A Colonial Economy in Crisis: Burma’s Rice Cultivators and the World Depression of the 1930s* (London, 2005), p. 25.
- 207 Brown, *A Colonial Economy in Crisis*, p. 25.
- 208 Brown, *A Colonial Economy in Crisis*, p. 25.
- 209 Maria Serena I. Diokno, ‘The Bullinger Pool in Burma, 1921 to the mid-1930s’, *The Philippine Review of Economics*, 57 (2020), p. 69.
- 210 Diokno, ‘The Bullinger Pool’, p. 69.
- 211 Rajeswary Ampalavanar Brown, *Capital and Entrepreneurship in South-East Asia* (London, 1994), p. 127.
- 212 Matthew Bowser, ‘Misdirected Rage’, *Perspectives Daily: The American Historical Association* (9 August 2018), available at: <https://www.historians.org/research-and-publications/perspectives-on-history/summer-2018/misdirected-rage-the-socioeconomic-roots-of-burmeso-islamophobia> (website accessed 20 February 2023).
- 213 John F. Cady, *A History of Modern Burma* (Ithaca, 1965), p. 279; Donald M. Seekins, *State and Society in Modern Rangoon* (London, 2014), pp. 43–4.
- 214 Bernard Houghton, ‘Indian Mill-Owners Cry Halt!’, *The Labour Monthly* (June 1931), pp. 344–51; J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge, 1948), pp. 197–9.
- 215 *Parliamentary Gazette*, 49 (1921), p. 173; *Illustrated London News*, 8 January 1921; John Walker, *The Queen Has Been Pleased: The British Honours System at Work* (London, 1986), p. 100.
- 216 James Marchant, *Dr. John Clifford, C. H.: Life, Letters and Reminiscences* (London, 1924), p. 248.
- 217 Hamil Grant, *Two Sides of the Atlantic: Notes of an Anglo-American Newspaperman* (London, 1917), p. 255.
- 218 Hinks to JEI, 23 February 1921, Royal Geographical Society, EE/17/2/5.
- 219 Parliamentary Archives, Bonar Law papers, BL/108/6/6; Alistair Loxden, ‘The Man Who Enriched – and Robbed – The Tories’, *Parliamentary History*, 40 (2021), p. 389; Ivor Jennings, *Party Politics: The Growth of Parties* (Cambridge, 2010), p. 264.
- 220 Rodney Love, ‘The Failure of Consensus in Britain: The National Industrial Conference, 1919–1921’, *Historical Journal*, 21 (1978), p. 659.
- 221 For the levy see Alzada Comstock, ‘From Capital Levy to Surtax’, *The American Economic Review*, 18 (1928), pp. 9–18.
- 222 J. R. Ellerman, ‘The Capital Levy’, *The Sphere*, 25 November 1922.
- 223 Ellerman Lines, *The Development of British Shipping Throughout the Ages* (Liverpool, 1924), p. 32.
- 224 Ellerman Lines, *The Development of British Shipping*, p. 45.
- 225 *The Daily Telegraph*, 13 July 1916; *The Daily Mail*, 6 May 1919; Maurice Lindsay, *Lowland Scottish Villages* (London, 1980), p. 157.
- 226 Survey of London, *The Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and the Royal Opera House* (London, 1970), p. 28; John Rylands Library, Basil Dean Archive, 2/10/151, Sir Alfred Butt to The Ellerman Property Trust Ltd., 1924.
- 227 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 84.
- 228 *The Times*, 3 January 1930; *The Chelsea Society: Annual Report* (1929), p. 18.
- 229 *The Daily Telegraph*, 27 March 1929; *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 August 1929; *The Times*, 3 January 1930.
- 230 *The Times*, 3 January 1930.
- 231 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 85.
- 232 Margaret Aitken, *Six Buchan Villages: Re-visited* (2004), p. 71.
- 233 *The Times*, 5 May and 10 May 1922; *The Telegraph*, 2 December 1921; *The Sphere*, 14 November 1925.
- 234 *The Times*, 26 January 1933 and 18 July 1933; *The Telegraph*, 26 January 1933; *The Daily Mail*, 26 January 1933. This date corrects the date of 1930 provided in Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 84.
- 235 *The Daily Telegraph*, 6 December 1919; *Paper-Maker and British Paper Trade Journal*, 59 (1920), p. 13.
- 236 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 September 1926; *Illustrated London News*, 6 October 1928. JEI would repurchase a significant interest in Illustrated London News Ltd., which he retained until 1961 (*The Times*, 25 and 28 November 1961).
- 237 *The Times*, 25 October 1922.
- 238 Tom Clarke, *My Lloyd George Diary* (London, 1939), p. 225.
- 239 *New York Times*, 1 October 1922. For a further account of the transaction see Charles Williams, *Max Beaverbrook: Not Quite a Gentleman* (London, 2019).
- 240 For example see Hamilton Fyfe, *Press Parade Behind the Scenes of the Newspaper Racket and the Millionaires’ Attempt at Dictatorship* (London, 1936), p. 102.
- 241 British Library, Add. MS 62170, fo. 58r.
- 242 Thomas Bell, ‘Rally to the Unions’, *The Communist* (7 October 1922).
- 243 *The Financial Times*, 12 November 1969.
- 244 *The Nautical Magazine*, 187–8 (1962), p. 273.
- 245 *The Daily Express*, 19 July 1933.
- 246 *The Daily Mail*, 20 July 1933.
- 247 *The Daily Mail*, 18 July 1933.
- 248 National Maritime Museum, AAA0219-22.
- 249 JEI *DBB*.
- 250 *The Times*, 11 June 1913, 11 March 1922; *The Daily Mail*, 14 March 1913.
- 251 For an example of a public speech see John William Davis, *The Ambassadorial Diary of John W. Davis: The Court of St James 1918–1921*, ed. Julia Davis Adams and Dolores A. Fleming (Morgantown, 1993), p. 406.
- 252 For this meeting see *A Parliament of the Press: The First Imperial Press Conference* (London, 1909), pp. 25, 32, 50.
- 253 H. M. Swetland, *American Journalists in Europe* (New York, 1919), p. 40 reports that JEI was also present at a similar lunch hosted by Northcliffe on 29 November 1918.
- 254 Edward N. Hurley (1864–1933), Chairman of the United States Shipping Board, after the Armistice, attended a luncheon in London ‘to meet the leaders in British shipping’, including JEI, possibly on this date (Edward N. Hurley, *The Bridge to France* (Philadelphia, 1927)). On 8 June 1920, JEI was present at a dinner for the Royal Army Medical Department (*Science Progress in the Twentieth Century 1919–1933*), 15 (1920), p. 129.
- 255 Morgan, ‘Ellerman’, p. 257.
- 256 *The Times* engaged in this reportage, but less frequently: on 19 February 1928, for example, *The Times* reported that JEI had arrived at the Hotel Negresco in Nice. Earlier instances of this reportage exist: *The Near East*, 16 February 1922 and *The Sphinx*, 11 February 1922, reported that JEI and Lady Ellerman were visiting Cairo.

- 257 For an example of JEI engaging with press inquiries about his business interests see *The World's Paper Trade Review*, 78 (1922), p. 114, 'We learn from Sir John Ellerman that it is absolutely untrue that he has purchased Horton Kirby Paper Mill'.
- 258 *The Times*, 10 February 1916.
- 259 JEI *ODNB*.
- 260 JEI *DBB*.
- 261 Bryher, *HA*, p. 8.
- 262 AC: Census of 1901.
- 263 AC: London, England, Land Tax Valuation, 1910.
- 264 For an historical account of the construction of 1 South Audley Street see Michael Hall, '1 South Audley St, Mayfair', *Country Life* (5 November 1992).
- 265 For JEI's addresses in this period, which were published, see Edward Walford, *The County Families of the United Kingdom* (London, 1919), p. 428. South Audley Street was coincidentally the location of the home of Sir Cuthbert Quilter (*The Accountant* (25 November 1911), p. 738).
- 266 AC: Census of 1911.
- 267 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 2.
- 268 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 70.
- 269 Wyndham Lewis, *Blasting and Bombardiering* (London, 1967 [1937]), p. 229.
- 270 *The Daily Express*, 18 July 1933.
- 271 *The Financial Times*, 22 July 1933.
- 272 *Souvenir of the Fine Art Section, Franco-British Exhibition, 1908* (London, 1908), p. 294.
- 273 Oliver Meslay, 'Exported Art from Lowry to Spencer: British Artists Exhibiting in Paris 1900-1940', *British Art Journal*, 1 (2000), p. 56. In 1916, JEI was discussed as a potential benefactor to The National Gallery (Jonathan Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece: A History of the National Gallery* (London, 2006), p. 128).
- 274 Sotheby's (London), *Catalogue of Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Century English and Continental Drawings and Watercolours* (30 October 1975), lots 220, 222.
- 275 Morgan, 'Ellerman', p. 257.
- 276 *The Sphere*, 12 May 1917.
- 277 British Museum, *A Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities*, 3rd edn. (London, 1922), p. 59.
- 278 *The Sphere*, 13 May 1916.
- 279 Morgan, 'Ellerman', p. 256.
- 280 Viola Meynell, *Alice Meynell: A Memoir* (London, 1947), p. 308.
- 281 Sidney Theodore Felstead, *In Search of Sensation: Being Thirty Years of a London Journalist's Life* (London, 1945), p. 83.
- 282 T. H. S. Escott, *City Characters Under Several Reigns* (London, 1922), p. 156.
- 283 Richard Aldington, 'Farewell to Europe', *The Atlantic* (December 1940).
- 284 Kynaston, *The Financial Times*, p. 57.
- 285 Augustus Muir and Mair Davies, *A Victorian Shipowner: A Portrait of Sir Charles Cayzer, Baronet of Gartmore* (London, 1978), pp. 232–3.
- 286 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 67.
- 287 Yale, Gen MSS 1223.
- 288 Bryher, *HA*, p. 265.
- 289 Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–1951* (Oxford, 1998), p. 5. For a similar emphasis on JEI's distinction from the upper class see A. J. P. Taylor, *From Sarajevo to Potsdam* (London, 1967), p. 79; W. D. Rubinstein, 'New Men of Wealth and the Purchase of Land in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Past and Present*, 92 (1981), p. 141.
- 290 The novelist Dennis Wheatley (1897–1977), who grew up near 1 South Audley Street, recalled in a memoir that JEI had particularly old-fashioned sartorial taste: 'The multi-millionaire, Sir John Ellerman, who lived in South Audley Street, always wore [a square-topped bowler]', reportedly then a style associated with 'older gentlemen' (Dennis Wheatley, *The Time Has Come ...: The Memoirs of Dennis Wheatley: The Young Man Said 1897–1914* (London, 1977) p. 239).
- 291 W. D. Rubinstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain Since the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1981), p. 45.

- 292 Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (London, 2003), p. 73.
- 293 Clarence W. Barron, *They Told Barron: Conversations and Revelations of an American Peppy in Wall Street, the Notes of the Late Clarence W. Barron* (New York, 1930), p. 343.
- 294 For a trivial example of JEI's preference for a less expensive option, in this case a Lanchester automobile, see Anthony Bird and Francis Hutton-Stott, *Lanchester Motor Cars* (London, 1965), p. 178.
- 295 *The Syracuse Herald*, 14 September 1930. For a reproduction of the article in Australia see *The Cairns Post*, 5 February 1931.
- 296 Milton Bronner, 'The Millionaire Nobody Knows', *Business News*, 31 October 1930.
- 297 *The Sunday Times*, 4 October 1936.
- 298 McLeave, 'John Reeves Ellerman', p. 107.
- 299 McLeave, 'John Reeves Ellerman', p. 123.
- 300 McLeave, 'John Reeves Ellerman', p. 187.
- 301 McLeave, 'John Reeves Ellerman', p. 187.
- 302 *The Accountant* (5 August 1933), p. 218.
- 303 *The Daily Express*, 21 July 1933.
- 304 *The Daily Mail*, 21 July 1933.
- 305 *The Evening Standard*, 21 July 1933.
- 306 Hannah Glover's entry in the English Death Registers, for example, is given as 'Annie, Lady Ellerman'.
- 307 *The Times*, 25 July 1933.
- 308 *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, eds. Nigel Nicholson and Joanne Trautmann Banks (London, 1975), vol. 5, p. 237.
- 309 Walter F. Pratt, *Privacy in Britain* (Lewisburg, 1979), p. 80; *The Journalist*, 14–16 (1931), p. 158.
- 310 *The Times*, 22 July 1933.
- 311 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 151, f. 5120–8.
- 312 *The Daily Mail*, 20 July 1933.
- 313 *The Daily Mail*, 18 July 1933.
- 314 *The Times*, 18 July 1933.
- 315 *The Daily Mail*, 18 July 1933.
- 316 *The Times*, 30 September 1936.
- 317 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1933.
- 318 *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1933.
- 319 *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 November 1934.
- 320 *The Daily Telegraph*, 30 September 1936; *The Times*, 30 September 1936.
- 321 *The Times*, 1 January 1934; *The Economist*, 7 October 1933; 'Salaries of Scientific Workers in Government Employment', *Nature*, 132 (30 September 1933), p. 508: 'The country's financial position is very different now from what it was in October 1931. The national finances have been stabilised. Successive conversion schemes have reduced the burden of debt charges. The estimated revenue from the new tariffs for the current year is £24,500,000. Moreover, during the current year the revenue has received a windfall of more than £8,000,000 from death duties on the estate of the late Sir John Ellerman alone'.
- 322 Hansard, House of Commons Debate, vol. 288, 17 April 1934, c. 934.
- 323 Hansard, House of Commons Debate, vol. 298, 18 February 1935, c. 23.
- 324 Hugh Dalton, *Practical Socialism for Britain* (London, 1935), p. 338.
- 325 *The Bricklayer, Mason and Plasterer*, 38–40 (1935), p. 192.
- 326 *The Socialist Standard* (October 1937). For a similar denouncement of JEI see Edgar Hardcastle, 'What To Do About Fascism', *The Socialist Standard* (November 1937).
- 327 *The Daily Express*, 23 August 1933.
- 328 *The Telegraph*, 16 August 1933.
- 329 *The Saturday Review*, 19 August 1933, summarised the will pithily: 'Apart from a few legacies and charitable bequests, half of this colossal sum goes to his son, and half to you and me'. In more precise terms, JEI's principal beneficial interest was constituted by the

residue of JEI's estate. JEI was eligible to take the legacy of £2 million when he reached the age of 30. The residue was held on trust by the trustees of JEI's will trust, who were to pay JEI the income of the residue for the duration of his life, in accordance with clause 32(1) of the will, which described the arrangement as a 'protective life interest'. The will provided that JEI was not to have the capital of the residue in the will trust during his lifetime. Indeed, no capital was ever appointed to JEI from the will trust. For a helpful clarification of this arrangement the authors are indebted to an email communication of 3 April 2023 from Michael Jacobs.

330 *The Daily Express*, 23 August 1933.

331 *The Daily Express*, 31 August 1933.

332 *The Daily Express*, 31 August 1933.

333 *The Daily Express*, 31 August 1933; *The Saturday Review*, 19 August 1933 agreed with this assessment: JEI had left 'a patriotic will, for which the testator deserves more gratitude than he will probably receive'.

334 For this gift see *The British Medical Journal*, 2828 (1915), p. 461.

335 *The Times*, 13 April 1920.

336 *The Times*, 29 August 1916. For the architectural commission see Frederick Chatterton, *Who's Who in Architecture* (London, 1923), p. 90.

337 For a description of conditions in the hospital see Suzannah Biernoff, *Portraits of Violence: War and the Aesthetic of Disfigurement* (Ann Arbor, 2017), p. 67; *The British Medical Journal*, 2917 (1916), p. 739 and 2944 (1917), p. 745.

338 For a similar foundation, the Cassel Hospital for Nervous Disorders, established in 1921 by Sir Ernest Cassel (1852–1921), see *The Lancet*, 203 (24 May 1924), p. 1068. David Lindsay (1871–1940), Earl of Crawford would later recall that the physician Sir Robert Hutchison, 1st Bt. (1871–1960) had informed him that Hutchison and JEI '[d]uring the war [...] used to travel about a great deal inspecting hospitals. Ellerman used to listen carefully to Hutchison's [sic] talk, used to press him to talk, seemed to take possession of what Hutchison [sic] said, but never did volunteer a remark himself' (David Lindsay, *The Crawford Papers: The Journals of David Lindsay*, ed. John Vincent (Manchester, 1984), p. 598).

339 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 83 (emphasis added).

340 *Time Magazine*, 24 July 1933.

341 For this example see <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20794/port-erroll-conservation-area-appraisal.pdf> (website accessed 20 February 2023).

342 Morgan, 'Ellerman', p. 257.

343 *The Times*, 1 January 1921.

344 For JEI's support of the Hospital see London Metropolitan Archives, A/KE/D/04/02/117. The files record that JEI donated in excess of £10,000 to the Hospital in his lifetime.

345 For examples of gifts not publicised in newspapers see Asthma Research Council, *Report of Progress* (London, 1929), p. 41; *The Journal of State Medicine*, 27 (1919), p. 240, recording a donation of £105 to The Royal Institute of Public Health; *The Journal of State Medicine*, 30 (1922), p. 130, recording a subscription to a prospective maternity hospital specialising in antenatal care. For context, the amount which we know was donated by Sir Ernest Cassel in his lifetime included £500,000 to the Sir Ernest Cassel Educational Trust alone (Jill Pellew, 'A Metropolitan University Fit for Empire', *History of Universities*, 26 (2012), p. 232).

346 For the Guinness Trust see <https://history.guinnesspartnership.com/the-origins/> (website accessed 20 February 2023).

347 Peter Scott, 'The Anatomy Of Britain's Interwar Super-Rich: Reconstructing the 1928/9 'Millionaire' Population', *Economic History Review*, 74 (2021), p. 641. In a letter of 17 January 1909, Northcliffe, recovering from food poisoning he'd contracted on the *Lusitania*, encouraged JEI to invest in Canada, 'beyond question the richest undeveloped country in the world' (BL, Add. MS 62170, fo. 16r). For several documents preserved by the Inland Revenue pertaining to the duty owed by JEI see The National Archives, Kew, IR 59/954–7, T 160/1054/13.

348 Peter Scott, 'A Fiscal Constitutional Crisis: Tax Avoidance and Evasion in Inter-War Britain', *English Historical Review*, 137 (2022), p. 178 clarifies that it was 'surtax' free income.

349 Scott, 'The Anatomy', p. 661.

350 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 83.

351 *The Daily Telegraph*, 23 May 2006.

352 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 67.

353 Bryher, *HA*, p. 263.

354 For her birth certificate see Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 147, f. 5032.

355 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 271, n. 14. We have adopted female gendered pronouns to refer to Bryher. However, there are a number of indications that Bryher expressly eschewed this identification as female, including in personal dress. The following observation, from Bryher's novel *Development*, published in 1920, is often cited as early evidence of this preference: 'To possess the intellect, the hopes, the ambitions of a man, unsoftened by any feminine attribute, to have these sheathed in convention, impossible to break without hurt to those she had no wish to hurt, to feel so thoroughly unlike a girl—this was the tragedy' (cited in Bryher, *ODNB*).

356 Sylvia Beach, *Shakespeare and Company* (New York, 1959), p. 100.

357 The material was acquired for Yale University by the Yale professor Norman Holmes Pearson (1909–1975), Bryher's literary executor.

358 Bonnie Costello, Celeste Goodridge, and Cristanne Miller, eds., *The Selected Letters of Marianne Moore* (London, 1998); Susan Stanford Friedman, *Analyzing Freud: Letters of H. D., Bryher, and their Circle* (New York, 2002); Keri Walsh, ed., *The Letters of Sylvia Beach* (New York, 2010); Michael Allan, ed., *Dear Sir (Or Madam): Letters of Norman Douglas to Bryher and Two Letters from Bryher to Douglas* (Gratz, 2013).

359 For this description see Bryher's entry in *ODNB*.

360 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 20, 100.

361 Bryher, *HA*, p. 108.

362 Bryher, 'Paris 1900', in *Life and Letters To-Day*, 2 (1937), pp. 33–42; Bryher, *Paris 1900*, transl. by Adrienne Monnier and Sylvia Beach (Paris, 1938). For Benjamin's views, see the letter from Bryher on 19 December 1937 quoted in McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 202.

363 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 87–8; Bryher, *The Days of Mars: A Memoir, 1940–1946* (London, 1972), p. 55.

364 Bryher, *HA*, p. 118.

365 Bryher, *HA*, p. 123.

366 *Daily Mail*, 29 June–7 July 1920.

367 Bryher, 'The Best Years of One's Life [review article]', *Life and Letters To-Day*, 13 (1935), pp. 208–10, at p. 209. On Bryher's suggestions regarding the use of film in education, see her article 'Films in Education', *Close Up* (August 1927), pp. 49–54, and the commentary in Jayne E. Marek, *Women Editing Modernism: Little Magazines and Literary History* (Lexington, 1995), pp. 122–8.

368 Bryher, *HA*, p. 124.

369 Bryher, *HA*, p. 180.

370 British Library, Add. MS 88936/5/10, Bryher to Laurie Lee, 1 November 1957.

371 Bryher, *HA*, p. 173.

372 Bryher, *HA*, p. 158.

373 Bryher, *HA*, p. 159.

374 Bryher, *HA*, p. 186.

375 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 33.

376 University of Leeds, BC. shorter correspondence, Richard Aldington to Bryher, 6 October 1918.

377 Bryher, *HA*, p. 187.

378 For Bryher's account, see her letter to Amy Lowell, 12 August 1918, cited in Gillian Hanscombe and Virginia L. Smyers, *Writing for Their Lives: The Modernist Women 1910–1940* (London, 1987), p. 36.

379 Perdita's biological father was Cecil Gray.

380 Bryher to H. D., 20 March 1920, transcribed in Lauren D. Eckenroth, 'Poet/Editor/Publisher: A Catalogue and Selected Correspondence of H. D., Bryher, and Sylvia Beach, from 1918 to 1931', PhD dissertation, Boston University (2020), p. 60.

381 Bryher, *HA*, p. 205; the date reported in McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 14 must be erroneous, in the light of the report of their marriage in *The New York Times* below.

382 Bryher, *HA*, p. 205.

383 Bryher, *HA*, p. 205.

384 *New York Times*, 12 March 1921.

385 Hanscombe and Smyers, *Writing for Their Lives*, p. 73.

386 Bryher, *West* (London, 1925), p. 50.

387 Bryher, *HA*, p. 201.

388 Diana Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, ch. 3.

- 389 Bryher, *HA*, p. 215.
- 390 See the letters from Bryher to H. D. on 14 June 1923, [15 June 1923], and [18 June 1923] transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, pp. 88–92.
- 391 Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*, p. 102; Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (Oxford, 1983 [1959]), p. 514.
- 392 See the letter from Beach to Bryher on 26 December 1925, transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 125.
- 393 Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*, p. 99; this occurred in 1922.
- 394 Beach to Bryher, 30 November 1935, transcribed in Walsh, *Letters of Sylvia Beach*, p. 164.
- 395 Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*, p. 103.
- 396 Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*, p. 102.
- 397 Beach to Bryher, 24 February 1925, transcribed in Walsh, *Letters of Sylvia Beach*, pp. 107–8.
- 398 Bryher, *HA*, p. 226.
- 399 Norman Douglas and Bryher, *Dear Sir (or Madam): Letters of Norman Douglas to Bryher and Two Letters from Bryher to Douglas*, ed. Michael Allan (Graz, 2013), p. 49.
- 400 Douglas and Bryher, *Dear Sir (or Madam)*, p. 49.
- 401 Barbara Guest, *Herself Defined: The Poet, H. D. and her World* (New York, 1984), p. 151.
- 402 Douglas and Bryher, *Dear Sir (or Madam)*, pp. 49–50.
- 403 Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, p. 000.
- 404 On these concerns, see Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, pp. 466–7.
- 405 Letter from H. D. to Macpherson, [1928?], cited in Susan Stanford Friedman, ‘Modernism of the “Scattered Remnant”: Race and Politics in H. D.’s Development’, in *Feminist Issues in Literary Scholarship*, ed. Shari Benstock (Indiana, IN, 1987), pp. 208–31, at pp. 212–3.
- 406 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 91, n. 11.
- 407 Donna Krolik Hollenberg, *Winged Words: The Life and Work of the Poet H.D.* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2022), p. 160.
- 408 Scott Allen Nollen, *Paul Robeson: Film Pioneer* (Jefferson, NC, 2010), p. 24.
- 409 Bryher to H. D., [30? October 1927], transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 186.
- 410 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 253–4.
- 411 Bryher to H. D., 7 March [1933], in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 58.
- 412 For their meetings in this period see Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 72, f. 2857.
- 413 Bryher, ‘G. W. Pabst: A Survey’, *Close Up* (December 1927), pp. 56–61.
- 414 *H. D., Woman and Poet*, ed. Michael King (Orono, ME, 1986), p. 375; Maggie Magee and Diana C. Miller, *Lesbian Lives: Psychoanalytic Narratives Old and New* (Hillsdale, NJ, 1997), p. 7.
- 415 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 262, 269.
- 416 Bryher to H. D., 30 April [1933], in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 223.
- 417 Bryher to Macpherson, 14 April [1933], p. 176.
- 418 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 414, n. 24.
- 419 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 356.
- 420 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 356.
- 421 Magee and Miller, *Lesbian Lives*, p. 32.
- 422 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, 178; Douglas and Bryher, *Dear Sir (or Madam)*, pp. 228–9; Sarah May Ling Chadfield, ‘Rethinking the Real: Modernist Realisms in *Close Up* and *Life and Letters To-day*, 1927–1939’, PhD dissertation, Royal Holloway, University of London (2016), p. 258 n. 680, citing a letter from Herring to Bryher, 12 August 1935; Carol Tinker and Silvia Dobson, ‘A Friendship Traced: H. D. Letters to Silvia Dobson’, *Conjunctions*, 82 (1982), pp. 115–57, at p. 126.
- 423 Bryher, *HA*, p. 230.
- 424 Bryher to H. D., 15 April [1931?], transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 269, and the comments cited from a letter from Bryher to H.D. on the 16 April 1931 on p. 244.
- 425 Bryher to H. D., 14 May 1933, transcribed in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 271.
- 426 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 353.
- 427 Bryher, ‘What Shall You Do in the War?’, *Close Up* (June 1933), pp. 188–92; Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, ch. 3.
- 428 For Petrie’s friendship with Bryher see *Anything Once: An Autobiography* (London, 1971), p. 40. Townshend and her mother were reportedly taken by JEI and Hannah Glover to Paris at Christmas in 1910, to Scandinavia in 1911, the west coast of Scotland in 1912, and the Mediterranean in 1913. For this information see <http://user.astro.wisc.edu/~townsend/tree/record.php?ref=6A29>
- 429 Douglas and Bryher, *Dear Sir (or Madam)*, p. 231.
- 430 Robert Herring and Petrie Townshend, ‘Editorial’, *Life and Letters To-day*, 1 (1935), p. 1.
- 431 Bryher to Herring, May 1935, cited in Chadfield, ‘Rethinking the Real’, p. 242, n. 631.
- 432 Robert Herring and Petrie Townshend, ‘Editorial’, *Life and Letters To-day*, 1 (1935), p. 2; Chadfield, ‘Rethinking the Real’, pp. 248–90.
- 433 Beach to Bryher, 21 September 1935, in Walsh, *Letters of Sylvia Beach*, p. 161.
- 434 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, pp. 32–3.
- 435 Christopher Townsend, ‘Close Up, After Close Up: Life and Letters To-Day as a Modernist Film Journal’, *The Journal of Modern Periodical Studies*, 9 (2018), pp. 245–64, at p. 246, citing a letter from Herring to Bryher, (autumn?) 1935; Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 33; Beach, *Shakespeare and Company*, p. 212.
- 436 *Richard Aldington & H.D.: Their Lives in Letters, 1918–61*, ed. Caroline Zilboorg (Manchester, 2003), p. 181.
- 437 Linda Wagner-Martin, *Favored Strangers: Gertrude Stein and her Family* (Newark, NJ, 1997), p. 155.
- 438 R. E. Knoll, ‘Ezra Pound St Elizabeth’s’, *Prairie Schooner*, 47 (1973), pp. 1–13, at p. 10; Miranda Hickman, ed., *One Must Not Go Altogether with the Tide: The Letters of Ezra Pound and Stanley Nott* (Montreal, 2011), p. 147
- 439 Yale, Gen MSS 1223.
- 440 For this correspondence see Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 152, f. 5144.
- 441 Bryher, *HA*, p. 278.
- 442 H. D. to Bryher, 3 May [1933], in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 236.
- 443 Freud to Bryher, 14 May 1933, in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, pp. 273–4; Bryher to H. D. 15 May 1933, in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 279.
- 444 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 134, n. 25.
- 445 Cited, from a letter from Bryher to Macpherson, 11 June 1933, in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 342. For the strain in hosting refugees, see, in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, Bryher to Macpherson, 9 June 1933, p. 345.
- 446 H. D. to Silvia Dobson, 18 July 1934, transcribed in Tinker and Dobson, ‘A Friendship Traced’, p. 121.
- 447 Gisèle Freund to Walter Benjamin, 4 November 1939, transcribed in Natalie Raoux, ‘Walter Benjamin, Gisèle Freund, Germaine Krull et Hélène Léger. Deutschland-Frankreich; Mann-Weib. Eine Folge von Briefen’, *Revue Germanique Internationale* 5 (1996), pp. 22–53, at p. 234.
- 448 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 22.
- 449 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 4.
- 450 Bryher to Herr, February 1940, transcribed in Guest, *Herself Defined*, p. 257.
- 451 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, pp. 90–1.
- 452 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 55 (emphasis in original).
- 453 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, pp. 100–6.
- 454 Andro Linklater, *Compton Mackenzie* (London, 1992), p. 299.
- 455 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 111. For the purchase of this farm see Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 434.
- 456 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, pp. 180–1.
- 457 Hollenberg, *Winged Words*, pp. 215–216.
- 458 Guest, *Herself Defined*, p. 294.
- 459 Guest, *Herself Defined*, p. 299.
- 460 British Library, Add. MS 88936/5/10, Bryher to Laurie Lee, 7 January 1959.
- 461 Cambridge University Library, MS Add. 9777/16/[unfoliated], Bryher to Lethbridge, 30 November 1951.

- 462 For the Normans as their era's Nazis, see Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 166; for the other quotations see Cambridge University Library MS Add. 9777/16/6, Bryher to Lethbridge, 31 October 1951.
- 463 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 100.
- 464 Bryher, *HA*, p. 121; Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 100.
- 465 W. Bryher, 'The Girl-Page in Elizabethan Literature', *The Fortnightly Review* (1920), pp. 442–52. The work was also privately printed in an edition by Clement Shorter. For Bryher's collection, see her letter to H. D., 27 May 1933, in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 330.
- 466 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 38.
- 467 Bryher, *The Days of Mars*, p. 164.
- 468 These manuscripts are now British Library, Add. MS 73085–73087. MS 73085, like many of Bryher's purchases from this period, was from Maggs's bookstore, where Kenneth Maggs, in particular, played a key role in facilitating Bryher's acquisition of rare books and manuscripts. Bryher also appears to have given other manuscripts to Latham, notably including what is now Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. D. 2912, a volume of state tracts and letters from the early seventeenth century.
- 469 Elizabeth Sitwell to Benjamin Britten, 25 December 1962, transcribed in *Selected Letters of Edith Sitwell*, ed. Richard Greene (London, 1997) p. 439. See Beinecke Library, Yale University, 1978 +55 copy 1, for Bryher's copy of Shakespeare's second folio with a presentation inscription from Bryher to Pearson. Sitwell, in the aforementioned letter, refers to the copy lent to her by Bryher as the '3rd folio Shakespeare', so it is possible Bryher owned multiple early editions of Shakespeare. It seems less plausible Sitwell made an error; in the same letter, she also refers to her own copy of the second folio.
- 470 Alice Toklas to John Schaffner, 11 November 1961, transcribed in *Staying on Alone: Letters of Alice B. Toklas*, ed. Edward Burns (New York, 1973), p. 406.
- 471 Guest, *Herself Defined*, p. 301; Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 57, f. 2079, Valentine Schaffner to Bryher, 24 November [late 1960s?], writing to thank Bryher 'for your gift of my college tuition'.
- 472 Virginia Smyers, 'H. D.'s Books in the Bryher Library', *The H. D. Newsletter*, 1 (1987), pp. 18–25.
- 473 *The Times*, 2 February 1983.
- 474 *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 February 1983.
- 475 Bryher was the beneficiary of five trust settlements made by JEI: 1909, 1914, 1920, and two by effect of his will. On her death in 1983, the trusts, which were invested in government securities, were dissolved and the securities sold; the amount generated was £6 million, as recorded in the High Court judgement of Nourse J (as he then was) *In Re Ellerman's Settlement and Will Trusts* (11 November 1983) pertaining to the taxable status of the proceeds of the sale. The investment in government securities by these trusts stemmed from Bryher's preference for gilts, as securities which generated tax free income and were exempted from inheritance tax.
- 476 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 29.
- 477 No letters between Bryher and JEI are extant, as far as we can determine.
- 478 Annette Debo, *The American H. D.* (Iowa City, IA, 2012), p. 197.
- 479 Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, ch. 3.
- 480 Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, ch. 3.
- 481 *The Times*, 14 May 1915.
- 482 The portrait is now preserved in the offices of John Ellerman Foundation.
- 483 Yale, Gen MSS 1223.
- 484 *Richard Aldington & H.D.*, p. 181.
- 485 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, pp. 1–2.
- 486 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 2.
- 487 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 2.
- 488 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 63.
- 489 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 68.
- 490 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 68.
- 491 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 3.
- 492 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 2.
- 493 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 224.
- 494 McAlmon, *Being Geniuses Together*, p. 2.

- 495 McAlmon to H. D., 3 October 1933, transcribed in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 385.
- 496 Bryher, *HA*, p. 205.
- 497 Bryher, *HA*, p. 290.
- 498 Bryher, *HA*, p. 107.
- 499 Bryher to H. D., 23 May [1933], transcribed in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, pp. 311–12.
- 500 Bryher, *HA*, p. 200.
- 501 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 170.
- 502 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 70, f. 2693.
- 503 For a discussion of Bryher's role in its publication see Betsy van Schlun, *The Pool Group and the Quest for Anthropological Universality: The Humane Images of Modernism* (Berlin, 2016).
- 504 Bryher to Beach, 3 January [1927?], transcribed in Eckenroth, 'Poet/Editor/Publisher', p. 142.
- 505 Bryher to H. D. and Macpherson, 6 March 1927, transcribed in Eckenroth, 'Poet/Editor/Publisher', p. 152. The term in the letter is an 'exam' and the editor refers to JEI's studies at the Inner Temple; however, there is no evidence that JEI ever enrolled at the Inner Temple, as we note below (III.3).
- 506 Bryher to H. D. and Macpherson, 6 March 1927, transcribed in Eckenroth, 'Poet/Editor/Publisher', p. 152.
- 507 Bryher to Beach, 17 June [1927], transcribed in Eckenroth, 'Poet/Editor/Publisher', p. 166.
- 508 Basil King and Daniel Staniforth, *Learning to Draw: A History* (Cheltenham, 2011), p. 150. Fragments of *Wing Beat* are accessible in the New York Museum of Modern Art, Circulating Film Library.
- 509 Laura Marcus, 'Close Up and Cross-Channel Cinema Culture', in *Cross Channel Modernisms*, eds. Jane A. Goldman, Claire Davison, and Derek Ryan (Edinburgh, 2020), pp. 162–83, at p. 172.
- 510 Bryher, *HA*, p. 219.
- 511 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 386. In October 1933, McAlmon intimated to H. D. that he had not recently seen JEI in person; on viewing a picture of JEI and his fiancée, McAlmon noted that JEI's 'photo looked as though he'd become a mild easy going sort' (Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 386).
- 512 *Richard Aldington & H.D.*, p. 181.
- 513 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 514 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 170; JEI's obituary in *The Telegraph*, 21 July 1933, reports that this gift was made 'a few months ago', which may indicate that the new year's gift was made in 1933.
- 515 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 170.
- 516 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 268–9.
- 517 Bryher, *HA*, p. 291.
- 518 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 11, f. 444.
- 519 Bryher, *HA*, p. 266.
- 520 Bryher, *HA*, p. 266.
- 521 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 362.
- 522 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 523 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 170.
- 524 *Daily Telegraph*, 22 and 23 August 1933.
- 525 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 408. A letter sent on the preceding day (11 October 1938) notes 'tomorrow John and Esther are dining here' and recalls a cordial discussion with JEI on the same day about Esther's choice of clothing.
- 526 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 411.
- 527 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 411.
- 528 *The Daily Mail*, 2 January 1940.
- 529 Glover's will, dated 19 January 1939, appoints Bryher as her sole beneficiary and executrix.
- 530 McCabe, *H. D. and Bryher*, p. 287.
- 531 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 151, f. 5116–17.

- 532 *Daily Express*, 18 July 1973.
- 533 Bryher, *HA*, p. 183.
- 534 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 542.
- 535 *The Times*, 22 July 1933.
- 536 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 267–8.
- 537 Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 132, n. 22.
- 538 For an unusual example of Bryher’s fascination with Black acquaintances see Yale, Gen MSS 88, b. 47, scrapbook containing photo collages of Black subjects, inscribed to Kenneth Macpherson by Bryher.
- 539 Friedman, ‘Modernism of the “Scattered Remnant”’, pp. 212–16.
- 540 Friedman, Modernism of the “Scattered Remnant”, p. 229, n. 8, citing a letter from H. D. to McAlmon, 24 February 1949.
- 541 Bryher, *HA*, pp. 172–3.
- 542 Cambridge University Library MS Add. 9777/16/7, Bryher to Lethbridge, 28 November 1951.
- 543 Souhami, *No Modernism Without Lesbians*, ch. 3.
- 544 Guest, *Herself Defined*, p. 264.
- 545 George H. Thomson, *Dorothy Richardson: A Calendar of Letters* (Greensboro, NC, 2007).
- 546 Marya Zaturenska, *The Diaries of Marya Zaturenska, 1938–1944* (Syracuse, NY, 2002), p. 242.
- 547 Beach to Bryher, 30 November 1935, transcribed in *The Letters of Sylvia Beach*, ed. Keri Walsh (New York, 2010), p. 163; Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank: Paris, 1900–1940* (London, 1987), pp. 312–13.
- 548 The sponsors of JEI’s baptism were John Francis Butlin, Ida Annie Butlin, and William Cox.
- 549 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.
- 550 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.
- 551 We are grateful to Paul Godsland of the Malvernian Society for access to this record in the *Malvernian* magazine.
- 552 Bryher to H. D., March 1927, transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 151.
- 553 Bryher to H. D., March 1927, transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 149.
- 554 *Close Up* (July 1927), p. [71]. The novel consorted with a genre popularised by Alec Waugh’s *Loom of Youth* (1917).
- 555 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, p. 28.
- 556 Bryher, ‘Note’ in *Why Do They Like It?*, pp. XI–XII.
- 557 Dorothy Richardson, ‘Foreword’, in [Black], *Why Do They Like It?*, pp. IX–X. For Richardson’s involvement in writing the foreword see George Thomson, *Dorothy Richardson: A Calendar of Letters* (2007), pp. 62, 65, 66, 67.
- 558 Norman Douglas to Bryher, 28 March [1927], printed in Allan, *Dear Sir or Madam*, p. 236.
- 559 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, pp. 120–2.
- 560 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, pp. 74–5.
- 561 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, pp. 15–16.
- 562 *Sunday Times*, 22 October 2006; JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.
- 563 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 564 Bryher to Beach, 6 June [1926], transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 127.
- 565 Bryher to H. D., 6 March 1927, transcribed in Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 153.
- 566 [JEII], ‘Animals on the Films’, *Close Up* (July 1927), pp. 41–6, at p. 42.
- 567 [JEII], ‘Animals on the Films’, pp. 45–6.
- 568 [JEII], ‘Animals on the Films’, p. 44.
- 569 [JEII], ‘Animals on the Films’, p. 42.
- 570 See the discussion in van Schlun, *The Pool Group and the Quest for Anthropological Universality*, pp. 270–1.
- 571 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 96.
- 572 See Eckenroth, ‘Poet/Editor/Publisher’, p. 152.
- 573 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 574 In a recollection of 2019, Michael Jacobs, a legal adviser to the Moorgate Trusts, recalled a conversation with Frederick Hitch, a Trustee of the Moorgate Trusts, who had worked alongside JEII at Moorgate in the 1920s and early 1930s: ‘He [sc. Hitch] gave me [sc. Jacobs] to understand that John [sc. JEII] was not given responsibility for anything significant during his father’s lifetime, rather he was an “apprentice” in the office’ (JEF Archives, Michael Jacobs communication to Nicola Pollock et al., 20 September 2019, amended in e-mail communication to authors, 16 March 2023).
- 575 Yale, Gen MSS 1223.
- 576 British Library, London, Add MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D’Oyly Carte, 9 November 1954, fol. 34’.
- 577 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, p. 2.
- 578 [JEII], *Why Do They Like It?*, p. 32.
- 579 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 580 Yale, Bryher Papers, b. 10, f. 412.
- 581 For these provisions see s. (17) of JEI’s will.
- 582 For examples, see *Guinness Book of World Records* (1976), p. 491, (1987), p. 205, (1989), p. 179; Anne Dolan, ‘The Decline of the Aristocracy and the Second Duke of Westminster 1900–1940’, PhD dissertation, Trinity College, Dublin (2022), p. 163. For published criticism of JEII’s wealth see John Urry and John Wakeford, *Power in Britain: Sociological Readings* (London, 1973), pp. 61–2; Sam Aaronovitch, *The Ruling Class: A Study of British Finance Capital* (London, 1961), pp. 101–2.
- 583 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.
- 584 N. Taylor Phillips, ‘Clarence I. De Sola’, *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, 28 (1922), pp. 269–72; Esther I. Blaustein, Rachel A. Esar, Evelyn Miller, ‘Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue (Shearith Israel), Montreal, 1768–1968’, *Transactions and Miscellanies of the Jewish Historical Society of England*, 23 (1969), pp. 111–42.
- 585 *Western Reserve University: Catalogue, 1897–1898* (Cleveland, OH, 1898), p. 102.
- 586 *The Zionist Record* (Johannesburg), 13 September 1969 reports that JEII compiled a ‘600-page biography’ of Clarence de Sola: ‘The biography has been compiled from the hundreds of diaries kept during De Sola’s life and reassembled after his death by his widow’. No copy of this biography is extant, if one can accept the accuracy of this report.
- 587 *The Victory* (Trafalgar School for Girls), spring 1983 and winter 1985, unpaginated entries. Jessica and Raphael appear to have enrolled in McGill University before emigrating to England (*Calendar – McGill University* (Montreal, 1923), p. 530, which lists their names under enrolled students.)
- 588 *The Times*, 28 June 1929.
- 589 William Cox was evidently close to the de Sola family: Cox is described as a guest at the wedding of Jessica Elvira de Sola in July 1932 (*The Times*, 1 July 1932) and a mourner at the funeral of Gabriel de Sola in February 1931 (*The Daily Telegraph*, 21 February 1931).
- 590 *The Daily Telegraph*, 21 February 1931.
- 591 *The Daily Telegraph*, 24 July 1933. In a subsequent article on 22 August 1933, the paper reported that ‘[h]er [sc. Esther de Sola’s] engagement to Sir (then Mr.) John Ellerman was about to have been announced officially last month when the death of his father caused the announcement to be postponed’. Other contemporary papers reported the wedding was intended to take place on the night JEI himself died, with this plan changing only owing to Esther’s illness. See the report in *The New York Times*, 22 August 1933.
- 592 A highly unusual source, Judson K. Cornelius, *Household Humour* (Mumbai, 2000), p. 27, includes the following unattributed anecdote: ‘It became understood between Sir John Ellerman and Esther de Sole [sic] that they would marry. It was a strange wedding for a multimillionaire. A few hours before the ceremony the bridegroom rang up half a dozen close friends and relatives. “Esther and I are getting married in the morning,” he said. “Would you like to come?” “But where is it to be?” asked the bewildered guests. “That I can’t tell you,” he replied. “But if you want to come I’ll send a car to fetch you.” And not another word would he say. They were married at Chertsey Register Office’.
- 593 See the documents in Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/9.
- 594 *New York Times*, 22 August 1933; *The Australian Woman’s Mirror*, 12 September 1933; *The Straits Times*, 23 August 1933; *Nottingham Journal*, 26 August 1933.
- 595 *The Daily Express*, 19 July 1933.
- 596 For these details, see Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 97.
- 597 *The Times*, 17 February 1939.
- 598 Stephen Roskill, *Hankey: Man of Secrets*, 3 vols. (London, 1970–74), vol. III, p. 328.
- 599 *The Daily Express*, 30 September 1936; *The Daily Express*, 1 October 1936. For a separate instance of tracking JEII’s whereabouts

see *The Saturday Review*, 159 (1935), p. 634, which noted JEII and Esther were then visiting Montreal.

- 600 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936. A subsequent report also commented directly on the ‘six-foot wall, studded with broken glass’ that had ‘recently’ been built (*Daily Express*, 26 August 1937).
- 601 Pierre Dac, *L’Os à Moelle* (28 October 1938).
- 602 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936.
- 603 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936.
- 604 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936.
- 605 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 18 July 1937, fol. 72^r.
- 606 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936.
- 607 Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, pp. 329–30, citing the Hankey Papers. Roskill’s work presents a mine of relevant information pertaining to this period in JEII’s life, but it must be used with some care. In particular, Roskill notably misdates some documents, referring to JEII first becoming involved with Hankey in early 1937, when it is evident, as the date of the Lawrence Burgis memorandum indicates, that the initial approach had been made by early October 1936.
- 608 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 30 February 1937, fol. 67^r.
- 609 Hansard, House of Commons Debate, 26 March 1942, vol. 378, c. 2302; *The Economist*, 25 April 1942; Howard Cox and Simon Mowatt, *Revolutions from Grub Street: A History of Magazine Publishing in Britain* (Oxford, 2014); William Mennell, *Takeover: The Growth of Monopoly in Britain, 1951–61* (London, 1962), pp. 84–5.
- 610 See the discussion in Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, pp. 333–9, which draws on Churchill College, Cambridge, Hankey papers, HNKY 5/8 and HNKY 5/8A.
- 611 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, Hankey diary, 13 December 1937, and, for the reference to having to ‘bust-up’ the scheme, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 1/7, fol. 72^r.
- 612 Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, pp. 332–9.
- 613 Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, p. 333.
- 614 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 18 July 1937, fols. 71^v–72^r.
- 615 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 18 July 1937, fols. 71^v–72^r.
- 616 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 20 February 1937, fol. 68^r.
- 617 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 1/7, Hankey’s diary, 20 February 1937, fol. 68^r.
- 618 See the discussion in Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, pp. 330–2.
- 619 Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, pp. 346–9. On Haile Selassie and his period in England, see Edward Ullendorff, ‘Haile Sellassie at Bath’, *Journal of Semitic Studies*, 24 (1979), pp. 251–64; Graham Macklin, ‘“No Power on Earth can Remove his Liability”’: Empire Haile Selassie and the Foreign Office, a Documentary Essay’, *Immigrants & Minorities*, 25 (2007), pp. 73–93. It should be noted, however, that while Macklin’s work uncovers valuable new archival sources, it contains considerable lacunae, especially concerning Ellerman’s role.
- 620 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Davenport Price to Hankey, 14 August 1940.
- 621 Bryher to H. D., 14 May 1933, transcribed in Friedman, *Analyzing Freud*, p. 271.
- 622 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Hankey to Davenport Price, 28 September 1939, reveals how Davenport Price raised the JEII issue.
- 623 Roskill, *Hankey*, vol. III, p. 337, p. 340, citing extracts from Hankey’s diary.
- 624 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Hankey to Davenport Price, 22 April 1940, and, in the same file, Davenport Price to Hankey, 24 April 1940.
- 625 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Hankey to Davenport Price, 25 April 1940.
- 626 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Hankey to Davenport Price, 25 April 1940.
- 627 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Hankey to Davenport Price, 25 April 1940.
- 628 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, Davenport Price to Hankey, 1 May

1940, and, in the same file, Davenport Price to Hankey, 4 July 1940.

- 629 These personnel included Leonard Hicks, John Kimber, Charles Frederick Pratt, Henry Charles Steadman, and Frederick Brady, each of whom would serve as executives in JEII’s investment trust companies (JEF Archives, Notes from Michael Jacobs pertaining to the history of the Moorgate Trusts, 25 October 2019).
- 630 For this recollection see JEF Archive, KH interview with Jennifer Beach, 1–2 November 2016.
- 631 *The Telegraph*, 2 March 1940.
- 632 Wolff Heinrichsdorff, ‘Juden beherrschen England’, *Zeitschrift für Politik*, 29 (1939), pp. 339–47.
- 633 Claus Krüger, *Juden in England* (Berlin, 1940–4), vol. 2, pp. 295–6, 352–3.
- 634 For this reference see *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 76th Congress: Third Session: Appendix: Volume 86, Part 17* (Washington, D. C., 1941), p. 5160.
- 635 Otto Leibrock, *Der Südosten: Grossdeutschland und das neue Europa* (Berlin, 1941), p. 193.
- 636 William Joyce, *Twilight Over England* ([Berlin], 1942), pp. 113–14; Martin A. Doherty, *Nazi Wireless Propaganda: Lord Haw-Haw and British Public Opinion in the Second World War* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 53; Martin A. Doherty, ‘German Wireless Propaganda in English: An Analysis of the Organisation, Content and Effectiveness of National Socialist Radio Broadcasts for the UK, 1939–1945’, PhD dissertation, University of Kent (1998), p. 91.
- 637 For the inclusion of JEII on this list see <https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk/hitlers-black-book/person/35/sir-john-reeves-ellermann> (website accessed 9 September 2022).
- 638 *Illustrierter Beobachter*, 8 (1941), p. 232: ‘Ellerman juniors Haus in der “Strasse der Millionaire” in den Kensington Palace Gardens, ist wirklich sehenswert: allein der Tapeten — echte chinesische Seiden und französische Gobelins — haben ein paar hunderttausend Pfund gekostet; die goldenen Badezimmereinrichtungen für ihn und seine blutjunge jüdische Frau, die früher als Esther de Sola in allen Londoner Nachtclubs bekannt war, wetteifern an Pracht mit den Gemächern der siamesischen Katzen, die sich Ellerman zum Vergnügen hält.’
- 639 *The Daily Express*, 10 April 1940.
- 640 *The Zionist Record*, 13 September 1939.
- 641 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 22 August 1947.
- 642 *The Times*, 19 April 1963.
- 643 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 7 December 1954.
- 644 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 124.
- 645 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 26 January 1948. For these trips subsequently see Ulick Brown, *A Full Life: The Memoirs of Ulick Brown*, p. 156, extract preserved at JEF Archive: ‘Each year from about 1950 to 1973 [...] one of the Ellerman 12 passenger cargo ships, which were used post-war in E[llerman] & B[ucknall]’s fortnightly service to and from London, would be earmarked to take (apart from its normal cargo) Sir John and Lady Ellerman and a few personal friends for the couple’s annual stay in Cape Town from October to April’.
- 646 *The Daily Express*, 28 December 1939.
- 647 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 124.
- 648 On the issue of precisely when the company was ‘founded’, see the discussion in Tony Joseph, *The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company 1875–1982: An Unofficial History* (Bristol, 1994), p. 7.
- 649 See, recently, Olivia Williams, *The Secret Life of the Savoy and the D’Oyly Carte Family* (London, 2021).
- 650 See, generally, Joseph, *The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company 1875–1982*.
- 651 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Rupert D’Oyly Carte, 25 January 1933, fol. 1^r.
- 652 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, fol. 2^r; British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Rupert D’Oyly Carte, [April?] 1938, fol. 4^r.
- 653 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D’Oyly Carte, 9 November 1954, fol. 34^r.
- 654 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D’Oyly Carte, 2 September 1961, fol. 152^r. On the significance of the copyright issue, and its greater import than the loss of exclusive rights to use Sullivan’s music in November 1950, see Joseph, *The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company 1875–1982*, p. 298.
- 655 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D’Oyly Carte, 15 January 1962, fol. 158^r.
- 656 Joseph, *The D’Oyly Carte Opera Company 1875–1982*, p. 217.

- 657 See, for example, British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D'Oyly Carte, 16 November 1954, fol. 36^{r-v}.
- 658 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D'Oyly Carte, 21 November 1958, fol. 113. Letters between Rollins and JEII were sold by Richard Ford, the autograph dealer, prior to 2021. JEII also maintained a correspondence with Sir Donald Wolfitt (1902–68) on theatrical matters, now preserved in the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, PA-00100, b.21.11.
- 659 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D'Oyly Carte, 22 February 1954, fol. 29^r. Although the company did not adopt JEII's suggestions he warmly approved of the solution to adopt the line 'And they'll practice what they're preaching bye and bye'; as he wrote to Bridget D'Oyly Carte (ibid., 25 February 1954, fol. 28^r), this reformulation 'would be excellent ... It removes everything which could possibly give offence, and is well in keeping with the rest of the number.'
- 660 British Library, Add. MS 89231/2/63, JEII to Bridget D'Oyly Carte, 6 December 1957, fol. 94^r.
- 661 *The Daily Express*, 16 August 1948.
- 662 Lindsay, *The Crawford Papers*, pp. 592–3.
- 663 Parliamentary Archives, London, Beaverbrook Papers, BBK/H/252, Hugh Cudlipp to Lord Beaverbrook, 21 June 1950, reporting JEII's comments at their lunchtime meeting. For copies of these exchanges see Cardiff University Archives, Cudlipp Papers, GB 1239 432/1/3/4.
- 664 *The Daily Express*, 26 August 1937.
- 665 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 26 February 1936. For rumours regarding JEII keeping hedgehogs, see *The Daily Express*, 30 September 1936; Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY 5/8A/8, James van den Bergh to Elsie van den Bergh, 27 October [?].
- 666 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 24 October 1936.
- 667 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 24 October 1936.
- 668 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, letters dating 26 February 1936, 24 October 1936, 2 June 1939.
- 669 Terry A. Vaughan, James M. Ryan, and Nicholas J. Czaplewski, *Mammalogy* (London, 2000 [4th ed.]), pp. 1–3.
- 670 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 99.
- 671 Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, The Papers of Maurice Hankey, HNKY, 5/8, Lawrence Burgis notes, 6 October 1936.
- 672 For the correspondence with Hardy, see Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071. On JEII's election to the Linnean Society, see W. T. Calman, 'Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London. 10 December 1936', *Proceedings of the Linnean Society of London* 149 (1936–7), pp. 48–9. JEII's recommendation for entry to the fellowship had previously been read on 29 October and 12 November 1936.
- 673 David Lindsay, *The Crawford Papers*, p. 598.
- 674 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 11 November 1935, 12 November 1935, 26 November 1935.
- 675 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 26 February 1936.
- 676 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, letters dating 24 October 1936, 2 June 1939.
- 677 See in this respect the comments in J. R. Ellerman, *The Families and Genera of Living Rodents*, 3 vols. (London, 1940–9), vol. 1, p. xi.
- 678 On this, see, Malcolm C. McKenna and Susan K. Bell, *Classifications of Mammals Above the Species Level* (New York, 1997), p. 17.
- 679 Ellerman, *Families and Genera*, vol. 1, p. ix.
- 680 Donald F. Hoffmeister, 'The Families and Genera of Living Rodents [review]', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 24 (1943), pp. 106–7, at p. 107.
- 681 George Gaylord Simpson, 'The Principles of Classification and a Classification of Mammals', *Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*, 85 (1945), pp. 1–350, at pp. 199–200.
- 682 Simpson, 'The Principles of Classification and a Classification of Mammals', p. 199 (emphasis in original).
- 683 See, on this point, the discussion in Kevin de Queiroz, 'The Linnean Hierarchy and the Evolutionalization of Taxonomy, with Emphasis on the Problem of Nomenclature', *Aliso*, 15 (1996), pp. 125–44, at p. 127.
- 684 Matt Cartmill, 'A Sort of Revolution: Systematics and Physical Anthropology in the 20th Century', *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 165 (2018), pp. 677–87, at p. 678. JEII's specific contribution in this regard was also noted in the preface to *Families and Genera* (p. vii) by Martin Hinton, Keeper of the Department of Zoology at the British Museum.
- 685 De Queiroz, 'The Linnean Hierarchy', p. 129. On this development more generally, see E. Mayr and W. B. Provine, eds., *The*

Evolutionary Synthesis: Perspectives on the Unification of Biology (Cambridge, MA, 1980).

- 686 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, [May?] 1941.
- 687 G. G. Simpson, 'Checklist of Palearctic and Indian Mammals [review]', *Science*, 115 (1952), pp. 431–2 (emphasis in original).
- 688 See, for example, D. H. S. Davis, 'The Affinities of the South African Gerbils of the Genus *Tatera*', *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 118 (1949), pp. 1002–18, at p. 1002.
- 689 Zoological Society of London, *A List of the Fellows* (London, 1926), p. 61. We are grateful to Natasha Wakely, the Archivist of the Zoological Society of London, for confirming that the Society does not preserve any information about the election of JEII as a Fellow in 1893, except that the Fellowship Certificate records his place of residence as 12 Moorgate Street and his date of election as 20 April 1893.
- 690 *The Telegraph*, 8 November 1954.
- 691 E. W. MacBride, 'Exhibitions and Notices', *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, 106 (1936), pp. 1187–1190, at p. 1188, indicates that in July 1936 JEII presented a collection of rodents from the Aberdare Mountains, Kenya.
- 692 Zoological Society of London Archives, SEC/11/1/23.
- 693 See the discussion of this episode in Joe Cain, 'Julian Huxley, General Biology and The London Zoo, 1935–42', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 64 (2010), pp. 359–78. JEII's support of Huxley can best be seen in the series of letters sent to him and his wife throughout the spring and summer of 1942, now held at Rice University, Papers of Julian Sorell Huxley.
- 694 Alwyne Wheeler, 'The Zoological Collections of the British Museum (Natural History) – Evacuation of the Collections During the War Years 1939–1945', *Archives of Natural History*, 27 (2000), pp. 115–22, at p. 120, n. 2.
- 695 Peter Crowcroft, *Elton's Ecologists: A History of the Bureau of Animal Population* (Chicago, 1991), p. 41. For a survey of Elton and the significance of his work, see, Daniel Simberloff, *Environment and History*, 18 (2012), pp. 183–202. JEII had known Elton since at least the mid-1940s when they had corresponded over his *Families and Genera*, about which Elton had been 'most complimentary'. For this, see, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 2 November 1945.
- 696 On these trips, see the correspondence held by the Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, letters from JEII to Hinton, 8 April 1938; JEII to Hinton, [undated but c. 1941–2]; C. S. Webb to JEII, 6 June 1942. The material Webb collected was discussed in the third volume of *Families and Genera*.
- 697 Michael D. Carleton, 'Systematic Studies of Madagascar's Endemic Rodents (Muroidea: Nesomyinae): Revision of the Genus *Eliurus*', *American Museum Novitates*, 3087 (1994), p. 40.
- 698 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, Hinton to Hardy, 6 October 1947.
- 699 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, Hinton to JEII, 22 August 1948.
- 700 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 19 April 1945.
- 701 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 22 August 1947.
- 702 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 22 August 1947.
- 703 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 29 June 1946.
- 704 For an example of this stipulation see Lindsay, *The Crawford Papers*, pp. 592–3.
- 705 *The Daily Express*, 16 August 1948.
- 706 *Time Magazine*, 52/9 (1948), pp. 55–6. For a similarly dismissive assessment see *Punch*, 257 (1969), p. 95.
- 707 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 25 August 1948, responding to the letter from Hinton to JEII, 22 August 1948, that insisted JEII ought not to 'lose heart or interest in your work & for goodness sake don't allow the impertinence of a journalist to deflect you from a job that you like to do'.
- 708 As argued by Carleton, 'Systematic Studies', p. 40.
- 709 For this characterisation of England, see JEII to Beukes, 10 September 1957.
- 710 Parliamentary Archives, London, Beaverbrook Papers, BBK/H/252, Hugh Cudlipp to Lord Beaverbrook, 21 June 1950.
- 711 Hugo Cudlipp, *Walking on Water* (London, 1976), pp. 191, 288; Logan Gourlay, *The Beaverbrook I Knew* (London, 1984), p. 12. Cudlipp was said to have concerted with JEII and his solicitor representative Ellis Birk (d. 2004) in removing Cecil King (1901–1987) from the Board of the *Mirror*'s parent company IPC in 1968, after King had used the paper to encourage the removal from office of Harold Wilson by an extra-parliamentary procedure. Cudlipp was reportedly 'incandescent' at the suggestion that JEII was involved, after *The Daily Mail* described JEII as 'one of the prime movers behind the scenes' (Ruth Dudley Edwards, *Newspapermen: Hugh Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King and the Glory Days of Fleet Street* (London, 2003), pp. 392–3; Cyril Watling, *Ink In My Blood* (Cape Town, 1966), p. 120). In 1985, *The Illustrated London News* would describe JEII as a 'virtual recluse so far as the ILN was concerned, for he visited the office only once and met

- Bruce Ingram (who remained editor until 1963) only twice'. For belief in JEII's involvement see Rebecca West to Vera Watson, 31 May 1968, Morgan Library and Museum, New York, MA 4727.2:26. For public speculation about JEII's influence at IPC see *The Spectator*, 27 November 1971.
- 712 Parliamentary Archives, London, Beaverbrook Papers, BBK/H/252, Herbert Gunn to Lord Beaverbrook, 22 June 1950.
- 713 *The Daily Express*, 19 July 1933.
- 714 *The Daily Express*, 30 September 1936.
- 715 *The Daily Express*, 26 August 1937.
- 716 *The Daily Express*, 16 June 1950.
- 717 For this claim see de Sola's obituary in *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 August 1989, which reports that he was 'associated with many munificent benefactions including substantial donations during the 1939–45 War to the Royal Navy, the Canadian war effort and Jewish refugees. He provided flying hospitals for Russian Allied troops, made a major contribution to the rebuilding of the bombed Guildhall in the City of London and endowed a £1 million fund for the victims of the Turkish earthquake of 1940'.
- 718 Tudor Jenkins, *The Londoner* (London, 1962), pp. 172–3.
- 719 For example, 'Wealthy Briton Charters Ship to Transport 30 Refugee Families to U. S., Mexico', *The Archive of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency* (19 January 1940).
- 720 *Der Spiegel*, 12 February 1967: 'Sir John Reeves Ellerman, 57, britischer Reeder deutscher Abstammung, ist der scheueste, unbekannteste und spleenigste Multimillionär Europas. Sir John [...] steht in keinem Telephonbuch, in der britischen Wählerliste wird er unter einem Pseudonym geführt, und selbst seine Bediensteten kennen ihn kaum: Beim Betreten seiner zahlreichen Landhäuser muß er sich mitunter legitimieren'.
- 721 For Beukes's association with Smuts see Piet Beukes, *The Holistic Smuts: A Study in Personality* (Cape Town, 1989).
- 722 JEF Archive, JEII to Piet Beukes, 27 May 1958.
- 723 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 18 January 1952.
- 724 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 18 January 1952.
- 725 JEF Archives, JEII Domicile Folder, 18 October 1976; JEF Archive, KH interview with Honey Richter, 28 January 2019 records that the flat was in Norfolk House.
- 726 JEII to Beukes, 23 August 1958 (translation by Timothy Twining).
- 727 JEII to Beukes, 23 August 1958 (translation by Timothy Twining).
- 728 British Library, Add. MS 89231, JEII to Bridget D'Oyly Carte, 15 January 1962, fol. 158^r.
- 729 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 26 January 1948.
- 730 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 26 January 1948.
- 731 Natural History Museum, London, Museum Archives, DF ZOO/232/7/4/5, JEII to Hinton, 26 January 1948. J. R. Ellerman, 'Die Taksonomie van die Soogdiere van die Unie van Suid-Afrika', *Annale van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch*, 30 (1954), pp. 1–125.
- 732 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEII to Hardy, 24 October 1956.
- 733 J. R. Ellerman, *The Fauna of India*, vol. 3: *Mammalia* (Delhi, 1961), Part I, p. xi.
- 734 Payne and Brown, *Ellermans in South Africa, 1892–1992*, pp. 92–5, which recounts a variety of anecdotes of JEII's cruising to South Africa, referring to JEII's 'obsession' with not being cold; his rigid preference for drinking only water; and his anxiety when familiar routines were broken by guests.
- 735 *The Times*, 20 July 1973; Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 125. See also the comments in the chapter 'Four more pianists' in David Tidboald, *People I Made Music With* (Cape Town, 2008).
- 736 For Esther Ellerman's involvement in paintings depicting personnel during the Second World War see Imperial War Museum, ART/WA2/03/008.
- 737 For later published identifications of Esther as Ellen de Streuvee see *The Daily Colonist*, 19 July 1973.
- 738 JEF Archives, JEII to Dennis Martin-Jenkins and Frederick Hitch, 12 October 1969. For a summary overview of JEII's movements between 1969 and 1972, recorded for determining his tax residency, see JEF Archives, Nicholson, Graham and Jones to R. R. Greenfield, Inland Revenue, 21 March 1978.
- 739 Honey Richter, the daughter of Piet Beukes, and a close friend of JEII and Esther recalled in 2019 her belief that JEII had declined to have children out of a concern that any child would be as 'unhappy' as he had been (JEF Archive, KH interview with Honey Richter, 28 January 2019).

- 740 This description was echoed by the journalist Cyril Watling, who knew JEII personally, and whose memoir describes JEII as 'extremely shy' (Watling, *Ink In My Blood*, p. 119).
- 741 *The Sunday Telegraph*, 22 July 1973.
- 742 *The Guardian*, 18 July 1973.
- 743 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1973.
- 744 For a recollection of JEII's conduct aboard these cruises see Norman Freeman, 'An Irishman's Diary About Rats, Cats, and Sir John Ellerman', *The Irish Times*, 6 November 2017.
- 745 *The Daily Express*, 18 July 1973.
- 746 *The Financial Times*, 18 July 1973.
- 747 *The Sunday Telegraph*, 22 July 1973.
- 748 *The Times*, 20 July 1973.
- 749 *Cape Times*, 20 July 1973.
- 750 *The Times*, 20 July 1973. In reference to JEII's punctiliousness, Payne and Brown refer to JEII's extreme punctuality: 'Everyone knew of Sir John's passion for punctuality. If bidden to his home for dinner, one learnt to arrive, usually after a tactical wait down the road, precisely at 7 pm. As one knocked at the door, it would open immediately, as if by electronic impulse — Sir John was standing there, confident that his guests would not be late' (Payne and Brown, *Ellermans in South Africa, 1892–1992*, p. 92).
- 751 *The Times*, 21 July 1973. In an obituary of Morrison-Scott, Solly Zuckerman (1904–93) recalled that Morrison-Scott had confided that he and Ellerman once 'had to use the telephone to reconcile their differences about particular taxonomic matters, often settling their arguments through the intermediary of Ellerman's butler!' (*Journal of Zoology* 228 (1992), pp. 1–4).
- 752 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.
- 753 JEII to Beukes, 7 December 1966; JEII to Beukes, 10 June 1968. JEF Archive, KH interview with Anne Alexander, 14 June 2016 and 19 August 2016 records that the staff at Ellerman House in Cape Town were 'Cape Coloureds', members of the mixed race community of South Africans on the Western Cape.
- 754 JEF Archive, KH interview with Inez Gretton, 29 January 2019.
- 755 For this decision, in the case *Ethiopia and Liberia v. South Africa*, see Marinus Wiechers, 'South West Africa: The Decision of 16 July 1966 and its Aftermath', *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 1 (1968), pp. 408–46; Ernest A. Gross, 'The South West Africa Case: What Happened?', *Foreign Affairs* (October 1966), pp. 36–48. The case pertained especially to *locus standi*, that is, the legal standing of the applicants (Ethiopia and Liberia) to bring a claim to the International Court of Justice regarding South Africa's administration of a mandate over South West Africa. The mandate was entrusted to South Africa in 1920 by the League of Nations Covenant. According to Article 22 of the Covenant, the territory — formerly a colony of Germany — was 'inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world'. JEII's support for South Africa in this matter cannot be unambiguously construed as a support for apartheid, but it is clear that he opposed independence for the territory; the South African position, which Buekes's employer Jan Smuts had articulated as early as 1922, was the mandate had effectively permitted South Africa to annex the territory permanently.
- 756 JEII to Beukes, 31 July 1966.
- 757 JEII to Beukes, 20 May 1963.
- 758 JEII to Beukes, 8 May 1964.
- 759 JEII to Beukes, 25 May 1964.
- 760 JEII to Beukes, 6 January 1956.
- 761 JEII to Beukes, 6 July 1966.
- 762 JEII to Beukes, 6 January 1956.
- 763 JEII to Beukes, 6 January 1956.
- 764 JEII to Beukes, 14 February 1956. JEII apparently even believed he and Beukes had known each other in a previous life in the fourteenth century. See the comments recorded in <https://rachelswart.org.za/about-us/history-and-namesake/> (website accessed 26 August 2022); Otto J. Scott, *The Other End of the Lifeboat* (Chicago, 1985), p. 253.
- 765 JEII to Beukes, 14 February 1956.
- 766 JEF Archive, KH interview with Anne Alexander, 14 June 2016 and 19 August 2016, includes the unusual recollection of Anne Alexander, a close associate of JEII in South Africa, that JEII had informed a blind individual that she was blind because she had blinded a person in a previous life.

- 767 JEIF to Beukes, 14 February 1956.
- 768 Alister Hardy, *Science and the Quest for God* (London, 1951), pp. 15–22.
- 769 Hardy, *Science and the Quest for God*, p. 19.
- 770 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEIF to Hardy, 21 June 1951.
- 771 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS. Eng. misc. c. 1071, JEIF to Hardy, 14 February 1954. Johnson's reputation would later be tarred by his hosting and co-founding, with Anne Hamilton-Byrne, the meetings of an abusive cult group infamously known as 'The Family'.
- 772 See the papers and correspondence from the early 1980s held at Bodleian Library, Oxford, Papers of Alister Clavering Hardy, MS Eng. misc. C. 1085.
- 773 JEF Archive, KH interview with Honey Richter, 28 January 2019.
- 774 JEF Archive, KH interview with Honey Richter, 29 January 2019; KH interview with Jennifer Beach, 1–2 November 2016.
- 775 *The Telegraph*, 5 May 1934.
- 776 *The Telegraph*, 30 October 1936.
- 777 *The Telegraph*, 27 October 1936.
- 778 For an example of an anonymous gift to the Clarendon Press see Brian Short et al., *The Front Line of Freedom: British Farming in the Second World War* (Exeter, 2006), p. 63.
- 779 Ian Fraser, 'Sir John Ellerman, Bt.', *St Dunstan's Review*, 637 (January 1973), p. 3.
- 780 Charles Drazin, *The Finest Years: British Cinema of the 1940s* (London, 2007); Ernest Betts, *Inside Pictures: With Some Reflections from the Outside* (London, 1960), p. 31.
- 781 JEF Archive, KH interview with Honey Richter, 28 January 2019.
- 782 *Swart Fund Report* (1985).
- 783 Jaco Loubser, 'Changing the John Ellerman Museum into the Ellerman Resource Centre for Zoology', *South African Museums Association Bulletin*, 25 (2000), p. 57. For JEIF's other support of zoological research in South Africa see Brian M. Randles, *A History of the Kaffrarian Museum* (King William's Town, 1984), p. 61.
- 784 JEF Archives, JEIF Domicile Folder, 18 October 1976.
- 785 A characteristic example of this generosity was JEIF paying off a residential mortgage for Inez Gretton; JEF Archive, KH interview with Inez Gretton, 29 January 2019. Another example is provided by the BBC programme *Flog It!*, series 13, compilation 40 (2002), during which a guest presented a painting by Edmond Marie Petitjean (1844–1925), gifted by JEIF and Esther to a member of their household staff. The painting was recently offered for sale by Ewbank's (13 August 2014, lot 356).
- 786 For this provision see s. (3) (1) of JEIF's will.
- 787 JEF Archives, JEIF Domicile Folder, 18 October 1976.
- 788 JEF Archives, Nicholson, Graham and Jones to R. R. Greenfield, Inland Revenue, 21 March 1978.
- 789 JEIF reportedly purchased the country's entire stock of Egyptian tobacco via a Bond Street tobacconist during the Suez Crisis (JEF Archive, information from KH to Nicola Pollock, 9 November 2016).
- 790 JEF Archives, JEIF to Dennis Martin-Jenkins and Frederick Hitch, 12 October 1969.
- 791 JEF Archives, JEIF to Dennis Martin-Jenkins and Frederick Hitch, 12 October 1969.
- 792 JEF Archives, JEIF to Dennis Martin-Jenkins and Frederick Hitch, 12 October 1969.
- 793 JEF Archives, Raymond Walton QC to JEIF and others, 9 September 1969.
- 794 For a record of the proceedings see The National Archives, Kew, J 84/473. The application to the Chancery Division of the High Court required that all the named beneficiaries of JEIF's will trusts still living would be parties; a second application was made in the same year, requesting approval for the appointment of assets from JEIF's will trust to the Moorgate Trusts.
- 795 *The Daily Telegraph*, 18 July 1973.
- 796 As Michael Jacobs has noted, the provision (s. 45) of the Act altered the situation 'radically': 'Prior to FA 1973 there was no reduction in estate duty if the shares in question were sold at a lower valuation than their value for probate purposes on the date of death. This law changed the situation radically. There was also a risk that the real estate which was also a major asset falling into estate duty on JEIF's death would also be sold for less than its probate value, as indeed it was, but there had been an estate duty relief for several years which allowed the value of real estate sold within 3 years of death to be calculate on the sale value rather than the date of death value. That was the type of relief introduced by s. 45 FA 1973, but it was limited to sales within 1 year of death. If these reliefs had not been so

restrictively time-limited, the Executors/Trustees would almost certainly have held on to the relevant asset until the recession of 1973/4 had passed' (email communication to authors from Michael Jacobs, 16 March 2023).

797 *The Times*, 14 December 1973. Michael Jacobs has summarised the process as follows: unitisation 'involved liquidating the companies through a special court process and reconstituting them as one unit trust'; 'outside shareholders, [...] could go on holding securities in the new unit trust'; the directors of the investment trust companies 'would manage the sale of enough, selected underlying securities to pay the costs of the exercise and buy in the Ellerman interests at as near as possible full market value' (JEF Archives, Notes from Michael Jacobs pertaining to the history of the Moorgate Trusts, 25 October 2019).

798 For reportage of this figure see *The Times*, 13 December 1973.

799 JEF Archives, JEIF Domicile Folder, 18 October 1976.

800 For these recollections see Christopher Biggins, *My Story* (London, 2015), pp. 224–5; Kenneth Williams, *The Kenneth Williams Diaries*, ed. Russell Davies (London, 1993), p. 645.

801 *Evening Standard*, 18 July 1973.

802 JEF Archives, Will of Esther Ellerman, 10 October 1985.

803 *Sunday Telegraph*, 22 July 1973.

804 JEF Archives, Notes from Michael Jacobs pertaining to the history of the Moorgate Trusts, 25 October 2019.

805 JEF Archives, Submission of Nicholson, Graham and Jones to Inland Revenue, 21 March 1978.

806 JEF Archives, Deed of Appointment relating to The New Moorgate Trust, 1 October 1982.

807 *Lloyd's Ship Manager*, 3 (1982), p. 56.

808 The John and Esther Ellerman Memorial Trust was established in 1974 by St Dunstan's, South Africa. The object of the Trust was to establish a mobility centre in the Cape for training blind people in modern methods of mobility. Trustees of St Dunstan's automatically became Trustees of the Memorial Trust; the latter commenced operations in 1975.

809 The Ian Fraser Memorial Bursary Fund was established in 1977 as a subsidiary fund of St Dunstan's, South Africa, to commemorate the life of Lord Fraser, who died in 1974. The object of the Fund was to provide bursaries, grants, and scholarships to registered blind persons to aid in their studying for degrees or diplomas at any South African university.

810 The Colin Gohl Scholarship Fund was established in 1972 by JEIF to perpetuate the memory of Colin Gohl (1918–1971), the Director of Parks and Forests of the Municipality of Cape Town, and a close friend of JEIF and Esther Ellerman. The object of the Fund was to provide scholarships to support students of Stellenbosch University who wished to study nature conservation, forestry, and parks administration and recreation.

811 The St Giles Association for the Handicapped was established in 1953, with the goal of alleviating 'the loneliness and isolation of the physically disabled through sports and social activities'. JEIF commenced his support of the Association in circa 1971.

812 *Port of London*, 50–51 (1975), p. 126; Glyn Hardwicke, *Keepers of the Door The History of the Port of London Authority Police* (London, 1980), p. 3 dedicates the work to Esther Ellerman. One impetus for the gift was the practice of the PLA Police of facilitating JEIF privacy when arriving or departing from London by ship (JEF Archive, KH interview with David Martin-Jenkins, 29 February and 17 March 2016).

813 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins, memoir, 15 February 1979.

814 Ulick Brown, *A Full Life: The Memoirs of Ulick Brown*, p. 155, extract preserved at JEF Archive.

815 This is the informal name used to describe the investment trust companies and other entities which managed JEIF's non-Ellerman Lines Ltd. assets.

816 JEF Archives, Submission of Nicholson, Graham and Jones to Inland Revenue, 21 March 1978.

817 JEF Archives, Submission of Nicholson, Graham and Jones to Inland Revenue, 21 March 1978.

818 JEF Archive, KH interview with David Martin-Jenkins, 29 February and 17 March 2016.

819 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/adhocs/006301newarnings-surveynewestimeseriesofgrossweeklyearningsfrom1938to2016> (website accessed 20 February 2023).

820 JEF Archives, Undated notes from Michael Jacobs pertaining to the history of the Moorgate Trusts.

821 For information about Hudson see <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/our-organisation/the-fighting-arms/surface-fleet/patrol/archer-class/hms-smiter/the-guy-hudson-memorial-trust> (website accessed 20 February 2023).

822 JEF Archive, Michael Jacobs to Peter Pratt, 11 November 1992. The letter, properly speaking, was addressed to Pratt in his role as a director of New Cavendish Street Investment Co. Ltd.

823 Michael Gillard, *In the Name of Charity: The Rosminster Affair* (London, 1987), p. 164.

- 824 JEF Archive, Re Sir John Reeves Ellerman, Baronet, C. H., Deceased, Deed of Appointment of Additional Trustee, 11 May 1940.
- 825 JEF Archive, Trustees of Sir J. R. Ellerman Bart., Properties held 13th November 1969 on the basis of their 1965 valuations.
- 826 JEF Archives, Notes from Michael Jacobs pertaining to the history of the Moorgate Trusts, 25 October 2019.
- 827 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 174.
- 828 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 131.
- 829 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 131.
- 830 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 143.
- 831 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 134.
- 832 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 137.
- 833 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 140.
- 834 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 149.
- 835 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 155.
- 836 Taylor, *Ellermans*, pp. 161–4.
- 837 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 161.
- 838 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 161.
- 839 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 165.
- 840 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 165.
- 841 *The Sunday Telegraph*, 22 July 1973.
- 842 Taylor, *Ellermans*, p. 174.
- 843 *The Financial Times*, 18 January 1974.
- 844 *The Economist*, 13 August 1977.
- 845 *Fairplay International Shipping Weekly*, 6 October 1983.
- 846 JEF Archive, Press Information, Ellerman Lines plc; *The Financial Times*, 5 October 1983.
- 847 Payne and Brown, *Ellermans in South Africa, 1892–1992*, p. 128.
- 848 *The Times*, 4 October 1983.
- 849 Labour Research Department, *Profiting from Apartheid: Britain's Links with South Africa* (London, 1986), p. 26; Patrick F. Wilmot, *Apartheid and African Liberation: The Grief and The Hope* (Ile-Ife, 1980), p. 163; Ruth First, Jonathan Steele, Christabel Gurney, *The South African Connection: Western Investment in Apartheid* (London, 1973), p. 329.
- 850 Payne and Brown, *Ellermans in South Africa, 1892–1992*, p. 161.
- 851 David Scott, *Window into Downing Street* (Spennymoor, 2003), pp. 213–14.
- 852 Scott, *Window*, pp. 213–14.
- 853 Scott, *Window*, p. 214.
- 854 Scott, *Window*, p. 217.
- 855 Scott, *Window*, p. 217.
- 856 Scott, *Window*, p. 215.
- 857 JEF Archive, KH interview with Timothy Martin-Jenkins, 8 June 2016 and 9 July 2016.
- 858 JEF Archive, KH interview with Timothy Martin-Jenkins, 8 June 2016 and 9 July 2016.
- 859 Scott, *Window*, p. 220.
- 860 *The Guardian*, 13 January 2021.
- 861 Simon Clark and Erik Schatzker, 'Britain's Billionaire Barclay Twins Use Stealth to Amass Empire', *Bloomberg UK* (30 November 2004), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2004-11-30/britain-s-billionaire-barclay-twins-use-stealth-to-amass-empire> (website accessed 20 February 2023).
- 862 Esther's shares, which constituted 20.96 percent of Ellerman Lines plc, were held by Marine Holdings S. A. Luxembourg. In April 1980, the Inland Revenue determined that Esther was non-domiciled in the United Kingdom for tax purposes, with effect from 17 July 1973; she elected her domicile as South Africa. JEII, however, was deemed resident, which significantly increased the duty owned

- at his death. Esther's subsequent residence in Monte Carlo, and her use of accounts and company structures in Jersey, the Isle of Man, Panama, and Luxembourg reduced her exposure to taxation in the United Kingdom; however, the Capital Transfer Tax Office would ultimately assess her estate for capital transfer tax on her death, with the exception of the half which passed tax free to her second husband.
- 863 *The Times*, 4 October 1983.
- 864 For news coverage of Leadbitter's complaint see *Evening Gazette*, 19 April 1984.
- 865 JEF Archive, M. Gunning, Charity Commission to The Secretary, Moorgate Trust Fund, 19 March 1984.
- 866 JEF Archive, H. Phillips, Charity Commission to Dennis Parry, 5 June 1984.
- 867 JEF Archive, Dennis Parry to H. Phillips, Charity Commission, 20 June 1984.
- 868 JEF Archive, Dennis Parry to H. Phillips, Charity Commission, 20 June 1984.
- 869 JEF Archive, John Cameron to Dennis Martin-Jenkins, 9 March 1984.
- 870 JEF Archive, Dennis Martin-Jenkins to John Cameron, 20 March 1984.
- 871 The loss of the Ellerman name in shipping was the result of a series of mergers and acquisitions over two decades. In 1985, the Lines' shipping division was sold to its management and then in 1987 was acquired by Cunard (Trafalgar House) to become Cunard-Ellerman. Cunard later sold their Ellerman interests along with Cunard-Brocklebank Ltd. to Andrew Weir (Bank Line) Ltd. of Glasgow in 1991. In 1991, P&O purchased the Cunard-Ellerman container business which became part of P&O Containers. In 1996, P&O Containers merged with Nedlloyd to form P&O Nedlloyd. In 2004, P&O's container operations became Royal P&O Nedlloyd, which was acquired by the A. P. Møller-Maersk Group in 2005, becoming Maersk Line. In 2003, Hamburg Süd Group acquired the Ellerman services to the Mediterranean and to India/Pakistan from Andrew Weir Shipping. These were previously Cunard-Ellerman. In 2005, the Ellerman brand was removed from Hamburg Süd's entities entirely.
- 872 JEF Archive, KH interview with David Martin-Jenkins, 29 February and 17 March 2016.
- 873 For a note on the use of the definite article ('The John Ellerman Foundation') see the Abbreviations page above.
- 874 JEF Archive, KH interview with Michael Jacobs, 12 January and 26 January 2016.
- 875 JEF Archive, KH interview with Michael Jacobs, 12 January and 26 January 2016.
- 876 JEF Archive, KH interview with Dr John Hemming, 4 September 2019.
- 877 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 878 JEF Archive, KH interview with Dr John Hemming, 4 September 2019.
- 879 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 880 JEF Archive, KH interview with Richard Edmunds, 10 March 2016.
- 881 JEF Archive, KH interview with Dr John Hemming, 4 September 2019.
- 882 JEF Archive, KH interview with Sue MacGregor, 6 September 2019.
- 883 JEF Archive, KH interview with Nicola Pollock, 6 July 2021.
- 884 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 885 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 886 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 887 JEF Archive, KH interview with Nicola Pollock, 6 July 2021.
- 888 JEF Archive, KH interview with Professor Brian Hurwitz, 21 June 2021.
- 889 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021.
- 890 John Ellerman Foundation, *Annual Report and Financial Accounts 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014*, p. 1
- 891 John Ellerman Foundation, *Annual Report and Financial Accounts 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014*, p. 1
- 892 John Ellerman Foundation, *Annual Report and Financial Accounts 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014*, p. 2.
- 893 John Ellerman Foundation, *Annual Report and Financial Accounts 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015*, p. 1.
- 894 JEF Archive, KH interview with Lady Riddell, 22 June 2021; JEF Archive, KH interview with Tim Glass, 15 October 2019 and 31 October 2019.
- 896 JEII *ODNB*.

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