

Ellen Hutchins (1785-1815): Botanist and Artist

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Ellen Hutchins is regarded as the first female field botanist in Ireland as well as being a gifted botanical illustrator. Born on St Patrick's Day 1785, she died, a month before her 30th birthday, on 10 February 1815. A typed manuscript (MS 47), *ELLEN HITCHINS a Botanist*, in the Representative Church Body (RCB) Library in Dublin gives some account of Hutchins's life and surroundings 'as gathered from letters and the conversation of the few that knew her'. The provenance of the manuscript can be assigned to Ellen's niece Alicia Maria Hutchins (1832-1915) with the memoir evidently coming into the possession of the RCB in 1943 through *her* niece Margaret Thyra Barbara Shore Nightingale (1872-1945) sister-in-law of the library's founding benefactress. The year 2015 marks, respectively, the bicentenary, centenary, as well as the 70th anniversary, of the deaths of these three ladies and thus a fitting time to belatedly publish the family manuscript.

INTRODUCTION

Ellen Hutchins, from west Cork, is justifiably regarded as the first female field botanist in Ireland. She was born on 17 March 1785 at Ballylickey and died at Ardnagashel, also in Bantry Bay, on 10 February 1815. During her short life, blighted somewhat by illness, she drew plant specimens she had collected and later became a taxonomic expert on the various terrestrial and aquatic species. Her plant collecting was centred in her native area between Bantry and Glengarriff as well as into Kerry.² Specimens collected by Ellen Hutchins are now in various herbaria around the world including Dublin, London, Edinburgh, Helsinki and New York. She had many species named in her honour including mosses and liverworts, lichens and marine algae as well as some flowering plants. She did not publish anything in her own right, but her many plant records as well as her illustrations were included in the works of the leading botanists of the day. This paper and an illustrated piece about a memoir of her life are permanently available as a digital presentation on the Church of Ireland website at this link: <www.ireland.anglican.org/about/214>.

¹ Great-great-grandniece of Ellen Hutchins.

² She is also said to have collected at the diagonally opposite end of the country in the north around Belfast (Braithwaite, 1887; Lett, 1914-1916; Pearson, 1918) as well as in the west of Ireland (Smith, 1813).. Lett (1915-1916) says that in Braithwaite's "British Moss Flora" are several records of mosses collected by Miss Hutchins at "Belfast," and in the "North of Ireland" in the year 1801. However, Ellen would then have been just 15 or 16 years old. Braithwaite (1887) does indeed give moss records, attributed to Miss Hutchins, from 'N. of Ireland (1808)' and Belfast (no date) as well as from Bantry (two with no date, 1808, 1809 and 1812) and Mangerton (no date) – which are all of later date. After both of the northern records Braithwaite has the symbol ! to signify that the specimen had been examined by the author. Pearson (1918) has the same reference as Lett to her taken from Braithwaite. Some authors would seem to have committed errors when referring to Ellen as 'Miss Hutchins of Belfast', e.g. Don (1831). It is doubtful she ever collected specimens in the north of Ireland while the west of Ireland is most probably reference to west Cork and Kerry.

Her manuscript catalogue of Irish plants, comprising 17 folios with over 1,000 names of species listed with locations, was acquired by the British Museum (Natural History) in 1900. Mitchell (1999) printed the full listing therein as vascular plants, bryophytes [mosses and liverworts], lichens and algae.

Aspects of Hutchins's botanical achievements as well as some biographical information have been published elsewhere from as early as three years after her death down to the present day and there are good sources also available online (See Bibliography). The objective of the present work is to outline the provenance of a manuscript on Hutchins's life, prepared by her family and to formally publish the typescript with an annotated description. The memoir is a typed manuscript (MS 47) among the holdings of the Representative Church Body (RCB) Library in Dublin.³

DESCRIPTION OF MANUSCRIPT

The manuscript, nine folios of typescript tied into a limp card folder, 293 x 229 mm., is described as *Representative Church Body Library, Dublin MS 47: An account of the life of Ellen Hutchins (1785-1815) an Irish botanist who was born in Co. Cork and who worked in Dublin. [n.d., late 19th/early 20th cent.]. From Lady Barbara Stephen, Hampshire, August 1943.* It is catalogued as *Representative Church Body Library, Dublin MS 47: HUTCHINS, Ellen (1785-1815) Botanist An account of the life of the co. Cork born botanist, Ellen Hutchins, by her niece, Alicia Hutchins. c. 1914.* Previously it was described, in the national Library of Ireland's catalogue as *Representative Church Body Library MS. O. 15: A memoir of the life of Ellen Hutchins (died 1815) of Bantry, by (?) lady Barbara Stephen, 1943.*

The actual title of the typescript is *ELLEN HUTCHINS a Botanist* and is reproduced in full as the Appendix.

ff.1-2. The first two folios of the typescript deal with the genealogy of the Hutchins family, Ellen's father and their home at Ballylickey. The salient feature of this preamble is that Ellen is a daughter of Thomas and Elinor Hutchins.⁴ There are other manuscripts, in the National Library of Ireland, on the Hutchins family.⁵

³ The RCB Library was founded in 1931 and is now located at Braemor Park, Churchstown, Dublin D14 N735.

⁴ Thomas Hutchins (1735-1787) married his third cousin Elinor Hutchins (1743-1814) in 1759 (<http://www.ornaverum.org/family/bantry-hutchins.html>)

⁵ The National Library of Ireland (NLI) manuscripts on the Hutchins family:

- i. MS 13558 – Genealogical note on family of Hutchins of Wiltshire and co. Cork. (Photostat).
- ii. MS 8685 – Manuscript, typescript and 'photostat' copies of documents relating mainly to the families of Hutchins, of Bantry, Co. Cork, etc.

MS 13558 came to the library in 1964 from Miss G. Hutchins. MS 8685 consists of three folders of very varied material, including a lot of Photostats (Elizabeth Harford – Archivist NLI, personal communication).

f.3. In folio three we learn that Ellen was sent to school in Dublin at which time she was not inclined to feed herself properly. Following schooling, she was taken under the caring guardianship of the Stokes family, who lived in Harcourt Street, and soon began to thrive. Dr Whitley Stokes (1763-1845) was a keen botanist (Lecturer in Natural History at Trinity College, Dublin) as well as a medical doctor and was instrumental in Hutchins taking up the study of botany. By 1805 Ellen had returned home to Ballylickey, where her mother was in poor health and her brother Thomas was disabled,⁶ when she set about her systematic pursuit of the study of plants, armed with some books lent by Stokes, as we are informed on the following folio.

f.4. In folio four, the uncongenial surroundings to which she is returning are touched upon and Ellen receives further advice from a French tutor⁷ on how to distract from this situation by studying plants as she herself once had. Earlier in the folio we learn that Ellen's eldest sister [Katherine] had done drawings, in silhouette, of her parents.

f.5. Whilst in Dublin, Whitley Stokes apparently had introduced Ellen to James Townsend Mackay (1775-1862) who was curator of the Botanic Garden at Trinity College. Ellen corresponded with Mackay sending him specimens and seeking help with identifying plants.⁸ Through Mackay she was introduced, in 1807, to Dawson Turner (1775-1858) an eminent English botanist for whom she supplied specimens and illustrations for his volumes on the *Fuci*, i.e. seaweeds of the large genus of brown algae.⁹ She was very successful at collecting specimens, and discovered many plants new to botany. Mackay would later include her many records in his *Flora Hibernica* (Mackay, 1836).¹⁰ In the early 1800s it was the convention that women not publish their scientific findings as it was considered immodest. Ellen writes to her brother telling him that she has requested that her name not be published with her findings but seeking his advice on whether she ought to consent adding that she would not be happy to do so unless he thought it right.

A third MS (p. 928) allied to these, on microfilm, although ostensibly about letters to and from Thomas Hutchins has other material not related to the Hutchins family, e.g. Pakenham Mahon Papers.

⁶ Thomas suffered an accident while at school which left him partially paralysed.

⁷ This lady may have been an émigré from revolutionary France.

⁸ Mackay visited Ellen at Ballylickey in August 1805 when he instructed her on examining and drying sea-plant specimens (Mitchell, 1999).

⁹ He remarks in one of the volumes, on Ellen having discovered a new species in 1808, that 'Miss Hutchins, to whose friendship I am happy to own myself indebted for many of the particulars above mentioned in the description of the species, as well as for the drawing here represented, which was made by herself from a recent specimen' (Turner, 1811).

¹⁰ Mackay refers to her as 'the late amiable and accomplished Miss Hutchins, a lady who for many years was unremitting in her investigation of the Botany of the south of Ireland' (Mackay, 1836).

f.6. That Ellen's name thereafter was published with her plant records indicates that her brother did indeed approve. He had said in a letter to her that Thomas Taylor¹¹ was telling him what a great botanist she is but she demurely responds saying that while she has made some progress she is far from that. Ellen tells him about her collaboration with Mackay and Turner who have helped her greatly by sending plates and descriptions of plant species to aid her work. She adds that she is constrained in her observations by the lack of reference works and how her mother cannot afford such expensive books.

f.7. The names of the leading botanists of the day, who had recorded her success, are given and reference made to the tribute paid to her, shortly after her death, in a book¹² which was later published in an article in the *Journal of Botany* (Vol. 50, 1912). Mention is also made to the fact that an unnamed Swedish botanist¹³ had visited Dublin purposely to meet her but was amazed to find such a young girl as the discoverer of so many plant species. Allusion is made here to the many difficulties and anxieties in Ellen's home life at the time.¹⁴ Through all of her tribulations she nonetheless managed a tremendous amount of botanical work which was stated to have been a welcome diversion. She is described as having been happiest at work in her garden or in her little boat collecting sea plants to examine, classify and share with her botanist friends.¹⁵

f.8. On folio 8 and into the following one, information on Ellen, taken from a paper by the Rev. H.W. Lett,¹⁶ is given. Therein it says that the remarkable collection of plants made by Ellen Hutchins, together with a large number of her drawings and notes on the species, passed into the possession of Dawson Turner and eventually ended up in the Botanic Gardens

¹¹ Dr Taylor was a young botanist friend, and a distant cousin, of Ellen's.

¹² *Primitiae florum Essequiboensis* published in 1818 wherein it says she died at 'Bontajae in Hibernia'!

¹³ The unnamed Swedish botanist has not been identified – contemporaries would include Georgii (Göran) Wahlenberg (1780-1851) who published his *Flora Lapponica* in 1812 and Olof Swartz (1760-1818) as well as the great Swedish algologist Carl Adolph Agardh (1785-1859), born the same year as Ellen, who dedicated the group of marine algae *Hutchinsia*, subsequently called *Polysiphonia*, to her memory (Harvey, 1846-51) and who published his *Systema Algarum* in 1824.

¹⁴ This is a passing reference to the fact that Ellen and her mother had been turned out from the family home, Ballylickey House, by her eldest brother Emanuel (1769-1839) and had to go to live at Bandon. Thomas senior had died intestate and a long family feud had ensued over property.

¹⁵ James Mackay and Dawson Turner sent her shrubs and herbaceous plants for 'Miss Ellen's Garden' (Chesney, 1997).

¹⁶ Although it was not published (Lett, 1914-1916) until the year the author of the manuscript died, Lett had sent the draft paper previously for he writes on 13 March 1914:

'Dear Madam,

I now return your account of Miss Ellen Hutchins, which I know that I have kept rather long, it is most interesting, but her memory deserved it, I thank you for favouring me with a perusal. I was very glad to see that you had got a line or two from my biog notice, & you were quite welcome to use them.

It is a pity her name is not on some memorial stone at her grave, she well deserved that it should be.

I remain yours sincerely

H W Lett'. (Letters from Lett to Hutchins, archives, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew).

at Kew.¹⁷ At this point in the MS we are told that Dawson Turner, with whom she was in constant contact through correspondence, had invited Ellen, many times, to visit his home in Yarmouth; that he asked her to become godmother to one of his daughters and subsequently sent her news of ‘Little Ellen’s’ progress. Two other botanists are also in contact with her, Sir William Hooker (1785-1865)¹⁸ as well as James Mackay, who sent, or helped to get, her books. In the final paragraph of the folio we learn that Ellen with her mother, who was then gravely ill, moved to Bandon to avail of better medical attention; that Mrs Hutchins died there in March 1814 and is buried there.

f.9. The brief final folio of the MS simply outlines that Ellen moved to Ardnagashel, where her brother Arthur lived with his family, after her mother died in Bandon. Ellen did not long survive her mother¹⁹ dying less than a year later, on 10 February 1815, at Ardnagashel.²⁰ She was buried outside the southern wall of the old church, at Garryvurcha, in Bantry. Ellen’s disabled brother Thomas, whom she had cared for, died five months later in July 1815 and the MS ends by lamenting how much he must have missed her, during her illness and absence in Bandon, during those last few years of his life.

PROVENANCE OF MANUSCRIPT

The RCB Library’s provenance details, of the MS, simply state that it is, ‘An account of the life of the co. Cork born botanist, Ellen Hutchins, by her niece Alicia Hutchins, c. 1914’ (Susan Hood, personal communication).

¹⁷ Although the bulk of Ellen Hutchins’s collection of specimens are in the Natural History Museum, London (having been transferred there from Kew) 237 of her watercolour drawings are housed at Kew and some specimens of marine algae are in the Department of Botany at Oxford University (Clokie, 1964). Fittingly a number of seaweed specimens from Bantry Bay had been acquired by the Botany Department at University College Cork (Parkes, 1954) which later went to Trinity College Dublin. There are some specimens of marine algae and lichens in other herbaria, e.g. Natural History Museum London, Linnean Society London, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Finnish Museum of Natural History – University of Helsinki and New York Botanical Garden. A number of her illustrations of marine and freshwater algae, are in the Sheffield Museum and there are letters in Trinity College Dublin, Trinity College Cambridge and Kew.

¹⁸ Hooker sent Ellen a copy of his book *Journal of a Tour in Iceland* published in 1811 which in the manuscript appears corrected having been typed as a tour in Ireland. He married Dawson Turner’s eldest daughter and came on an extensive tour to Ireland in June 1815, just four months after Ellen’s death, with his new bride (Hooker, 1903). He later became the first Director of the Botanic Gardens at Kew. In his *British Jungermannia* Hooker cites no less than 45 recordings by Ellen and dedicates the species *Jungermannia hutchinsia* to its discoverer and gives it pride of place as the first plate in the book. On her ability in locating rare species he adds ‘Miss Hutchins of whom it may almost with truth be said, she finds every thing’ (Hooker, 1816).

¹⁹ In Ellen’s final letter to Dawson Turner, dated 30 November 1814, she tells him she is then ‘Reduced to a skeleton I frighten everybody I am so entirely destitute of flesh’ (Mitchell, 1999). It is believed that Ellen suffered from chronic consumption and also complications from taking mercury for a liver complaint (Chesney, 1997).

²⁰ Matilda Hutchins, her brother Arthur’s wife, wrote to Dawson Turner informing him that Ellen had died, in her arms at Ardnagashel, on 9 February (Dawson Turner correspondence, Trinity College Cambridge) while the church burial record gives 10 February so the likelihood is that she passed away in the early hours of the latter date.

Authorship of the memoir had been tentatively attributed to Lady Barbara Stephen (Hayes, 1979) but as Mitchell (1999) rightly pointed out, ‘it is, almost certainly, the work of Ellen Hutchins’ niece, Alicia (183?-1915)’. The confusion arose because Lady Barbara Stephen, Ellen’s grandniece, donated the memoir and it was thus described by the National Library of Ireland (NLI) as *Representative Church Body Library MS. O. 15: A memoir of the life of Ellen Hutchins (died 1815) of Bantry, by (?) lady Barbara Stephen, 1943*. That entry was tentatively used in Hayes’s *Manuscript Sources for the History of Irish Civilisation* (Hayes, 1979).²¹

The three questions to be answered, regarding provenance, are:

Who compiled the manuscript? At what date? How did it end up in the RCB Library?

The manuscript bears no marks which would answer any of these questions. However, documented information held by the Hutchins’s family can reveal the answers.

It can be established, *sine dubio*, that Alicia Maria Hutchins (1832-1915), niece of Ellen Hutchins (1785-1815), wrote the manuscript and that it was completed in 1913. Before it was typed, Alicia had sent the hand-written memoir to her sister Louisa in England asking for comment and Louisa replied on 17 July 1913, saying that it would be profanation to meddle with it.²² Louisa had married a Shore Nightingale who was first cousin of the celebrated nurse Florence. It would be Louisa’s daughter Margaret Thyra Barbara Shore Nightingale – the Lady Barbara Stephen²³ – who would lodge the manuscript with the RCB in 1943. It was suggested, by the Assistant Librarian and Archivist Dr Susan Hood, that there may have been some familial association between Lady Barbara Stephen and Rosamond Emily Stephen (1868-1951) who had previously, in 1931, bequeathed her book collections to the RCB Library (<http://ireland.anglican.org/about/103#RES>). In fact, the two were sisters-in-law and it may reasonably be concluded that the manuscript came into the possession of the RCB Library through this relationship.

²¹ Richard J. Hayes (1902-1976) was Director of the National Library of Ireland. The Hayes catalogue includes entries for manuscripts of Irish interest held in a number of libraries and archives in Ireland and overseas. During World War II, he was used by the Irish Government to decode German messages (National Library of Ireland, MSS 22981-22984).

²² The letter from Louisa to Alicia, dated 17 July 1913, begins:
Dear Alicia (your memoir)

I think “it” is most beautiful, and touching: shows her great merits of mind and character: indeed I should feel it profanation to meddle with it (Hutchins Family Private Collection).

²³ Lady Barbara Stephen (1872-1945), née Margaret Thyra Barbara Shore Smith (later Shore Nightingale) was born in London and attended Roedean School in its early years. She read history at Girton College, Cambridge (1891-1894) gaining a Class II honours degree. Her father was first cousin of Florence Nightingale for whom she kept house after going down from Girton. She is acknowledged as an historian and published two books on Girton College (Girton College Archive, Cambridge, Personal Papers of Barbara Stephen, GCPP Stephen).

At the time of the manuscript's completion, Alicia is a lady of 81 and from comments in Louisa's letter may have been working on the memoir for some time. A notebook found by the family has transcriptions of Ellen's letters to her brothers in 1807, which Alicia quotes from within her memoir. The letters themselves reappeared very recently among Hutchins family papers and have never been published (See www.ellenhutchins.com).

Following its completion in 1913 the MS had been typed and then retyped, with corrections to the text added, after typographical errors had been identified (Copy in Hutchins Family Private Collection). The initial version has local names misspelt and thus is unlikely to have been typed by the family. Following the deaths, respectively, in 1915 and 1922 of Alicia and Louisa, the memoir had come into the keeping of the succeeding generation. Efforts by the family to have the memoir published in the 1940s and 1980s were unsuccessful and the manuscript is now being formally published. The first typed version, with typographical errors, has Proof stamped on it indicating that it was being prepared for publication.

There are two copies of the manuscript, both nine folios of typescript tied into a limp card folder, extant: one at the RCB Library (MS 47) and the other in the Hutchins family collection.

AUTHOR OF MANUSCRIPT

Alicia Maria Hutchins (1832-1915), author of the typescript memoir, was born in Co. Cork in 1832, one of eight children, to Samuel Hutchins (1786-1862) and Frances Camac (1795-1839). The family had property in Ireland and in England and they lived in Dublin for a time where her mother died in 1839,²⁴ the same year her father inherited Ardnagashel House in west Cork.²⁵ Her father remarried, in 1842, to Mary Burrowes (1814-1849) with whom he had three other children. At that time, the children, except for the youngest, were domiciled in England at various education establishments. Alicia, along with sisters Frances and Louisa, were educated at a small girls' school at Kent Terrace, in Marylebone, London, run by Irish-born Isabella Magarey while their brothers Emanuel and Samuel Newburgh were in Essex (England, Wales & Scotland Census, 1841). In 1851 Alicia was in Dawlish on the south coast of Devon (England, Wales & Scotland Census, 1851) with her older sister Frances, step-sister

²⁴ Frances Camac Hutchins, wife of Samuel Hutchins, of Ardnagashel, Co. Cork, died on 16 September, 1839, aged 44, and is buried at Monkstown, Dublin (Ball and Hamilton, 1895). Francis Arthur was born in February 1839 in Dublin where his mother died the following September and he was christened on 2 October 1839 at Ballyhay, Cork.

²⁵ On the death of his elder brother Emanuel in 1839 the estate passed to Samuel, who is said to have established a soup kitchen at Ardnagashel during the Famine (O'Hea O'Keeffe, 2013).

Mary B. and step-brothers Elliot B. and Peter B.²⁶ For the Census (30 March 1851), when Alicia is 18 years of age and Frances is 22, their rank/profession/occupation are each given as Landed Proprietor. Their sister Louisa Ellen, aged 20, is then listed as a visitor at the Ladies School, Toxteth Park in Liverpool while Francis Arthur then aged 12 is at a school in Bristol run by John Reynell Wreford,²⁷ who lists himself as a dissenting minister and school master. Later in the 1850s Alicia returned to Ireland and lived at 1 Upper Pembroke Street Dublin. She was among the *Mademoiselles* listed as attending the Earl of Eglinton's first Drawing Room, for nobility and gentry, on St. Patrick's evening 1858, at Dublin Castle (Anon., 1858). In 1876, Standish O'Grady (1846–1928), barrister who was later a celebrated historian and novelist, was living with her in the house. She was living there alone between 1879 and 1881. In 1882 and 1883, Hugh Pollock, another barrister, was lodging there with her. Presumably, these two barristers were friends of her younger brother Samuel Newburgh,²⁸ who had by then moved back to Ardnagashel, Bantry and was a J.P. for Co. Cork. When living in Dublin, Alicia was a supporter of women's suffrage and attended its association's meetings (e.g. Anon., 1880). Neither she nor her sister Frances (1828-1902), affectionately known as Fanny, married. Frances was an educationist who worked at Alexandra College Dublin, Newham College Cambridge and later was Principal of Aberdare Hall Cardiff until retirement in 1892. In April 1892 Alicia is with Frances at Aberdare Hall from where she writes to an unknown party, presumably a builder, referring to plans by Mr Fuller²⁹ regarding the building of a new house on the Hutchins's land for £800 (Hutchins Family Private Collection). In 1893 or the following year they moved into the newly-built Gortnavalig House, Ardnagashel, next door to their brother Samuel Newburgh and his family of thirteen children, in west Cork where Frances died on 15 October 1902. Alicia had given her religion as Unitarian in 1901 (Census of Ireland, 1901) while ten years later, aged 78, she lists her religion as Church of Ireland (Census of Ireland, 1911). She was by then taking a greater role in running the family's business affairs with her niece, Margaret

²⁶ The middle name B. represents Burrowes the maiden name of the mother.

²⁷ John Reynell Wreford (1800-1881) as well as composing more than 50 hymns (Miles, 1907) wrote a book on Presbyterianism and translated another work.

²⁸ Samuel Newburgh Hutchins (1834-1915) was educated in England (Marlborough College, 1936), entered Trinity College Dublin in 1860 graduating B.A. in 1864 aged 26 (Burtchaell and Sadleir, 1935) and admitted barrister-at-law, King's Inns, Dublin, in 1865. As a young man he served in the Australian Mounted Police (the Gold Escort) during the Australian gold rush of the 1850s, returning to Ireland with no gold, but 650 Australian seeds for the garden at Ardnagashel (Hutchins Family Private Collection).

²⁹ James Franklin Fuller (1835-1924) of Kerry was an actor, novelist and architect who designed many churches and country mansions in Ireland (Brady and Cleeve, 1985). He was architect to the Representative Church Body and the National Board of Education among others (<http://www.dia.ie/architects>).

E. Hutchins, acting as her secretary to whom she dictated letters etc. For example, as late as a year before her death, in November 1914, Alicia is corresponding with a legal firm in Dublin regarding the Hutchins's estate. Alicia died at Gortnavalig on 18 November 1915 in her 84th year and is described as Gentlewoman on her death certificate. Probate of Alicia's Will (Effects £5,345 7s. 8d.) was granted to her niece Margaret E. Hutchins on 27 January 1916. Her brother Samuel Newburgh (1834-1915) had died seven months before Alicia, at his residence Ballylickey in Bantry and two of his sons also died in the same year: Thomas Arthur (1888-1915) was killed in action at Gallipoli on 14 May and Richard (1876-1915) died a day later, in Cork, at the Military Hospital Victoria Barracks. Regarding Alicia's other siblings, two died in infancy Samuel (1825-1828) and Robert Arthur (in 1837 when just a few months old) and her elder brother Emanuel (1823-1880)³⁰ died in Dublin aged 57 whereas the youngest Francis Arthur (1839-1921)³¹ reached a good old age as did her sister Louisa (1830-1922). Her stepmother had died following the birth of her half-sister Mary Burrowes (1849-1855),³² who died young, and her two half-brothers, Peter Burrowes (1843-1901) and Elliot Burrowes (1845-1905), also predeceased her.



Hutchins family group at Ardnagashel, on the shore of Bantry Bay, in 1908. Alicia Hutchins, the author of the manuscript, is in middle then aged 76. Others referred to in the text are her nephew Thomas Arthur, her niece Margaret on far left and her brother Samuel Newburgh on far right (Hutchins Family Private Collection).

³⁰ Following his early education in England, Emanuel entered Trinity College Dublin, became a Magistrate for Co. Cork (Walford, 1860) and never married.

³¹ Following his early education in England, Francis Arthur joined the army, retiring as Lieutenant-Colonel, married in 1890 and became J.P. for Kent and Hampshire (Burke and Fox-Davies, 1912).

³² Mary Burrowes Hutchins was born on 11 January 1849 and her mother died some two weeks later.

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APPENDIX

ELLEN HUTCHINS a Botanist

MS 47 Representative Church Body Library, Dublin

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ELLEN HUTCHINS

a botanist.

It may be of interest to those who have found the name of Ellen Hutchins in the records of botanical research, to learn something of her life and surroundings, as gathered from letters and the conversation of the few who knew her -

The family of Hutchins in Ireland is descended from two cousins, who came from Devonshire between 1600 and 1640 - Thomas who held lands near Michels town, and other parts of the rich pasture lands of the county Limerick at Crégane Castle; and Richard, who, having served under the Earl of Orerery during the Civil War in ¹⁶⁴¹~~1641~~, settled at Blackrock, now Bantry House.

The relationship between the two branches of the family was renewed when Richard's daughter, Hannah, married Thomas' grandson, also named Thomas; and a second marriage took place later, when in 1759, Thomas Hutchins of Ballylickey married Elinor, only daughter of Arthur Hutchins of Crégane - of this marriage, Ellen was one of the children.

Members of the family have lived at various places on the shores of Bantry Bay, and the house in which Ellen was born (Ballylickey) is now occupied by them. It stands at the Head of the Bay, facing West, and has an extended and beautiful view of the mountains at each side, and of the islands which break the long sheet of water. It was here that Ellen

studied nature. Very little is known of her father, whom she was too young to know. He was a magistrate and was much respected in the country. At this time very severe and unjust laws were in force against Catholics, and a Protestant, who coveted a Catholic's horse, could seize it, on paying five pounds for it. A priest, who had been so treated, referred his case to Thomas Hutchins, who ordered the horse to be restored to him, on the grounds that it was of much higher value than the price offered. He strongly objected to the practice, common among gentlemen, of excessive drinking of wine after dinner, and endeavoured to check it, even declining to sit at the head of his own table, where he knew he should be expected to fill his glass each time the decanter passed him. He had been in Paris and was detained there on parole, probably on suspicion of being a spy. He was said to be a remarkably good sword's-man, and to speak French "like a native" excitedly, while at other times his manner was very quiet. He had probably received a good education and desired the same for his children.

He died in 1787, only six of his many children, surviving him. Of these, three of his sons had been at school. The eldest and perhaps the second, had passed through Trinity College, Dublin - and prepared for professions as a barrister and a solicitor. The ~~third~~ third son, while still at school, met with an accident, a fall on the ice, which so injured his spine, that he became a confirmed invalid. Ellen's letters describe him as "driving in a light carriage and being carried

to a boat." He was however able to assist his brothers in the management of their property.

While Ellen was still very young, she was placed in a school, between Dublin and Donnybrook. As she grew up, she became delicate, and it was found that she had been insufficiently fed, healthy appetites not being considered lady-like. Dr. Whitley Stokes, who was a friend of the family, was consulted; and when it was proposed to take her home, he said "I think you had better give her to Mrs. Stokes and me." And Ellen went to live in his house in Harcourt Street. Dr. Stokes warned Mrs. Stokes to take no notice of Ellen's nervous state, nor of her disinclination for food, and advised that some small thing should be left in her room, which might tempt her to eat, when alone. This plan was successful and after a time Ellen regained her appetite and health.

No doubt the companionship of Dr. Stokes' family, and the conversation of the cultivated people, whom she met at his house, had a reviving interest for her, and took her thoughts off herself.

However this may be, the time came when she was well enough to return to Ballylickey - It was natural that she should shrink from the prospect of the life she would lead there.

Her mother was now an elderly woman in feeble health. The only brother living at home was the invalid, Thomas; and the only other member of the household was her father's aunt

Isabella, daughter of Beversham Harman of Laharen, known as "Aunt Bel," whom Ellen described in Feb. 1806, as "having been in bed all the winter, and not having left her room for 3 years," and who died soon after, aged about 100 years. Ellen's only sister, Katharine, the eldest of the family, had died in 1789. She was said to be very handsome and constantly on horseback, as she walked with difficulty. The only memento of her, is a silhouette of her father, executed by her, clearly and carefully cut, and valuable as being the only likeness of him. She had done one of her mother also, which was lost.

There were no cousins, nor relations of Ellen's age to bring a cheerful element into the family circle; and few visitors came to the house. There was little communication with distant places, and the scenery of Bantry Bay and Glengarriff, so famous now, had not attracted strangers. Even a journey to Cork was a difficult and dangerous expedition; the roads were so bad that men were sent on to fill the boggy holes with furze bushes and stones, to enable the carriage to pass safely; and Mrs. Hutchins had often preferred to ride there on a pillion behind her groom. Ellen confided her fears to Dr. Stokes, and he advised her to take up the study of some branch of natural history, and offered to lend her books. Botany was the subject he recommended, as it would encourage her to spend much time out of doors, and give her quiet and interesting occupation at home.

Similar advice was given her by an exiled French lady, a refugee, who taught her french, and who said that the study

of Botany had been a solace to herself, when she, like Ellen, had to live with uncongenial people.

It is probable that through Dr. Stokes Ellen became acquainted with Mr. Mackay, the Curator of the College Botanical Gardens in Dublin, with whom she corresponded and whom she consulted when classifying the specimens of the plants she collected.

In 1807, Mr. Mackay made her acquainted with Mr. Dawson Turner, to whom she supplied specimens and drawings of "Sea plants" for his "Historia Fucorum" - Her illustrations of the plants are careful and beautiful drawings, even to the most minute parts of the frustification, and yet so modest was she about her work that she hesitated as to the propriety of allowing her name to appear in the descriptions of her discoveries:

She writes to her brother:

"For some time past, I have amused myself learning Botany. I am told by those that are good judges that I have made very great progress for the time I have been learning, in a curious and difficult branch, that of marine plants. I have been very successful and have discovered a great number of kinds unknown before. Of these new plants, plates and descriptions will be given by botanists now publishing their works, and it is usual to mention the place where the plant was found and the name of the person who was the discoverer. I desired that my name should not be published. I have since been asked to allow it to be mentioned. I am doubtful whether I ought to do so or not, I beg you to tell

"me what I should do. Mrs. Tayler and Phyllis wish my name to be mentioned for the plants I have found, and I would not suffer it to be done until I know if you thought it right. I send my plants to Mr. Mackay, a very good botanist, who was sent by the College to this and many other parts of Ireland, and who has made great discoveries in Botany. He gives me all the information I want and sends the plants to those who describe and publish them. I also send a great many to Dr. Stokes and have made him a very fine collection. He says he is quite astonished at the progress I have made." and again "Tom Tayler tells you wrong, when he says that I am a great botanist, for indeed I am very far from it. I have I believe made pretty good progress for the time I have been learning. My powers of observation are small and I have had too few books to do much. All the fine books on Botany are expensive and my mother cannot afford to give me books. In the sea plants, a large and difficult branch, I have done most. I have made a great many discoveries of new ones, no less than seven already and some that are not yet determined. Mr. Turner, a great botanist in England, has sent me some rare sea plants - Some of the new plants I found were sent to him. He was so pleased with them that he sent me some of the rarest kinds found in England and some foreign ones and some plates and descriptions by him of Fuci and Lichens."

Fortunately her scruples were overcome, and her name has taken its place among the botanists of her time. Sir

James Smith, Sir William Hooker, Dr. Taylor, Mr. Mackay, Mr. Dawson Turner, have recorded her success.

A Swedish botanist, who went to Dublin purposely to meet her, was amazed to find a young girl as the discoverer of the many plants which bear her name. ^x"In the journal of Botany, Feb. 1912, o. 63, under the title of Eighteenth Century women botanists, a reprint from a little work the "Primitiæ Floræ Esseque-boensis" by G.F.W. Meyer published in 1818, a tribute is made to the botanical work of Miss Hutchins. She is described as having lately died at Bontajae in Ireland, and allusion is made to Hepatic Jungermannia Hutchinsia, named after her - and of her having found many ~~new~~ ^{new} plants to English Botany."

She was keenly interested in her work, and rejoiced in it as a means of diverting her thoughts from the many difficulties and anxieties of her home life.

A field at Ballylickey is still called "Miss Ellen's Garden," where she tended her plants and those sent her by Mr. Mackay; and her happiest hours were spent in it and in her little boat, when it was rowed beside the rocks at low water, that she might gather the sea plants, which grew there undisturbed and uninjured, bringing her treasures home, to examine and classify, and share with her friends.

^xFrom a paper by the Rev. H.W. Lett prepared for the Royal Irish Academy.

^xSpecimens of many rare species of cryptogamie plants
 " discovered by her are in the British Museum and the remarkable
 " collection of plants which she made, together with a large
 " number of beautiful drawings and notes on the plants, passed
 " into the possession of Dawson Turner and are now in safe
 " keeping at Kew."

But it was not only her love for Botany that attracted her friends. Dawson Turner writes to her of the books he reads; Dr. Warburton's letters to Dr. Hurd, containing criticisms of the literary men of the day;" "Parson's Travels from Scanderoon to Bussorah": "Mount Caucasus," with an account of its natural history, translated from the German; Byron's Poems, and those of Sir Walter Scott, of which she had copies. He quotes passages from Dante and Tasso and from some french poets. He invites her many times to visit him at Yarmouth, and make acquaintance with his family. He asks her to become Godmother to one of his daughters, and continually gives her news of the "Little Ellen's" progress. Sir William Hooker sends her his "Tour in Ireland" and Mr. Mackay, besides sending her plants for her garden, helps her to get books.

In October 1812, Ellen and her mother were in Bandon. Both were ill and in need of better medical advice than Bantry could supply, and it was there Mrs. Hutchins died in March 1814, and there she was buried.

^xFrom the Rev. H.W. Lett's Paper.

Ellen did not long survive her. Returning home, she went to Ardnagashel, where her brother Arthur and his family lived, and she died there, on the 10th of February 1815. She was buried in the church-yard in Bantry, outside the southern wall of the old church.

Her brother Thomas, who died in July of the same year, must have sadly missed her loving care and sympathy; during those last years of his life.