

library, was described as an autograph MS of a text which had not been represented at all in the 1889 sale', namely this one, the 'Epistle on Taste', or *Epistle to Burlington*. We now see that it had been sold as from Charles Chauncy's library in 1887, but not to Thompson, and had therefore not passed to Nassau Lees. The 1887 and 1911 catalogue entries both appear to refer to the same manuscript, an autograph of the *Epistle to Burlington* with a Chauncy provenance. Smith ('Alexander Pope', 2–3 and PoA 76) discusses the likelihood of its identification with Morgan Library MA 352, in which one leaf of the *Epistle to Burlington* is followed by eight leaves of the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*. The Morgan fragment was indeed collated by Jonathan Richardson.¹⁹ And, as we shall see below, its readings correspond to those transcribed by Whitwell Elwin from a manuscript which, when he saw it, was in the possession of the Chauncy family.

486 Ethic Epistles I to III, AUTOGRAPH MS. OF POPE, *with numerous alterations and corrections by himself* | 4to.

£20 to Thompson. This fair copy — 'a superb example of [Pope's] calligraphy' as Peter Croft called it — must be what Richardson meant by 'the several finished copies, (of his own neat and elegant writing)' which he possessed, 'several' referring to the different 'books' of the *Essay on Man* identified in the previous clause in Richardson's memoir.²⁰

The two manuscripts of the *Essay on Man* in the 1887 sale both passed from the Chauncy family via Thompson to Nassau Lees. One of the Nassau Lees copies (484 above) is, as we have just seen, at the Morgan Library; the other, Lot 80 at the Nassau Lees sale, was catalogued as 'Ethic Epistles I–III', and can surely be identified both with the present copy and with the manuscript of the *Essay on Man* now at Harvard, which bears the same title (Smith, 'Alexander Pope', 2–4 and PoA 165). The Harvard manuscript was offered for sale by Dodd, Mead and Co. of New York in 1910.²¹

A manuscript sold as Lot 112 in the Stuart M. Samuel sale in 1907 also bore the title 'Ethic Epistles'. There are two ways to explain this. The first is that two manuscripts bore this title: the one now at Harvard, and the one in the Samuel sale. In that case, there were three manuscripts of the *Essay on Man* in all: the one now at the Morgan, the one now at Harvard, and a third, now unlocated, known only from its appearance in the Samuel sale catalogue. Smith proposes, on several grounds, that this was the case, and if she is right, the chronology of sales must have been as follows: 1887, the present Harvard MS is sold to Nassau Lees; 1889, the present Harvard MS is sold at Nassau Lees' sale; 1907, a previously unknown MS with the same title appears at Samuel's sale, is sold to Sabin, and is never seen again; 1910, the present Harvard MS is offered for sale by Dodd, Mead and Co. An alternative explanation is that there were only two

19. See Mack, ed., *Last and Greatest Art*, 159 n 2.

20. P. J. Croft, *Autograph Poetry in the English Language* (London: Cassell, 1973), 1. 70.

21. *Alexander Pope: Notes Towards a Bibliography of Early Editions of his Writings: A Catalogue of Marshall C. Lefferts's Great Collection of First and Later Editions of the Works of Alexander Pope, with the Autograph Manuscript of an Essay on Man* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, [1910]), 49–50; identified with the Harvard manuscript in Smith, 'Alexander Pope', 3.