

## NICHOLL, Sir JOHN (1759 - 1838), judge

**Name:** John Nicholl  
**Date of birth:** 1759  
**Date of death:** 1838  
**Spouse:** Judy Nicholl (née Birt)  
**Child:** Mary Anne Nicholl  
**Child:** Katherine Luxmore (née Nicholl)  
**Child:** Judy Franks (née Nicholl)  
**Child:** John Nicholl  
**Parent:** Elizabeth Nicholl (née Havard)  
**Parent:** John Nicholl  
**Gender:** Male  
**Occupation:** judge  
**Area of activity:** Law  
**Author:** Henry John Randall

Born 16 March 1759, the second son of John Nicholl of Llan-maes, one of a family long established at Llan-maes and Llantwit Major, Glamorganshire. He was educated at Cowbridge and Bristol, and matriculated from S. John's College, Oxford, 27 June 1775 (B.C.L. 1780). He obtained the degree of D.C.L. on 6 April 1785, the essential qualification for admission to the exceedingly close corporation of Doctors' Commons, of which he was admitted an Advocate on 3 November 1785. His practice became extensive and he succeeded Sir William Scott (lord Stowell) as king's Advocate on 6 November 1798, and was knighted according to custom. He was elected to Parliament in 1802 and remained a member for different constituencies until the Reform Act dissolution in December 1832, when he retired. His parliamentary career was marked by consistent Toryism, and he steadily opposed Roman Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform. His positive contribution to legislation was the Ecclesiastical Courts Act, 1829.

In January 1809 he was appointed Dean of the Arches and judge of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, and was admitted to the Privy Council. In 1833 he was appointed judge of the High Court of Admiralty. In the following year he was made vicar-general to the archbishop of Canterbury and resigned the offices of Dean of the Arches and judge of the Prerogative Court. As a judge he earned golden opinions ' for inflexible impartiality and great strength and soundness of judgment.' His judgments appear in the 'reports' and several were printed separately.

About 1803 he purchased the estate of Merthyr Mawr, Glamorganshire, and erected there a gracious mansion and stored in it a library of some 30,000. He took an active part in the politics of his native county, and consistently supported Sir Christopher Cole, the Tory member. He was a most active member of the volunteer movement during the Napoleonic war and attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He assisted actively in the establishment of King's College, London, and was a Fellow of the Royal Society and of the Society of Antiquaries.

He married Judy, youngest daughter of Peter Birt of Wenvoe, on 8 September 1787, and died at Merthyr Mawr on 26 August 1838. He left one son, [John Nicholl](#), and three daughters.

### Author

**Henry John Randall**, (1877 - 1964)

### Sources

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, and references there given

### Further Reading

Wikipedia Article: [Sir John Nicholl](#)

### Additional Links

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