

I.

LETTERS FROM LORD HAILES AND THE EARL OF BUCHAN RELATIVE  
TO A PROPOSED COLLECTION OF SCOTTISH PORTRAITS, AND TO THE  
FORMATION OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES. COMMUNICATED BY SIR  
JAMES D. H. ELPHINSTONE, BART.

No. I.—*On the Collection of Engravings from Scottish Portraits, proposed to  
be published by Lord Buchan.*

“ MY LORD,

“ I approve much of your Lordship’s plan in general ; but I must beg  
leave to observe that the fifty Heads can never be afforded at five guineas, as  
the prices of engravers are in y<sup>e</sup> present age. Houbraken got but 100 guilders  
for a common head, but those days are over.

“ There are some in your Lordship’s list, of whom I know no pictures, and  
it would not be proper to make the public expect more than could probably  
be performed.

“ Some in y<sup>e</sup> list have not much celebrity. John, 14th E[arl] of Sutherland,  
was a gallant rough colonel of Highlanders, and a staunch friend of y<sup>e</sup> Revo-  
lution, but of no considerable talents. Thomas Lermont certainly deserves no  
place, although there were a portrait of him, which is hardly possible. The  
picture of Bishop Elphinston, at Aberdeen, is modern ; the old picture was

spoilt; and I believe it was Mr Mosman who replaced something in its stead. There is an exceeding good portrait of Dr Alexr. Monro, by Ramsay.

“As to the engravers, I do not think that Woollet ever engraves heads. If Tanaie at Amsterdam is alive [Pieter Tanjé, the engraver here alluded to, died in 1760], he will be a good hand. Bartolozzi and Wille are both extravagantly dear; possibly Bartolozzi would engrave Mary Q[ueen] of Scots, to show how much superior he is to Vertue. I do not think that lives, &c., ought to be promised at present, though Sir John Dalrymple is of a different opinion. There is a book to which every Scotsman ought to lend a hand, and that is a Scottish Biography. If I did not live so much out of the world as I do, I should sollicite for such a work. I return your Lordship's list enclosed. I have little chance of seeing Sir John Dalrymple, as I am always in the country, unless while in y<sup>e</sup> Court of Session. I should imagine that the List made up by your Lordship, and your general plan, will give him great pleasure. The subject is a favourite of his,

“I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,  
and most humble servant,

(Signed) “DAV. DALRYMPLE.”

“NEW HAILES, 5th October 1778.  
The Earl of Buchan, Edinburgh.”

No. II.—*On the same Subject.*

“MY LORD,

“I am glad that your Lordship has turned your thoughts to the plan of Scottish heads. T. Philips, printseller, made out a catalogue some years ago, and I am sure that he will be very happy to furnish you with a copy.

“In your Lordship's memorandum there are some portraits of which I know nothing: there are others concerning which I beg leave to make some observations:—

“*James II.* at Windsor. Qu. if a full face or a profile? If a full face, not genuine. *James II.* had one side of his face disfigured with what is vulgarly called a *claret mark*. No painter would have drawn his full face.

“*James III.* I know nothing of the picture. I think that Mr Walpole mentions some picture of him and his queen. Qu. whether the same?

“*Alexr. Stuart*, Archbishop of St Andrews. I know not any picture of him. Without meaning to depreciate the merits of that young prelate, is there anything in the character given by Erasmus that might not be equally well applied to any young lad of quality while studying the Latin language.

"*Cardinal Beaton*, original in Fife, in possession of the Beton family.

"*John Knox*. Qu. if genuine?

"*Crichton*. Mr Pennant mentions such a picture. I doubt as to the genuineness of the picture at Culross, so frequently copied, and so wonderfully improved in Mr Pennant's plate.

"*Carstairs*. Professor Macky had an original  $\frac{2}{3}$  by Medina, which he told me, as I think, was very like.

"*Naper or Napier*. Qu. whether y<sup>e</sup> father or y<sup>e</sup> son?

"*Barclay*, his print prefixed to some of his works. He was not a Scotsman; he was born in France or Lorraine; and, if I mistake not, did not understand English.

"*Colin Maclaurin*. His son told me that there is no picture of him that has any tolerable resemblance.

"*Regent Moray*. I know nothing of y<sup>e</sup> picture at Donybrissel. Qu. if the one shewn as his at Lord Moray's house in y<sup>e</sup> north? I am convinced that that picture is not genuine.

"*Regent Chatelherault*. This of very dubious authority.

"*Earl Gowrie*. I know not of any such picture, nor of E. Glencairn, L. Dun, L. Calder.

"*Sir James Dalrymple*. I suppose you mean *Sir John*, first Earl of Stair.

"*Fletcher of Salton*. Mr Fletcher knows nothing of any picture of him. There was one done at Rome, but lost at sea.

"Many might be added to this catalogue.

"Duke of Rothes, . . .	Lely,	Lesly.
Earl Callender, . . .	Scougal,	Ibid.
President Gilmour, who pleaded for y <sup>e</sup> Marquis of Argyle.		Inch, Sir H. Gilmour.
Duke of Lauderdale,	Lely,	In different places.
R <sup>d</sup> . E. of Lauderdale,	C. Marat,	Hatton.
Chancellor Seton, . . . said to be	Vandyck,	Yester, M. Tweedale.
Alexander Henderson, y <sup>e</sup> original,		Ibid.
Chancellor Tweedale, . . .		Ibid.
First Earl of Hadinton, . . .	Jamieson,	Tynningham, L <sup>d</sup> . Hadinton
Chancellor Loudoun . . .		Loudoun.
Secretary Loudoun . . .	Kneller,	Ibid.
Sir J. Campbell, killed at Fontenoy,	Ramsay,	Ibid.
First E. Leven, . . .		Melvil, L <sup>d</sup> . Leven.
1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>d</sup> Dukes Queensberry,	Kneller,	Drumlanrig.
E. of Traquhair, . . .	Jamieson,	Ibid.

2 Dukes of Hamilton, . . . Vandyck (*said*) Hamilton.

Lt. Genl. Douglas, . . . Ibid.

Duke W<sup>m</sup>. Hamilton, . . . Ibid.

General David Lesley, Jamieson. I saw it at Aberdeen many years ago.

Forbes of Corse; a very good portrait, Aberdeen.

Genl. Douglas in y<sup>e</sup> Swedish service, Whittinghame, Hay of Drummelzier.

“There are many more which might be discovered on inquiry. The hurry of the Session, and my residence in the country, prevent me from paying my respects to your Lordship; this, I flatter myself, you will accept as an apology.

“I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship’s most obedient,  
and most humble servant.

(Signed) “DAV. DALRYMPLE.”

“NEW HAILES, 26th Nov. 1778.”

“My inquiries as to Dr Arthur Johnston tended to an edition which I propose of his *Parerga*, a book, or miscellany rather, of exceeding humour. I mean to publish it for y<sup>e</sup> benefit of y<sup>e</sup> Infirmary at Aberdeen, if I find encouragement. Y<sup>e</sup> price of y<sup>e</sup> book will be about four shillings.

“Addenda.

“Thomas Learmonth, comm. called T. the Rymer, Baillie Learmonth’s.

The Chevalier Ramsay.

John Law.

First Earl of Kelly, at Kelly.”

[Note by C. E. Dalrymple, Esq., on the foregoing letters.

That Lord Hailes, in his first letter, holds “Thomas Learmonth” cheap as a celebrated character, and yet in his second recommends his name to be adopted; and actually seems to believe in the authenticity of “Baillie Learmonth’s” picture of the said Thomas! If such a picture had existed, it certainly would have been one of the greatest curiosities in Europe, as it would have been executed *before* the revival of oil painting, and must have been fully 500 years old! It is strange that so acute and critical an antiquarian should have fallen into such an error.

His Lordship disposes summarily of the picture of Bishop Elphinston in King’s College; but, supposing what he says to be true, there must surely have been some vestige of an original, from which the present picture must have been done.

It does not appear why his Lordship should think “Sir James Dalrymple”

meant "Sir John Dalrymple, first Earl of Stair." Sir James was author of "Collections on Scottish History," and was probably included by Lord Buchan as an author and antiquarian.

Lord Buchan must have supposed himself to possess an original picture of Fletcher of Saltoun, although Lord Hailes had been told by Fletcher's descendant that no picture of "The Patriot" existed. I have a small and poor engraving, printed in a sort of reddish brown ink, of "Andrew Fletcher," being so lettered with the following in small letters close under the plate, which is oval,—“Aikman pinxit, Anna Forbes del: Buchaniæ Comes Imitavit,” and below, “From an authentick portrait in the Collection of the Earl of Buchan.” “London, pub: Sep. 21, 1791, by J. Debrett.” Does the above inscription mean that Lord Buchan engraved this print himself!]

No. III.—*Letter from Lord Hailes to the Earl of Buchan. Labelled outside in an old hand, “Commends his plan for a Society of Antiquaries in Scotland, but doubts his success, and assigns his reasons.”*

“MY LORD,

“I am honoured with your Lordship's letter; but, as I do not reside in Edinburgh, it is impossible for me to attend at the meetings which your Lordship proposes, and, indeed, my time is so much employed during the sitting of y<sup>e</sup> Court of Session, that, although I resided in Edinburgh, I could not promise any attendance at all.

“The plan which your Lordship proposes is very laudable, but it can hardly be executed in the present state of men's minds. I every day see *Regiam Majestatem* quoted in y<sup>e</sup> version of y<sup>e</sup> profoundly ignorant Skene, as if that book had been written in y<sup>e</sup> Scottish language of James VI.; and if lawyers find themselves easy and contented with knowing nothing of the old law of Scotland, what hope is there that individuals not connected with the science of law, can do anything of moment? I have written books large enough; but if the sale of them had been confined to Scotland the expense of printing would not have been defrayed.

“I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient  
and most humble servant,

(Signed) “DAV. DALRYMPLE.”

“NEW HAILES, 31st October 1780.

The Earl of Buchan,

St Andrews Square, Edinburgh.”