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# David Hay Fleming (1849-1931): Scottish Church Historian and Antiquarian

ROY MIDDLETON

## I. EARLY LIFE

### Parentage

David Hay Fleming<sup>1</sup> was born at St Andrews in Fife on 9th May 1849. His father, John Fleming, married Ann Hay on 10th August 1842. Ann's parents were David Hay (1767-1852), a weaver in Strathkinness, and his wife Christian Walker. John Fleming and Ann Hay had three sons and a daughter. The eldest son died in infancy and their second son Peter, born in 1845, was not very robust and died at the age of twenty-one. The subject of this biographical account was their third son, who was named after his maternal grandfather. Their daughter was called Christina.<sup>2</sup> John Fleming was a stoneware, glass and china merchant in the ancient university town.

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<sup>1</sup> Biographical information on Fleming is quite limited. The only rather slender biography is Henry M. Paton's *David Hay Fleming: Historian and Antiquary*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1934, to which this biographical sketch is heavily indebted. There are also inserts on Fleming in both the *Dictionary of National Biography 1931-1940 Supplement*, Editor L. G. Wickham Legg, Oxford University Press, 1949, pp. 282-283. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, along with a short account in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Editor Nigel M. De S. Cameron, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 324-325. The writer would acknowledge the help given to him by the editor of this journal, the Rev Dr D. W. B. Somerset, and Kenneth Henke, the Reference Archivist in the Library of Princeton Theological Seminary, for providing him with information on the L. P. Stone lectureship.

<sup>2</sup> Paton acknowledges that it was due to the kindly help and retentive memory of Fleming's sister, Christina, that he owes much of the information in his memoir (op. cit., p. 26).

David Hay attended the Old Light Antiburgher Congregation at Balmullo and according to Henry M. Paton had been a burghess since 1767.<sup>3</sup> From a business perspective it was a great advantage for Hay to have been a burghess. Only burghesses could carry on business within the burgh, enter the trade guilds or exercise the franchise.<sup>4</sup> An oath that had been imposed on burghesses in the cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth in 1744 divided the Secession Church three years later. These were cities in which the Secession Church was strong and because of the business and civil advantages of being a burghess the issue of the oath became a topic the Secession Synod could not avoid.

The oath was intended to exclude Roman Catholics from being burghesses. The religious clause of the oath was as follows: “Here I protest before God, and your Lordships, that I profess, and allow with my heart, the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorised by the laws thereof: I shall abide thereat, and defend the same to my life’s end; renouncing the Roman religion called papistry.”<sup>5</sup> The division among the Seceders occurred over the interpretation of the oath. Those who believed a Seceder could not take the oath (the Antiburghers) viewed the wording of the oath as an approbation of the Church of Scotland from whom they had seceded. The alternative interpretation was that the oath was an acknowledgment and approval of the Protestant Reformed faith, (the Burgher position). The controversy was very bitter and led to one Synod deposing the other. The Burgess Oath was abolished in 1819.<sup>6</sup> As David Hay was a burghess in St Andrews he had not been required to take the offending oath.

Ann Hay was a twin. A rather surprising action for an Old Light Antiburgher, like Hay, was to have his daughters baptised in the Church of Scotland, by the leader of the moderate party. The insert regarding Ann Hay’s baptism<sup>7</sup> in the records of St Andrews and St Leonards is as follows: “Helen and Anne twins, daughters of David Hay, Weaver at

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<sup>3</sup> See Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 4, where it is stated that David Hay’s burghess ticket, on parchment, dated 11th September 1767 was among David Hay Fleming’s papers.

<sup>4</sup> See Robert Mackenzie, *John Brown of Haddington*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1918, p. 64, and Banner of Truth reprint, 1964, p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> John M’Kerrow, *History of the Secession Church*, Edinburgh, 1839, Vol. 1, p. 273.

<sup>6</sup> The literature on the Burgess Oath Controversy is very extensive. A useful overview of the controversy is in M’Kerrow, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, pp. 270-310.

<sup>7</sup> Baptismal register record of Helen and Ann Hay, accessed from [www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk) on 14th June 2010.

Strathkinness & Christian Walker his wife were born 3rd June & baptized 6th July 1810 by Dr Hill.” The Dr Hill who baptised the twins was George Hill<sup>8</sup> who had been appointed Professor of Greek at the United College, St Andrews in 1772. He was subsequently inducted to the second charge of St Andrews in 1780 and the first charge in 1808. He held his pastoral charges at the same time as his academic appointments. Hill became Professor of Divinity at St Mary’s College in 1788 and Principal in 1791. After William Robertson’s unexpected retirement from church politics in 1780, Hill assumed the leadership of the moderate party in the General Assembly.



*George Hill, Professor of Greek at St Andrews University.*

John Fleming was a lover of books and possessed a good selection, most of which were theological. This love of books was inherited by his

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<sup>8</sup> George Hill (1750-1819) was born in St Andrews. During his divinity studies at St Mary’s College in the University of St Andrews his scholastic ability attracted the patronage of Thomas Hay, the ninth Earl of Kinnoull, and the Chancellor of the University. At St Andrews, Kinnoull used his position to ensure the appointment of theological liberals. He sympathised with the dominant moderate interest in the contemporary church, and was a dependable supporter of that party’s leaders – William Robertson and Hugh Blair. The twelfth Earl – George Hay – was the patron who presented Robert Young to the parish of Auchterarder in 1834 which led to one of the main law cases in the Disruption struggle. Due to the support of both the ninth Earl and the moderate leader William Robertson, Hill was appointed Professor of Greek at St Andrews. His uncle was the minister of Prestonpans and obtained his licence by the Presbytery of Haddington in 1775. Hill was, however, more than an ecclesiastical politician. He was a competent teacher of Greek and is credited with raising standards in teaching theology. Notes of his lectures were published as *Theological Institutes*, and a fuller version in three volumes was printed two years after his death in 1821, with the title *Lectures in Divinity*. The Lectures teach orthodox Calvinistic theology. Thomas Chalmers used them as a text book in New College and Robert Dabney used them as one of his sources in his lectures on Systematic Theology. For biographical details of Hill see George Cook, *Life of George Hill*, Edinburgh, 1820. There are articles on Hill in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, and in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Editor Nigel M. De S. Cameron, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 407-408.

youngest son who, in later life, would possess one of the largest personal libraries in Scotland. When David was just six years of age, at a market being held in St Andrews, close to where the Flemings lived, one of the stalls was selling books, and the little boy's gaze fell on three stately quarto volumes that dominated the stall. He had only sixpence in his pocket and did not like even to ask the price of them; so he reluctantly traced his steps homewards. To his surprise, he found that the coveted volumes had preceded him; his father, who was fond of history, had bought them himself. David Hay Fleming was in later life to admit that his book buying instincts were developed before he was out of his teens. An illustrated copy of the *Scots Worthies* engaged the attention of the three young Fleming children on Sabbath evenings and the *Witness*, edited by Hugh Miller, was subscribed to and regularly read by the family.<sup>9</sup>

### **Old Light Antiburgher influence**

David Hay Fleming's father was an elder in Martyrs' Free Church in St Andrews and like many old-school Presbyterians, did not approve of Sabbath Schools.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, he received his early religious instruction at home and later attended Mr Govan's Bible Class. Besides attending the Free Church, David was also taken on foot by his mother's relatives<sup>11</sup> to the Secession Church at Balmullo,<sup>12</sup> which was just over six miles from St Andrews in the parish of Leuchars. This was a congregation of the General Associate (Antiburgher) Synod formed in

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<sup>9</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>10</sup> John Kennedy of Dingwall held similar views and ably articulated them in *The Present Cast and Tendency of Religious Thought and Feeling in Scotland (Eight Articles contributed to the Perthshire Courier from 4th February to 1st April 1879)*, Inverness, 1955 Reprint, pp. 51-52. Fleming's views were the same as his father; in the first of a series of articles in the *Original Secession Magazine* on the "Discipline of the Reformation" he makes the following observation in comparing the parental training of children advocated at the Reformation with modern practice: "Verily! Sabbath Schools, Children's Churches, and Bands of Hope are, at best, poor substitutes for the grand old system of the Reformation." Vol. 13, p. 531, March, 1878.

<sup>11</sup> Paton says he was taken with his grandparents to Balmullo (*op. cit.*, p. 11). This seems to be a mistake as his maternal grandmother died before his parents were married and David Hay, his maternal grandfather, died when he was three years of age.

<sup>12</sup> For details of the Balmullo congregation's history and that of its ministers see: David Scott, *Annals and Statistics of the Original Secession Church*, Edinburgh, 1886, pp. 261-262; Robert Small, *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church*, Edinburgh, 1904, Vol. 1, pp. 191-192; William Mackelvie, *Annals and Statistics of the United Presbyterian Church*, Edinburgh, 1873, pp. 136-137.

1787 which withdrew with Dr M'Crie and others in 1806 to form the Constitutional Presbytery (the Old Light Antiburghers). In 1852 the minister James Beattie along with the majority of the congregation united with the Free Church of Scotland. A minority of the congregation refused to enter the union and claimed the church, manse and glebe which, in order to avoid litigation, was surrendered to them. It was to this minority group who kept by the old banner that David Hay Fleming was taken as a boy. At Balmullo, he formed a friendship with an old member of that congregation called John Gourlay who lived in a one-roomed house in St Andrews. David would help him by lighting his fire and cooking his meals. The old worthy promised the lad a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* if he could recite Psalm 119 without mistake. Though he made one mistake, he duly received the book. These Old Light Antiburgher connections, formed whilst still a boy, had an abiding influence on David Hay Fleming. Thomas M'Crie's denomination stood for Calvinistic gospel preaching, maintaining the old Biblical standards and retaining the practice of the Scottish Reformed Church in its best days. Paton points out that, as a young lad, Fleming was reared in an atmosphere of strict integrity and hardy Scottish independence. He illustrates this from the life of his maternal grandfather, the weaver David Hay. During a period of hard times he was in financial straits, but unlike the common practice he refused to declare himself bankrupt. Instead he sent each year his principal creditor a fine web of cloth that he had woven himself.<sup>13</sup>

### **St Andrews**

St Andrews in the nineteenth century had a threefold appeal; it was the seat of an ancient Scottish University, a health resort and the home of golf. In 1881, Fleming wrote the first edition of what amounted to a tourist guide to St Andrews. This is how he describes the town of his birth in the 1897 edition of the *Guide*: "The situation of St Andrews, on a rocky plateau, at the pit of the bay to which it has given its name, is strikingly picturesque, and unsurpassed for free exposure to the bracing breezes from the German ocean . . . as the crow flies it is thirty miles north-east of Edinburgh and eleven south-east of Dundee. . . . The healthy climate of St Andrews is far famed, and almost unrivalled." After describing its decline at the end of the eighteenth century he goes on to

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<sup>13</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 11.

speak of its revival greatly furthered by “the princely munificence of Dr Bell; and Sir Hugh Playfair’s irrepressible zeal did much in converting the old Canterbury of Scotland into its modern Brighton. . . . The recent re-acquisition of the Links . . . and the opening of the New Golf Course form at once the most important event and the greatest addition to the attractions of St Andrews in its present day history.”<sup>14</sup>

The Flemings’ shop was on South Street and the family lived nearby in a small cottage. Shortly after David’s birth they moved to accommodation above the shop. John Fleming then purchased an old house with a large garden near the shop. It was his intention to pull down the ruinous building and extend the shop and erect a more commodious residence over the extension. Before he could accomplish this design, John Fleming died on 24th September 1859 at the early age of fifty-four.<sup>15</sup> It was left to the widow with a young family of three to carry the building scheme into effect. The house above the old part of the shop was then let to a Coast missionary, whose wife provided lodging for a Free Church student who, in Henry Paton’s words, “held revival meetings in the streets”.<sup>16</sup> The young street preacher who stayed in the Flemings’ old house would later become famous as Dr John Glasse,<sup>17</sup> the minister of Old Greyfriars Church of Scotland, in Edinburgh.

### The 1859 Revival

These were the days when a period of religious excitement was taking place on both sides of the Atlantic. A revival had begun at New York in America in 1857-1858<sup>18</sup> that swept through America and then came to Britain during the years 1859-1863. At a typical American meeting a person attending might pray, exhort, lead in song or give a testimony as they felt led. Distinctions between denominations and between ministers

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<sup>14</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Handbook to St Andrews and Neighbourhood*, J. & G. Innes, St Andrews Citizen Office, 1897, pp. 1, 4-6.

<sup>15</sup> John Fleming, like David Hay, was a burgess. He was also a “gild-brother” of St Andrews. Paton, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>16</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>17</sup> John Glasse was born at Auchtermuchty in 1848 and educated in a Free Church school, then at the University of St Andrews and at the Free Church’s New College Edinburgh. He sought licensing in the Church of Scotland. His publications are mainly on socialism and the relief of pauperism. For details see *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1915, Vol. 1, p. 44.

<sup>18</sup> For a recent detailed account see: K. T. Long, *The Revival of 1857-58; Interpreting an American Religious Awakening*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1998.

and laymen were ignored. Holiness movement historian, Timothy L. Smith, has observed with respect to the revival's beginnings in America, "the joyous liberty of the (Methodist) Camp Meeting 'love feast' was transferred into an urban setting".<sup>19</sup>

Inevitably, the American movement was reported in the British religious press. The accounts led to people asking why such movements seemed to happen so rarely in the British Isles. Enthusiasts in both the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church worked for its arrival in Scotland. American revivalists were soon flocking across the Atlantic; Charles G. Finney, James Caughey, Edward Payson Hammond, along with Walter and Phoebe Palmer, were all active in the 1859 movement in Britain. The female holiness evangelist Phoebe Palmer held meetings in both Edinburgh and Glasgow. Hammond was particularly popular in Scotland, and before returning to America he studied for a period at the Free Church College in Edinburgh. He was known as the child evangelist and was ready to accept children no older than five as potential converts.<sup>20</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon invited Hammond to speak to children at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London. It was reckoned that six thousand children attended. When Hammond returned to London seventeen years later, he found that children who had come to Christ at his meetings were now among the leaders of congregations.<sup>21</sup> The quickening in Scotland was very mixed in character. In the Western Isles, the revival largely followed the pattern of past quickenings and was guided by Calvinistic theology. In the east of Scotland and in the central belt it was generally of a very different character from earlier revivals. In these areas the movement led to the introduction of American revivalistic techniques into the main denominations. John Cairns, a leading United Presbyterian minister, commenting on the effect of the 1859 revival said, "Such movements . . . have directed special attention to the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion; and more recently much emphasis has been laid upon sanctification in connection with the higher Christian life".<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> T. L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform*, Baltimore, 1980, p. 64.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism*, Westport Connecticut, 1978, pp. 186-186. This informative volume was reprinted by Paternoster in 2006.

<sup>21</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Fervent Prayer: The worldwide impact of the Great Awakening of 1858*, Chicago, Moody Press, 1974, p. 116; and Ian M. Randall, *Rhythms of Revival: The Spiritual Awakening of 1857-1863*, Paternoster, Milton Keynes, 2010, p. 86.

<sup>22</sup> John Cairns, "Recent dogmatic thought in Scotland" in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, April 1891, p. 208. In a letter to a correspondent, Cairns describes the revivalist

The movement also stimulated a demand for hymns. It introduced Charlotte Elliott's hymn "Just as I am without one plea" to the great congregations of the movement. The hymn remains to this day the one that is most frequently sung when an evangelist calls for decisions. The decisionist hymn "Stand up, stand up for Jesus" originated in the revival.<sup>23</sup> Robert Rainy's biographer, Patrick Carnegie Simpson, states that the revival was the main impetus behind the Free Church-United Presbyterian union movement that started in 1863 and was vigorously opposed by James Begg and those committed to the old Calvinistic faith. Commenting on the revival, Simpson writes, "This was a real factor in the promotion of the subsequent union proposals".<sup>24</sup> The 1859-1863 revival movement in Scotland, taken as a whole, was a major factor in the erosion of the Reformed Faith in Scotland. J. Edwin Orr in discussing the theology of the revival speaks of it as being a blend of Calvinism and Arminianism; he writes, "Though the Calvinist-Arminian controversy had been extremely bitter following the first Evangelical Revival, there was the happiest harmony during the Second Evangelical Awakening".<sup>25</sup>

The movement was extensive in Perth and in Fifeshire, the area in which the ten-year-old David Hay Fleming lived. Revivals occurred in Dundee and just ten miles away in Cellardyke, near Anstruther. The Free Church student preaching in St Andrews indicates the movement was active in the University town. Alexander MacRae records that, "Almost every parish in the county of Perth felt the quickening influences of the Spirit during the wonderful years of 1859-60. Wherever there was a living Christian community the revival was long prayed for

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activities in Berwick where he was a minister, "I should rejoice to be able to speak of the movement with unqualified terms; but being in the hands of the Primitive Methodists, it has all the typical characters of their religion, and especially their revival religion – boisterous singing, the anxious seat, women and children praying, and services protracted till midnight. Still, good is being done, and some young people connected with my congregation have, I hope, received saving impressions." A. R. MacEwan, *Life and Letters of John Cairns*, London, 1898, p. 477.

<sup>23</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, London, 1949, pp. 258-260. On the change to Scottish public worship and the introduction of lively hymns fostered by the revival, see Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874*, Edinburgh, 1975, p. 185.

<sup>24</sup> P. C. Simpson, *The Life of Principal Rainy*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1909, Vol. I, p. 151.

<sup>25</sup> Orr, *op. cit.*, p. 251.



and its arrival hailed with gratification.”<sup>26</sup> In Perth itself John Milne, the friend of Robert Murray M‘Cheyne, was an active promoter of the movement.<sup>27</sup> The blurring, however, of denominational distinctive is seen when the sponsors of the movement declared that they “buried sectarianism in the South Inch of Perth and saw no Christian weep over its grave”.<sup>28</sup>

Cellardyke, just ten miles south from St Andrews, was the scene of a revival in the early part of 1860. On 8th December 1859 a Cellardyke fishing boat floundered at sea. Seven men died, five of them leaving widows. The following Friday the school-house witnessed a crowded prayer meeting of over two hundred, most of whom were men. The Free Church minister on the following Sabbath preached from Hosea 6:1, “Come, and let us return to the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up”. Prayer meetings continued until the New Year. On 12th March 1860 a young man went to sea under deep conviction of sin. After three days’ struggle he finally found rest in Christ for salvation. The Christian skipper of the boat saw the event as the beginning of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the community.

With the return of the ship, and the young man’s testimony, hundreds in Cellardyke became burdened for sin. They sent for ministers to come to the town before whom they would break down in tears. In a short period of time over three hundred adult enquirers were dealt with and half were said to be living a new life. One minister observed, “There is a visible change over the town; there is a restraint of evil”. Another claimed, “I never expected to see so much of heaven this side of time”.<sup>29</sup> The awakening at nearby Cellardyke appears to have been more in keeping with past revivals where the teaching was that of the old Scottish Calvinistic theology; this was in sharp distinction from the movement in other parts of the east coast of Scotland. Cellardyke was

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<sup>26</sup> Alexander MacRae, *Revivals in the Highlands and Islands*, Stoke-on-Trent (Tentmaker reprint), 1998, p. 119.

<sup>27</sup> See his letter in Horatius Bonar, *Life of the Rev John Milne of Perth*, James Nisbet, London, 1869, pp. 292-295. It is also printed in MacRae, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-122. For Milne’s involvement in the movement and that of other leading Free Church ministers see Bonar, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-301.

<sup>28</sup> Orr, *op. cit.*, p. 72 and Orr, *The Fervent Prayer*, *op. cit.*, p. 56. Contemporary accounts of the movement in Scotland can be found in the monthly magazine of the Evangelical Alliance – *Evangelical Christendom*, 1st May 1860, pp. 279-282 and 1st November 1860, pp. 618-630.

<sup>29</sup> Orr, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

distinguished by the fact that the converts were generally mature people – mainly men, as well as by a complete absence of bodily affections and wild extravagances which so offended sober-minded people elsewhere.<sup>30</sup>

Fleming's biography contains very little information regarding his spiritual experience, or of the events that led to his conversion, and of his making a public profession of Jesus Christ as his Saviour. It is, however, not without significance that his older brother Peter joined the young communicants' class at Martyrs' Free Church in 1863 at the age of eighteen. David followed suit a year later in 1864 at the age of fifteen – at the precise time when the revival movement was at its peak. Although it is impossible to state conclusively that the Fleming brothers were brought to the Saviour as a result of the 1859-1863 revival, it seems to be a probable assumption due to the intense activity of the awakening in the area around St Andrews. The likelihood is increased by the fact that, just over a decade later, Fleming was actively involved in the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). This was an organisation that was instrumental in promoting the revival movement.<sup>31</sup>

### **In the family business**

His father died when David was just ten years of age and his elder brother Peter<sup>32</sup> died seven years later. These events meant that David had to take a more active part in the family business. He achieved proficiency in keeping accounts and in finding markets for brass, copper and other commodities. He also became skilled with his hands in mending locks and fitting washers. The bereavements experienced by the family caused his mother to be more than ever anxious about her

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<sup>30</sup> Orr, *op. cit.*, p. 73. See the detailed account of the Cellardyke revival by Alexander Gregory, the Free Church of Scotland minister of Anstruther, in William Reid (Editor), *Authentic Records of Revival, now in progress in the United Kingdom*, James Nisbet, London, 1860, pp. 461-478.

<sup>31</sup> The frontispiece to the fiftieth anniversary commemorative volume on the 1859-1863 revival in Aberdeen is a picture of the first committee of the Aberdeen YMCA. See *Reminiscences of the Revival of '59 and the Sixties*, Aberdeen University Press, 1910.

<sup>32</sup> Paton has an anecdote of how David protected his brother, who was four years older than himself: "Some boys set upon his brother Peter, who was of gentle and retiring disposition and could not defend himself; and David in his defence struck one of them near the eye (a mark which the lad bore ever after). The boy's father wished David's mother to punish him, but she replied that she could not do so in fairness, as she had always told him, 'If any boy hits you hit him back.'" *op. cit.*, p. 83. Peter Fleming died on 10th June 1866.

remaining son, especially as their doctor expressed the opinion that his days were numbered. Within a month of his brother's death, his mother sent David, on a horse he had inherited from his brother, to visit relatives living at Balhallioch on Gairnside which is west of Aberdeen in Deeside. This was where the sister of his aunt lived. His aunt was the wife of his father's older brother William. Being somewhat adventurous the young Fleming went on the old military road through Glenshee and did the journey of over a hundred miles in just one day. When Mrs Fleming learned of this she wrote him a letter expressing her anxiety and chiding him for having ridden so far in tempestuous weather, adding, "You know the doctor told you to take great care of yourself. . . . I have been very angry with myself that I allowed you to take Donald [the horse inherited from his brother] with you; you would have had far more comfort on the train and under cover." She then instructs him regarding the return journey, "You must not come that dull road when you come home; cost what it will, come round by Aberdeen and take plenty of time to come, tho' you only ride ten miles a day".<sup>33</sup>

From the time of Peter Fleming's death, David lost much of his faith in the medical profession. This occurred as a result of his belief that his brother had died due to overdosing him with medicine. Paton notes, "Long years afterwards it was not an unusual practice with him, when escorting a friend through the Cathedral burying ground, to halt at a certain stone near St Rule's Tower, ask his friend to read the inscription, and then exclaim: 'Dead fifty years! He killed my brother and gave me six weeks to live!'"<sup>34</sup>

### **Madras College**

It was around this time that the young David Fleming began his studies at Madras College – the only educational institution he appears to have ever attended as a student. Madras College, which opened in 1833, takes its name from the system of education devised by the school's founder the Rev Dr Andrew Bell<sup>35</sup> who was born in St Andrews in 1753 and was the son of a local magistrate and wig-maker. He studied at the University

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<sup>33</sup> Paton, op. cit., p .9.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> The main source of information on Andrew Bell is the biography by Robert Southey and Charles Cuthbert Southey, *The Life of Andrew Bell*, 3 Volumes, London and Edinburgh, 1844. See also the article by Jane Blackie in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.



*Rev Dr Andrew Bell –  
Benefactor of Madras College.*

where he distinguished himself in mathematics. Bell spent time in Virginia as a tutor to a prominent plantation family but, as a Loyalist, had to return on the outbreak of the American War of Independence. He then became a clergyman of the Church of England and took up an appointment as chaplain to the regiments of the East India Company, in Madras. One of his duties was to educate the soldiers' children. Because there was a shortage of teachers, he used the older boys, who had been taught the lesson by the master, to instruct the younger pupils. The pupils who assisted the teacher were called "monitors". This method of

education became widely used in schools at home and abroad. After his return from India, Bell made it his life's work to travel the country and encourage schools to adopt "the Madras system", as it had come to be known. By the time of his death in 1832, over 10,000 schools were using his methods. To make sure that his educational ideas would be preserved for the future, he made arrangements for the fortune his success had brought him to be used to found a school in his native town St Andrews which was called Madras College. The senior part of the school is still on the original site in South Street whilst the modern school has grown up behind the impressive 1833 quadrangle.<sup>36</sup>

The institution was but a stone's throw from David's birthplace. It is not known whether he gained any outstanding distinctions during his career at Madras; except that writing in 1926 he says: "More than 60 years ago I was dux in arithmetic in the big class at Madras, but have forgotten nearly all of it since."<sup>37</sup> According to a fellow pupil, with whom his biographer made contact, David was twice dux in the Higher

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<sup>36</sup> For the history of the school see the material on the school's website ([www.madras.fife.sch.uk/](http://www.madras.fife.sch.uk/)).

<sup>37</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

Geography class. It was also reported of him that, as a schoolboy, the future history scholar did not like going to school and would have preferred a roving life such as most of his classmates chose for their career; apparently nearly all the boys in his class went to sea. In later life Fleming took a keen interest in the old school and had he been spared a few months longer he would have seen the school complete its centenary. He was engaged a short time before his death in writing an article for that occasion.

As a young man Fleming became a smoker, until he resolved not to be a slave to anything. Eventually after several attempts he was able entirely to abandon the practice. It was not to be expected that he would escape the attractions of St Andrews' popular sport. He had many a round of golf on the links and became acquainted with the men in that sphere of activity who were household names. His familiarity with the game enabled him in after years to handle questions of links and courses like an expert. His chief diversions, however, were riding and walking.

### **A family inheritance**

Five years after his conversion, in the middle of 1869, circumstances arose which gave a new bent to Fleming's activities and were probably the means of determining to a very large extent the shape of his future career. An advertisement appeared in the Edinburgh newspaper, *The Scotsman*, stating that an inheritance of £35,000 awaited claimants who could prove a relationship to Thomas Hay and his wife Agnes Gosman. Further advertisements indicated that the Thomas Hay in question belonged to St Andrews and that the fortune was deposited in the Chancery Court in London. Several people and organisations, including the English Presbyterian College, made attempts to claim the inheritance but failed to prove title. Meanwhile, the twenty-year-old David Fleming began to make extensive researches in the records of Births, Marriages and Deaths, preserved in the General Register House in Edinburgh, with the object of proving a relationship between the Thomas Hay in question and his mother, Ann Hay. Fleming filled up notebooks with information obtained in the Register House about the Hays and the Gosmans and compiled charts showing a relationship to his mother. In the event the young Fleming's researches were successful and, after the necessary certificates and affidavits had been forwarded, his mother obtained a third of the inheritance in 1876. A further amount was provided to Janet Hay who lived in Australia. She was the widow of

Ann's brother James.<sup>38</sup> For his services and his many years of research, Fleming was given by the family a gold watch with chain, suitably inscribed.<sup>39</sup> It seems probable that the twins, Ann and Helen, along with the widow of their brother, each received a third of the inheritance.

## II. BUSINESSMAN AND HISTORIAN IN ST ANDREWS

Fleming's genealogical researches were to change the direction of his life; they had whetted his appetite for things ancient, for history and especially for the lore of his native St Andrews. From his early parental training and his father's love of history, Fleming had become deeply interested in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland and, following his public profession of Christ as his Saviour, he had been reading industriously the best literature on the subject from his growing library. Though he was running the family business and describing himself as a "china-merchant", a literary career had greater attractions for him.

### *The Watchword*

As a young man of twenty-one, his earliest literary contribution was to *The Watchword*, a magazine edited by James Begg, whose main aim was to articulate opposition to a proposed union between the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church. In the issues of that periodical for January and February 1871 there are two unsigned articles, undoubtedly from Fleming's pen, dealing with "Dr Wylie's Historical Inaccuracies". The Dr Wylie in question was James Aitken Wylie,<sup>40</sup> author of *The History of Protestantism*, who was using his historical knowledge on the side of the union movement. In 1870 Wylie had published a sixteen-page pamphlet with the rather cumbersome title, *The establishment principle as now interpreted: a novelty unknown to our reformers and*

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<sup>38</sup> James Leuchars Hay had emigrated to Australia and died in 1867. See Paton, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> See Paton, op. cit., pp. 14-15 for fuller details. At the time Paton wrote his biography the watch was in his possession.

<sup>40</sup> James Aitken Wylie (1808-1890) after studying in the Original Secession divinity hall was ordained in 1831 to the Dollar Congregation of the Original Secession Church. He demitted his charge in 1846 with regret as the congregation, due to their reduced numbers, were unable to support him. He then became assistant editor of *The Witness* (Hugh Miller being the editor). Wylie was admitted to the Free Church in 1852 and served as editor of the *Free Church Record* from 1853-1860. He was then appointed by his Presbytery as Professor to the Protestant Institute of Scotland.

*subversive of Christ's headship*. In it Wylie argued against the Establishment Principle, which was one of the major issues in debate between Begg's supporters and the unionists. The United Presbyterians, who were "voluntaries", opposed any connection between Church and State.

An unsigned review had appeared in the September 1870 issue of *The Watchword*, titled "Dr Wylie's pamphlet". The review explained that Wylie was arguing that no "strong reasons" had been adduced why union should not take place on the basis of the Westminster Standards. The reviewer responded: "What is objected to is not Union *bona fide on the basis of the Westminster Confession in its integrity*, but union on the Confession, *mutilated and emasculated by a formula* which modifies, and qualifies it, to the extent of setting aside and rejecting some of the most important doctrines set forth therein."<sup>41</sup> The reviewer continues by detailing William Cunningham's view of "Christ as King of Nations" and by directing the readers to three outstanding statements on the Establishment Principle: Thomas M'Crie's *Statement of the Difference*; Hugh Martin's tractate, *Christ's Crowns in their Correlation*; and Andrew Symington of Paisley on the *Lectures on the Principles of the Second Reformation and The Headship of Christ over the Nations*. The review ends by stating that if this material had been perused the reader "would have no difficulty distinguishing between the ring of the true metal and the false. After the fine solid wheat of Dr M'Crie they would have little relish for the chaff at present floating so plentifully through the ecclesiastical atmosphere."<sup>42</sup>

Fleming's contribution to the debate began in the first issue of *The Watchword* for 1871. He begins by referring to the earlier review: "Although the fallacies of Dr Wylie's pamphlet have been sufficiently exposed in *The Watchword*, yet its demerits, in the way of historical blunder, have not received sufficient notice." So the twenty-one-year-old Fleming takes on the sixty-three-year-old author of *The History of Protestantism* with respect to historical accuracy. In pointing out Wylie's historical inaccuracies he refers to his holding to a defective definition of an "Establishment", misunderstanding the significance, as regards the Establishment Principle, of the events of 1560, 1567, and the National Covenant of 1580. He faults Wylie for misquoting Andrew Melville's "two

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<sup>41</sup> *The Watchword*, Vol. V, Edinburgh, p. 263. The italics are in the original. The doctrines being rejected included the "Establishment Principle".

<sup>42</sup> op. cit., p. 266.

kings and two kingdoms” exchange with King James, and puts Wylie’s version with the accurate one side by side in two columns. He then corrects him, with regard to the Second Reformation period, for failing to see the significance of the Establishment Principle as undergirding the events of: 1638, the era of the Solemn League and Covenant; the Martyrs of the Second Reformation; and the Revolution Settlement. Fleming sums up his argument by pointing out that through the entire history, “The one grand principle that the State must seek to discover, and, having discovered, sanction by its decrees, the truth as revealed by God – this principle we say runs through the whole history in a stream of continuous light”.<sup>43</sup>

He made a further contribution to *The Watchword* two years later in the issue of March 1873 titled an “Addition to the *Cloud of Witnesses*”.<sup>44</sup> Two years earlier, what has become the definitive edition of the *Cloud of Witnesses*, edited by John H. Thomson, had been published in Edinburgh by Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. Fleming’s article reproduces an unpublished letter and has a short historical introduction. He seems to have located the letter in the Edinburgh Register House during his genealogical researches on the Hay-Gosman inheritance. The letter was written by John Whitelaw of Stand, in the parish of New Monkland, before he was martyred for defending the cause of Scotland’s Covenanted Reformation. In his introduction Fleming observes, that it is a “powerful illustration of the power of grace to sustain and fill the soul with joy, even in the most trying hours”. He then reflects on the fight in which the Anti-Unionists were engaged, “The times before us are very threatening and such examples are precious”. Like his family, Fleming heartily approved of James Begg’s opposition to Free Church union with the United Presbyterians and it appears that he was the last survivor of

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<sup>43</sup> *The Watchword*, Vol. V, Edinburgh, pp. 465-460, 503-506. The correction of the Melville quotation is on page 504.

<sup>44</sup> The article is in *The Watchword*, Vol. VII, Edinburgh, pp. 556-559. The full title of the volume is, *A Cloud of Witnesses for the Royal Prerogatives of Jesus Christ: Being the last speeches and testimonies of those who have suffered for the truth in Scotland since the year 1680*. It was first published in Edinburgh in 1714. It was a project of the Cameronian Societies that took almost thirty years to complete as they carefully collected the extant material. It was intended as a continuation of the earlier compilation by Sir James Stewart (1635-1713) called *Naphtali, or the wrestling’s of the Church of Scotland for the Kingdom of Christ . . . with the last Speeches and Testimonies of some who have died for the Truth since the year 1660*. The first edition was a small quarto volume of 290 pages. The definitive edition of 1871 with Explanatory and Historical Notes extended to 612 pages.



that noble band of writers that assisted Begg in contributing to *The Watchword*.<sup>45</sup> The Flemings, as a family, were of the old-school section of the Free Church, and sympathised with the outlook of the stricter Seceders as represented by the Old Light Antiburghers. They also approved of the stand taken by Dr James Begg for the Establishment Principle and the old Presbyterian order in Church and State. Paton adds, “In the Union negotiations between the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church they were heart and soul with Dr Begg”.<sup>46</sup> On his visits to St Andrews, Begg was a guest of the Flemings.

### **Free Church of Scotland deacon**

The first minister of the Martyrs’ Free Church in St Andrews was William Maxwell Hetherington (1808-1865). He was called upon by the Church to superintend the theological studies of Free Church students at St Andrews University. To enable him to perform this duty satisfactorily Dr John Ainslie<sup>47</sup> was appointed as his colleague. When Hetherington was translated to Edinburgh in 1848,<sup>48</sup> Ainslie succeeded him as the minister of the Martyrs’ congregation. Although the precise date is not recorded in his biography, it was around this time, in the early 1870s, that Fleming was elected to and accepted the office of deacon in the congregation in which he had been reared, Martyrs’ Free Church in St Andrews. Though only in his early twenties, Fleming was so convinced

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<sup>45</sup> Another of the eminent men who provided assistance to James Begg as a major contributor to *The Watchword* was Hugh Martin.

<sup>46</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>47</sup> John Ainslie DD was a Disruption minister who signed the Act of Separation and Deed of Demission. He became Hetherington’s assistant in the Martyrs’ Church, St Andrews, in 1847 and the minister in 1848. He retired in 1876. See William Ewing, *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1914, Vol. 1, p. 78; Vol. 2, p. 152.

<sup>48</sup> In 1857, nine years after his move to Edinburgh, Hetherington was appointed to the Professorship of Apologetics and Systematic Theology at the Free Church College in Glasgow. He was the author of several important books: *History of the Westminster Assembly*, Fifth Edition, Editor R. Williamson, Edinburgh, 1890 and *History of the Church of Scotland: From the introduction of Christianity to the period of the Disruption*, Edinburgh, 1843. He also edited *The Works of George Gillespie*, Edinburgh, 1846. Hetherington was the subject of one of Fleming’s many anecdotes: “Though opposed to the private administration of baptism, he [Hetherington] was prevailed upon to do so on one occasion, but insisted on the preaching of the Word before administering the rite. ‘What am I to speak to you about?’ he asked the father of the child. ‘Weel, I’d like to hear ye speak o’ Gog and Magog.’ ‘Ah, well,’ replied the minister, ‘we shall find some subject more in keeping than that with the service before us’” (Paton, op. cit., pp. 68-69).

of “Second Reformation Principles” that he would not accept office unless the formula was adjusted to reflect these principles. Rather surprisingly, Ainslie was prepared to amplify the formula to meet Fleming’s requirements. His biographer does not tell us what precisely was meant by “Second Reformation Principles”, but it seems reasonably clear that his objections would have been similar to those of the minority in the Synod of the United Original Seceders who refused to unite with the Free Church in 1852. Their two main reasons for staying out of the union was their belief that it was a duty to renew the Second Reformation covenants and that in none of the Free Church’s manifestos had she given explicit testimony to the Covenanted Reformation but had left the matter an open question for her office bearers to hold the Secession views if they chose.<sup>49</sup>

In later life, Fleming was twice elected to the eldership. It is unclear from his biography whether this was in the St Andrews Free Church or Victoria Terrace, United Original Secession Church in Edinburgh where he transferred his membership in 1899. His reasons for declining the office of elder are stated to be his sense of unfitness, as well as the pressure of work due to his historical and antiquarian researches.<sup>50</sup>

### **William Black and the YMCA**

Around the time he became a deacon in the Free Church, Fleming connected himself with the local branch of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) whose president at that time was William Black.<sup>51</sup> This young man was the instrument used to encourage Dr Robert Laws<sup>52</sup> to go to Livingstonia. The Free Church of Scotland started this

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<sup>49</sup> C. G. M’Crie, *The Church of Scotland: Her divisions and her re-unions*, Edinburgh, 1901, pp. 206-214; David Scott, op. cit., pp. 177-238.

<sup>50</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>51</sup> William Black was born in Dunbog, a small village seventeen miles east of St Andrews. He was a few years older than Fleming and was trained as both a medical doctor and as a minister. He studied at the University and the Free Church College in Glasgow and was ordained in 1876 by authority of the General Assembly. See Ewing, Vol. 1, op. cit., pp. 71, 97.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Laws was born in Mannofield, Aberdeen, on 28th May 1851. When he was fifteen he felt called to be a missionary, and decided to train both as a minister in the United Presbyterian Church and as a doctor. After his studies were completed he heard of two projected missions in honour of David Livingstone to eastern Central Africa. One was to be organised by the Free Church of Scotland and the other by the Church of Scotland. After some negotiation the Free Church agreed to take him. It would have been

mission in Central Africa in 1875. It was named in honour of David Livingstone who had died two years earlier in April 1873. The person who had campaigned in the Free Church for over a decade to found such a mission was James Stewart (1831-1905) of Lovedale.<sup>53</sup> The first leaders of the mission were Laws and a Lieutenant lent by the Admiralty, E. D. Young; they were accompanied by four artisan missionaries.<sup>54</sup> Little over a year later, after he had qualified, Black followed Laws, adding to the strength of the Free Church's medical mission. James Wells tells how Black committed himself to Livingstonia. Wells was with James Stewart just before his death and they recalled the incident thirty years earlier; Wells writes: "One day he met me in the street. 'Oh,' he said, 'I was coming to see you. We'll soon get the money for Livingstonia, if we could tell our friends we had got the right man.' 'If you will come and conduct a service for me,' I said, 'you'll get the right man at the close.' He came and was introduced to Dr William Black. 'I remember it all,' he said, 'as if it had been yesterday.' I asked him if he were willing to go to Livingstonia. He walked up and down the vestry with his eyes fixed on the carpet. Then he came in front of me, drew himself up and said, 'Yes, with the help of God, I will.'" The death of Dr Livingstone created in Black a desire to serve Christ in Central Africa. He was chosen as the first medical missionary for Livingstonia.<sup>55</sup> On his way to Africa he travelled first class on the *SS Windsor Castle* and conducted daily prayer meetings in turn with a clergyman that was on board. William Black was a man of great promise, but sadly his sojourn on the mission was brief; he contracted blackwater fever, a complication of malaria, and died on 7th May 1877, at the age of thirty-two, just seven months after his arrival.

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a sensitive issue as the United Presbyterian and Free Church union negotiations had failed a few years earlier. Following ordination by the United Presbyterian Church he was appointed second in command of the Livingstone Mission. From 1877 until his retirement in 1927 he led the mission. He was moderator of the United Free Church General Assembly in 1908 and died in London on 6th August 1934. For a modern account of his life, see Hamish McIntosh, *Robert Laws: Servant of Africa*, Handsel Press, Carbury, 1993.

<sup>53</sup> See James Wells, *The Life of James Stewart*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1909, Chapter XIII, "The Founder of Livingstonia 1874-1875", pp. 123-132. For a further account of the founding of Livingstonia, see E. G. K. Hewat, *Vision and Achievement 1796-1956: A History of the Foreign Missions of the Churches united in the Church of Scotland*, London, Thomas Nelson, 1960, Chapter 16, pp. 209-221.

<sup>54</sup> Wells, op. cit., p. 129; Ewing, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 71.

<sup>55</sup> Wells, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

His was the first European grave on the shores of Lake Nyasa.<sup>56</sup> Among Black's belongings sent home to Scotland were photographs of Fleming, his sister Christina and their mother, indicating the close friendship between Black and the Flemings.

This reference to Fleming meeting Black, in the mid 1870s at the YMCA, is not without its interest in Scottish ecclesiastical history. This was exactly the time that the American Evangelist Dwight L. Moody and his soloist Ira D. Sankey were on their first visit to Scotland. The Americans had gained the explicit support of virtually all the Scottish Churches in the south. The only opposition to Moody came from a few ministers in the most conservative section of the Free Church. The majority of the Free Church in the south, including such men as Patrick Fairbairn, Andrew and Horatius Bonar, Alexander Somerville and Robert Rainy, were Moody's main sponsors. The external organisation to profit most by Moody's labours was the YMCA.<sup>57</sup> Prior to coming to the United Kingdom in 1873 Moody was an official of the YMCA in Chicago. During Moody's first evangelistic tour of Scotland, between November 1873 and August 1874, meetings were held with enthusiastic Free Church support in the area around St Andrews. Moody preached in Dundee, Perth, Aberdeen, Montrose, Arbroath, Brechin, and Forfar.<sup>58</sup> What Fleming's view was of Moody and Sankey is not known. With his old-school Second Reformation principles it is difficult to believe he would have approved of the American evangelist and particularly of Sankey singing hymns and accompanying himself on the harmonium. Among other members of the YMCA at that time was a gardener, possessed with a powerful voice, which he employed to good effect in street preaching.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> For further details of Black, see McIntosh, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 47, 49 and 69. James Stewart said of him, "He was a man in every way admirably qualified, by his varied previous training, habits, and inclinations, for any mission field". Wells, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>57</sup> Clyde Binfield in his biography of George Williams, the founder of the London YMCA, explains the effect that Moody's first British campaign, from 1873 to 1875, had on the YMCA throughout the United Kingdom. He writes, "All the contacts and connexions within the YMCA seemed to be galvanized by it". *George Williams and the YMCA – A study in Victorian social attitudes*, Heinemann, London, 1973, p. 214.

<sup>58</sup> For details see: Rufus W. Clark, *The Work of God in Great Britain under Messrs Moody and Sankey, 1873 to 1875*, London, 1876; *Narrative of Messrs Moody and Sankey's Labors in Scotland and Ireland*, New York, 1875; and Wilbur M. Smith, *An Annotated Bibliography of D. L. Moody*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1948.

<sup>59</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

### **Appeal to the Free Church General Assembly**

In 1876, after being the pastor for nearly thirty years, John Ainslie retired from the ministry at Martyrs' Free Church in St Andrews. Ainslie had been the minister during the whole of Fleming's life and had baptised him in the Free Church on 7th June 1849.<sup>60</sup> A call was eventually extended by a majority in the congregation to Lewis Davidson<sup>61</sup> which does not appear to have been sustained by the Presbytery. This decision was then appealed to the Synod who ruled out the call to Davidson; accordingly an appeal was made to the Free Church General Assembly. In both the Presbytery and the Synod the congregation's case was put forward by Fleming. As the General Assembly approached, in the vast Assembly Hall in Edinburgh, Fleming was advised that he might find it more difficult to put forward his case at the Supreme Court. He began apparently with the words, "Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking", and then continued, though still in his twenties, to speak with fluency and eloquence in favour of the call to Davidson. The General Assembly, whose moderator that year was Andrew Bonar, reversed the decision and Davidson was admitted to the St Andrews charge in 1878. He remained minister for just six years when he was translated to the Mayfield congregation in Edinburgh. This was also one of the Free Church General Assemblies that had to deal with the William Robertson Smith Case before his eventual removal from the Professorship of Old Testament Language and Literature in the Free Church College at Aberdeen in May 1881.

### ***Original Secession Magazine***

Shortly after his triumph in the General Assembly a series of very important, heavily researched, historical articles written by Fleming began to appear in the *Original Secession Magazine*. What contacts Fleming had with the editor of that journal we do not know, but it became for many years the vehicle in which he published some of his most important material, part of which was reprinted as pamphlets. From his youth Fleming had a deep sympathy towards the United Original Secession Church; we have noted already that when he was ordained as a deacon in the Free Church he insisted on the formula being adjusted to reflect

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<sup>60</sup> Details from Fleming's baptismal record, accessed from [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) on 11th November 2010.

<sup>61</sup> For details of Davidson, see Ewing, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 135.

the stand taken by the Original Seceders on Second Reformation principles. There is also the early connection with that Church through his mother's family. The first article was titled "Alexander Henderson and Leuchars".<sup>62</sup> Henderson, the Second Reformation leader of the Church of Scotland and a Scottish Commissioner to the Westminster Assembly, was the minister at Leuchars just six miles from St Andrews. Many articles followed, of which the following titles are merely a selection: "The Martyr Graves of Magus Moor",<sup>63</sup> "The Discipline of the Reformation",<sup>64</sup> "The Praying Society of St Andrews",<sup>65</sup> and "*Vindiciae Foederum: Its Allies and Antagonists and their Authors*".<sup>66</sup> The series of *Original Secession Magazine* articles also included an important four-part analysis of "The Hymnology of the Reformation",<sup>67</sup> in which he critically examined Horatius Bonar's opinions on that subject. Bonar had expounded his views in an appendix to his volume on the *Catechisms of the Scottish Reformation* and later, with more fullness, in a periodical article which he subsequently distributed to his congregation. Bonar asserted that his views on hymnology were those of Knox and the Scottish Reformers and that a contrary view was an innovation on Reformation Principles. Based on careful historical analysis, Fleming painstakingly demolished Bonar's assertions, demonstrating that he was wrong in advocating the introduction of hymns of human composition into the worship of God. He went on to show that this was especially the case if the advocacy was based on the practice of Knox and his colleagues.<sup>68</sup> Fleming concludes his first article with this devastating observation: "Dr Bonar, in short, is singularly illogical in holding that

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<sup>62</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 13, pp. 327-337, September 1877.

<sup>63</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 13, pp. 496-498, January-February 1878.

<sup>64</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 13, pp. 525-536, 602-614, 762-775, 807-821, March, May, September, November 1878.

<sup>65</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 14, pp. 38-50, January 1879.

<sup>66</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 14, pp. 401-412, 469-482, 548-562, 605-616, 766-773, 837-846, Vol. 15, pp. 35-42, November 1879, January, March, May, September, November 1880, January 1881.

<sup>67</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 16, pp. 461-470, 531-542, 597-607, 777-78, January-June, September 1884.

<sup>68</sup> Fleming's articles on "The Hymnology of the Reformation", and "The Discipline of the Reformation" have been reprinted by Naphtali Press, first in issues of *An Anthology of Presbyterian & Reformed Literature*, Vol. 3, 1990, and Vol. 4, 1991. Naphtali Press has reprinted them again along with Fleming's "The Story of the Scottish Covenants in outline" in *The Shorter Writings of David Hay Fleming*, Naphtali Press, Dallas, 2007.

because certain songs or hymns were published with various editions of the *Book of Common Order*, therefore 'there were hymns in the Church of Scotland'. He might as well insist that the Alphabet and Multiplication table are in the Church of Scotland now, because they have long been printed with the Shorter Catechism."<sup>69</sup>

As is seen from the articles controverting the views of Horatius Bonar, Fleming had strong convictions about the Regulative Principle at a time when the Free Church was abandoning its commitment to the Biblical and Presbyterian simplicity of Covenanting days. Fleming objected to the Martyrs' Free Church Kirk Session when the Psalms were excluded from the praise at meetings designed for the young people of the congregation. He stated: "When I was a member of the Bible Class, Psalms only were sung, and when hymns were first introduced only one was sung in the evening; now, I understand, the number has been trebled and the Psalms discarded."<sup>70</sup> His representations were ignored, though he had put forward his case courteously and had advanced cogent arguments. Anything savouring of departure from Reformation principles was obnoxious to him; his Bible was bound without the inclusion of paraphrases. Paton adds: "There was something Knoxian in this aspect of his Protestantism."<sup>71</sup> Fleming would return to this issue in later years as it was a major influence in loosening his connection with the Church of his upbringing. In these encounters he was guided by his intimate knowledge of Scripture, his own religious experience, and his familiarity with Reformation history.

### **A St Andrews citizen**

Fleming had a particular attachment to St Andrews, its past history and its present prosperity. In the last few years of the 1870s this attachment found him, whilst still conducting the family business, exploring the documentary treasures of St Andrews. The researches stirred within him the desire to write a complete history of the burgh. It was a scheme that was ever present with him all his days, but one he was not destined to complete. However, from his extensive studies he was able to prepare his, once well known, *Guides to St Andrews*. The first of these was published in 1881; it contained seventy-five pages, with the material arranged in

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<sup>69</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 16, p. 470, January 1884.

<sup>70</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 21.

<sup>71</sup> *ibid.*

alphabetic order.<sup>72</sup> Later editions had a different and more helpful layout as they were arranged more in the form of a guided tour of St Andrews. The *Guide* was repeatedly revised and enlarged. From seventy-five pages in 1881 it had grown to two hundred and forty pages thirty years later. A final edition was printed in 1924 in smaller type with the information updated. Hay Fleming's researches into local history and antiquarian lore led to a further guidebook that covered the whole of the East of Fife; this was called a *Guide to the East Neuk of Fife*.<sup>73</sup> This was a volume of two hundred pages, with many illustrations, and provided a great deal of information about the towns and villages from Crail to Leven. Unlike the St Andrews guide it does not appear to have been reprinted. His biographer observes, "Owing to the meticulous accuracy of the author, these *Guides* must long merit the attention of all who would seek a true picture of the region they describe".<sup>74</sup>

Believing it was his duty as a citizen to further the interests of his native town he offered himself in 1881 as a candidate for the Town Council and secured election. His first activity as a councillor involved his antiquarian expertise in preparing the Charters and other documents relative to the town's right to the mussel-scalps on the Water of Eden. The work was published at the town's expense in 1883. As a town councillor he took a great deal of interest in the Lochty Water Scheme, the purpose of which was to bring a new supply of pure water into St Andrews. In the 1860s the town's water was not filtered, and after heavy rain was sometimes as brown as coffee. At a town council meeting, one of the members held up a small phial of discoloured water in which he took a bath. A fellow councillor promptly asked whether the sample had been taken before or after he had been in the bath! His efforts on the water scheme were successful, but for some reason the project alienated a number of people in the town, with the result that when he stood for re-election in 1884 he lost his seat on the council.

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<sup>72</sup> D. H. Fleming, *The Alphabetic Guide Book to St Andrews*, St Andrews Citizen Office, 1881.

<sup>73</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Guide to the East Neuk of Fife, embracing all the Towns and Villages, Antiquities and Places of Interest between Fifeness and Leven*, Fife Herald Office, Cupar, 1886.

<sup>74</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 76.



### III. THE LATER YEARS IN ST ANDREWS AS HISTORIAN AND ANTIQUARIAN

#### Full time researcher

Up to this point Fleming had conjoined his literary activities and antiquarian researches with his mercantile business. This was about to change. His mother, with whom he and his sister lived, was becoming weaker in health and this meant that the entire responsibility of running the business fell on Fleming and Christina. On Sabbath morning, 6th August 1882, at the age of seventy-two, Mrs Fleming died. Almost fifty years later, her accomplished son dedicated to her memory the last book he was spared to write.<sup>75</sup> Fleming inherited the property, the business and the money that his researches had brought to his mother, subject to certain provisions in favour of his sister. This was a major turning point in his life when, at the age of thirty-three, he found himself in fairly comfortable circumstances, so much so that he decided to give up the family business and pursue unfettered his historical and antiquarian researches. His business training stood him in good stead during his literary career. Although the matter is not detailed by his biographer, it appears from references scattered throughout the volume that he owned a number of residential properties in St Andrews which provided him with a rental income.<sup>76</sup> By the spring of 1883 the whole stock of the shop had been sold. The following year Fleming became a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and was for a time a member of the council. Although he occasionally communicated notes to its *Proceedings* regarding archaeological discoveries in St Andrews, his larger contributions were more usually historical and bibliographical.

#### Marriage

Fleming's first adventure, in his new found freedom, was a visit to Anwoth and Wigtown. The journey, it would appear, was not taken entirely out of respect for Samuel Rutherford and the Wigtown Martyrs.

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<sup>75</sup> This was the book in which he catalogued and described the exhibits in St Andrews Cathedral Museum. It was published by Oliver & Boyd in 1931.

<sup>76</sup> See Paton, op. cit., pp. 40, 53. The last reference seems to indicate he had at least twenty tenants at the time of his death. In September 1931, just two months before his death, he was very concerned about the damage done to property in St Andrews due to the flooding of Kinness Burn – an anxiety coloured no doubt by his ownership of property near the burn. A few months before Fleming was born his father purchased a spinning

As his biographer observes, “Old ties had been broken, but new ones were in process of being formed”.<sup>77</sup> Fleming’s affections were now moving in the direction of a young lady, eight-and-a-half years younger than himself, who was spending her holiday quite close to Anwoth in the town of Dalbeattie. Despite the fact that Miss Robina Agnes Hart was the daughter of the hymn-singing precentor of Martyrs’ Free Church in St Andrews,<sup>78</sup> Fleming had found the young woman who would become his wife. Paton adds: “The moon that shone on the Solway tide doubtless smiled on the young explorers, whose talk was not always of Reformation principles or antiquarian relics.”<sup>79</sup> If Fleming was disappointed at losing his office as a town councillor this was speedily compensated for by the shared affections between himself and Robina Hart. They were married on 9th July 1885 in the home of Robina’s parents at 2 College Street, St Andrews. The marriage was conducted by the Rev Matthew Rodger, the Church of Scotland minister of St Andrews and St Leonards, banns having been read in that congregation.<sup>80</sup> Fleming’s cousin, the law-agent Peter Fleming, witnessed his signature, whilst Robina’s signature was witnessed by her cousin and close friend, Helen Buchanan.<sup>81</sup>

On the holiday following their marriage, Fleming’s book gathering instincts could not be entirely restrained. His eye roved from the object of his affections towards a quantity of books displayed for sale on a lawn and, hastening from Robina’s side, he secured for a “mere song” a splendid collection of Bannatyne Club publications.<sup>82</sup> It was a happy marriage; Paton records, “all David’s expectations with regard to his

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mill on the Kinness Burn along with some adjacent ground. This property he converted into dwelling houses, which still go by the name of Fleming Place. See Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 7, 52.

<sup>77</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>78</sup> Robina’s father was James Hart; his occupation is described as master plumber and gas fitter.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>80</sup> Details from their marriage certificate, accessed from [www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) on 11th November 2010.

<sup>81</sup> Helen Buchanan had lived with her aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs Hart, from the age of three or four, several years before Robina was born. After Robina’s mother died, she kept house for Mr Hart; and when he died in 1902 she went to live with the Flemings. Christina Fleming told Paton that Helen Buchanan was “a most capable, good, unselfish woman”. She was about seven years older than Robina and acted towards her the part of an elder sister. After Mr Hart died she was a constant companion of the Flemings. See Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>82</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 100-101.



*David Hay Fleming and his wife Robina Hart.  
The photograph was taken in 1885, the year they were married.*

[Reproduced by courtesy of the University of St Andrews Library – DHF-500543]

helpmeet must have been fulfilled, as those who were privileged to know her intimately were ready to testify. While keenly interested in all his work, she had her own accomplishments; among which were painting

and wood-carving, at which she exhibited considerable talent. . . . As illustrating the interest which Robina (whom he loved to call his 'Robin') took in her husband's work, she writes to him thus from Peebles, wither she was wont to go on holiday:<sup>83</sup> 'I think your idea about writing the St Andrews history is a very good one, but of course it could not take the place of a short popular history that ordinary people would buy; don't you think you should write that first?' In another letter she expresses the hope that he is getting his round of golf, and wishes that he could get away for a holiday, and rid of some chest trouble from which he was suffering."<sup>84</sup> After the marriage they continued to live in the family home in South Street and David's expectations in regard to his wife were more than fulfilled.

They never had any children, though visitors to their Edinburgh home, after they moved there in 1905, were led to surmise that a portrait of Robina as a child was that of a daughter. Three years after his own marriage, and doubtless to Fleming's delight, his sister Christina, of whom he was very fond and who had lived with him in the family home, married a prominent banker, Thomas Clendinnen, of the Royal Bank in Edinburgh.<sup>85</sup>

The Flemings moved from the family home at 173 South Street to 16 North Bell Street (now called Greyfriars Gardens) on 30th April 1889. This was a house with a garden area on the opposite side of the street. It was a substantial property that he purchased from the trustees of the estate of the late Major-General Hugh Lindsay Christie. Here the Flemings resided and he housed his growing library for sixteen years until their move to Edinburgh. With a few exceptions, that we shall note, life continued at an even pace with Fleming absorbed in his career of research and writing. He was continually researching and writing; his pen never slackened. One article after another flowed into the pages of the *Original Secession Magazine* and new and updated issues of his *St Andrews Guide* were ever going through the press. It speaks volumes, however, with respect to his ecclesiastical sympathies, that no article from his pen was ever published in the *Free Church Monthly Record*.

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<sup>83</sup> Robina Fleming was born in Peebles and doubtless had friends in the area.

<sup>84</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

<sup>85</sup> The marriage took place on 4th September 1888. Thomas Clendinnen belonged to Earlston and died in Edinburgh on 22nd March 1924. At the time of Fleming's death, in 1931, Christina was living at 10 Wilton Road, Edinburgh. See Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

### **A further appeal to Church Courts**

The research and writing of the remaining St Andrews years were punctuated by several major incidents. The first of these was in February 1892 when Fleming took a leading part in a further appeal against a decision of the Free Church Presbytery of St Andrews when they refused to sustain a call to James Ferguson. We noted earlier that, following the resignation in 1876 of the minister of the Martyrs' congregation, Fleming led an appeal to the General Assembly after the Presbytery refused a call to the congregation's choice, Lewis Davidson. That appeal was successful and Davidson was translated to the Martyrs' congregation but only stayed in St Andrews for six years. He was followed in 1884 by John Farquhar M'Rae whose pastorate was also brief, as in 1891 he accepted a call to a Presbyterian Church in Toorak,<sup>86</sup> near Melbourne, Australia. At that point the congregation extended a call to James Ferguson, a probationer who was the son of a Free Church minister, Lewis Ferguson (1832-1872), the minister successively of the West Church, Glasgow, and St Andrews, Edinburgh.<sup>87</sup> Again, the Presbytery refused to sustain a call to the congregation's choice and once more Fleming was called on to take the lead in the congregation's appeal against the decision of the Presbytery. In this he was supported by nine elders, nine deacons and two hundred and eighty-one members. Invaluable help, however, came from his cousin Peter Fleming, a qualified law-agent who had built up a successful practice in St Andrews and, like Fleming, was a deacon in the Martyrs' congregation. For a second time Fleming won the appeal on behalf of the congregation's choice who had been rejected by the Presbytery. Ferguson was ordained and inducted to the charge and remained their minister for forty-one years until his resignation in 1933, two years after Fleming's death. Sadly, Ferguson does not appear to have had Fleming's commitment to the old Reformed theology. He went first into the United Free Church in 1900 and then back into the Church of Scotland in 1929.<sup>88</sup>

### **Fleming and Confessional revision**

It is interesting, and rather surprising, to note that whilst David Hay Fleming was profoundly concerned for Second Reformation principles,

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<sup>86</sup> For M'Rae's move to Australia see John Wischer (Editor), *The Presbyterians of Toorak*, Melbourne, 1975, pp. 43-66.

<sup>87</sup> For Lewis Ferguson see William Ewing, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 152.

<sup>88</sup> See J. A. Lamb, *The Fasti of the United Free Church of Scotland 1900-1929*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1956, p. 378.

for maintaining the old paths, and for purity of worship, we read nothing whatever in his biography of his taking an interest in, or expressing alarm at, the Scottish Presbyterian Churches loosening their commitment to the Westminster Confession of Faith. This movement for creedal revision in the closing twenty-five years of the nineteenth century took the form of the Presbyterian Churches adopting Declaratory Acts. These were instruments that purported to explain the Westminster Confession, which in reality contradicted the Confession and were the late nineteenth century vehicle of doctrinal downgrade. Strangely, at the very time the Free Church was passing its Declaratory Act, Fleming was assiduously absorbed in research of a totally different kind on behalf of his beloved St Andrews. He was securing for the town the ownership of the golf links rather than let it become the property of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, who had made an offer to purchase the course. During the spring and summer of 1893 he was writing articles on the history of the property and urging the re-purchase on behalf of the community. The articles were published in booklet form in 1893 and, in his biographer's words, "convey to the reader an impression of the writer's full acquaintance with the demands of golf as a recreative stimulus to mind and body".<sup>89</sup> Fleming later moved a motion at a public meeting to acquire the links for the town and was deputed to go to London in April 1894 to give evidence to the House of Lords to further the St Andrews claim to the golf course. In a letter to her husband, Robina Fleming reflecting on the importance that was attached to the deputation comments, "If you don't get the Bill you may be ashamed to come back".<sup>90</sup>

To witness Fleming, as a Free Church deacon, involved in such research and lobbying about a golf course when the great creedal controversy was going on with all its historical ramifications for Scottish Presbyterianism is perplexing. In the Union Controversy in the 1860s and the early 1870s Fleming assisted James Begg as a contributor to *The Watchword*. In March 1882 a group centred round the ageing Begg began a monthly publication called the *Signal*. The journal was sub-titled "A Magazine devoted to the maintenance of Sound Doctrine and Pure

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<sup>89</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 27-28. Fleming's booklet on the links issue was a substantial volume of 120 pages and was titled, *Historical Notes and Extracts concerning the Links of St Andrews 1552-1893*, St Andrews Citizen Office, 1893.

<sup>90</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 28.

Worship". It was in a sense the continuation of *The Watchword*.<sup>91</sup> It seems tragic that Fleming was not assisting the editors of the *Signal* in their fight to prevent doctrinal declension and the abandonment of the Regulative Principle in the Free Church. It might, however, be said in his partial defence that the opposition to the Free Church Declaratory Act was centred in the Highlands, and the Lowland cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, not in Fife. Whatever the reason was for Fleming's silence, we cannot believe that he had any sympathy whatever with those advocating creedal revision; this is because of his clear lifelong commitment to Evangelical Calvinism and the esteem in which he was held by those who opposed the Free Church revision of her standards by the means of a Declaratory Act.<sup>92</sup>

### Critical reviewer

In the May and July 1891 issues of the *Original Secession Magazine* there appeared a review of Dr James Rankin's volume on Scottish Church History, the reviewer's initials being given as DHF.<sup>93</sup> The review was a devastating critique of Rankin's book. Fleming concluded the review by saying it was a "crude and ill-digested piece of work of no critical value whatever. It is chargeable with grave omission, gross misrepresentations, and countless errors; while the inexcusable ignorance which it displays is only equalled by the cool presumption which undertook such a task."<sup>94</sup> The review was noted by Sir William Robertson Nicoll,<sup>95</sup> the editor of the widely circulated journal the *British Weekly*. Nicoll wrote to Professor

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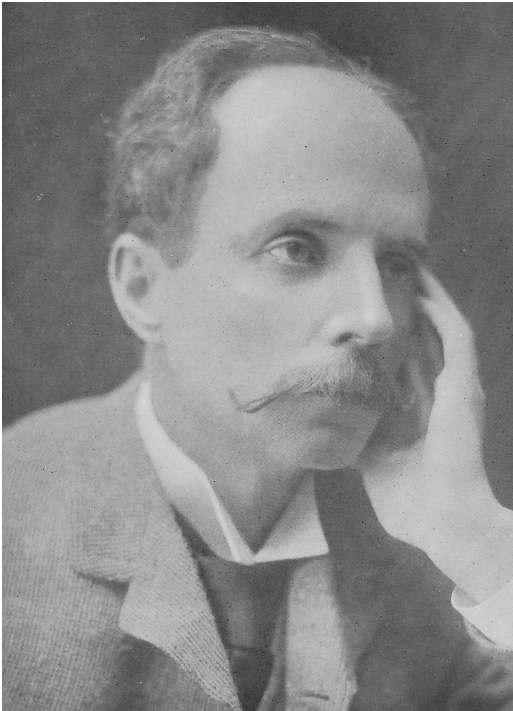
<sup>91</sup> See Kenneth R. Ross, *Church and Creed in Scotland: The Free Church Case 1900-1904 and its Origins*, Edinburgh, Rutherford House, 1988, p. 174.

<sup>92</sup> See the hearty approval of Fleming's witness in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 13, p. 239, and Vol. 14, pp. 478-479, at the time his Princeton Stone lectures on the Scottish Reformation were published. A further testimony to his ability is contained in the appreciation of his work written at the time of his death by Rev Donald Beaton, the editor of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, in Vol. 36, pp. 353-354.

<sup>93</sup> This was part of a multi-volume work edited by Robert H. Story. The second volume was written by James Rankin, the Church of Scotland minister of Muthill, with the title, *The Church from the reign of Malcolm Canmore to the Reformation; and from the Reformation to the Revolution*, London, not dated.

<sup>94</sup> Fleming's review appeared in the *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 20, May and July 1891. The review is re-printed in D. H. Fleming, *Critical Reviews relating chiefly to Scotland*, London, 1912, pp. 25-46.

<sup>95</sup> William Robertson Nicoll (1851-1923) was the eldest son of Rev Harry Nicoll, the Free Church minister of Auchindoir, Aberdeenshire. After training for the ministry he was



*William Robertson Nicoll.*

Robert Morton, the editor of the *Original Secession Magazine*, enquiring who the reviewer was and asking Morton to forward a letter to him. Nicoll's object was to secure the writer's services as a reviewer for the prestigious publications, the *British Weekly* and the *Bookman*. Fleming's visit to London in April 1894 on behalf of St Andrews' claim to the golf links was to have far reaching consequences for his literary work. In London he met for the first time, and had an interview with, Nicoll which resulted in the St Andrews scholar becoming a reviewer for his publications. The effect of this was to bring Fleming's ability as a critic

and an historian before a very much wider public. Thus began a friendship which only the hand of death was to interrupt. At their first meeting Nicoll pressed him to make a start with his promised biography of Mary Queen of Scots. This resulted in the next three years of his life being largely devoted to the task; the book was eventually published in 1897 by Hodder & Stoughton.<sup>96</sup> It was his first large book which regrettably only covered the period from Mary's birth to her flight into England. The depth of Fleming's research is seen in the fact that the text extends to 176 pages whilst the notes and appendices extend to 376 pages.

The real significance of his friendship with Nicoll was, however, the commencement of his role as a book reviewer for the *British Weekly*

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ordained in 1874 to his first charge at Dufftown, Banffshire. Three years later he was translated to Kelso North Congregation, whose first minister was Horatius Bonar. His preaching career was ended by pleurisy and the fear of tuberculosis, which had led to the death of his father, brother and sister. Nicoll then moved to London and devoted himself to a career in writing and journalism. He was also the editor of several series including *The Expositor's Bible*, London, 1887-1896, and the *Expositor's Greek Testament*, London, 1897-1911.

<sup>96</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Mary Queen of Scots: From her birth to her flight into England: A Brief Biography: with Critical Notes, a few Documents hitherto unpublished, and an Itinerary*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1898, Second Edition.



and the *Bookman*. Prior to meeting Nicoll, he had written critical reviews for at least twelve years for the *Original Secession Magazine* and several local newspapers, averaging around one a year. In the twenty years after meeting Nicoll, he would write almost a hundred critical reviews of major publications by eminent authors, including Charles G. M'Crie, Alexander Taylor Innes, Alexander Whyte, Andrew Lang and Peter Hume Brown. In 1912, one hundred and twenty of his most important critical reviews were collected by Fleming<sup>97</sup> and reprinted in a volume of over six hundred pages. In many ways the role of a reviewer and that of an historian are inseparably linked. His critiques in most cases were observations on historical facts and their misinterpretation. Paton observes with regard to his work as a reviewer: "The larger number of his reviews are on the side of approval, entire or partial. Of some writers he held a very high opinion; among them was Professor Hume Brown,<sup>98</sup> whose books he regarded as extremely useful. And even when he had to thrash Dr Andrew Lang for his inaccuracies and prejudices, he found opportunity to extol his industry, acuteness, wide reading, and liveliness of style."<sup>99</sup>

Fleming refers to Lang in the preface of his *Critical Reviews*: "While this volume has been passing through the press, the brilliant and strenuous career of Mr Andrew Lang has terminated so far as this life is concerned. A score of these reviews deal with his historical works. We were friends as well as antagonists. Fourteen years ago he referred to me . . . as his 'friend and constant trouncer'. . . . Our friendship of more than twenty years' standing was never strained and never broken. . . . He was very kind-hearted. I happened to draw his attention to one of his old fellow-students, who had missed the tide and was believed to be in want. He at once said, 'I will give him a ten-pound note'. When I replied that charity would not be accepted, he said, 'then we must find work for him'; and he did, and paid for it most handsomely. More than once I dispensed his bounty for him and it was delightful to see how anxious he was to save

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<sup>97</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Critical Reviews relating chiefly to Scotland*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1912.

<sup>98</sup> Peter Hume Brown (1849-1918) was appointed, in 1901, the first Professor of Scottish History at Edinburgh University and in 1908 he was made the Historiographer Royal.

<sup>99</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88. Andrew Lang (1844-1912) was an anthropologist, classicist and historian. He wrote works on Mary Queen of Scots and John Knox. He took an unfavourable view of Knox that aroused considerable controversy. A review by Fleming of a book by Lang that is reprinted in his *Critical Reviews* is given the heading, "Knox in the hands of the Philistines" (*op. cit.*, p. 188).

the feelings of the recipient.”<sup>100</sup> Because of the fairness of his reviews and his own careful research, he retained his friends, and maintained cordial relations with his literary antagonists. They loved the man, and revered his judgments. Unlike so many, in his critical reviews Fleming did not venture out of his own historical specialism. Though he had qualifications beyond many in the field of theology to affirm his convictions, he confined himself largely to history and historical theology.<sup>101</sup> William Robertson Nicoll commenting on Fleming’s volume of *Critical Reviews* says: “Scattered as are the contents of this book, it has one great aim, and that is to vindicate the character of the Reformers and the Covenanters.”<sup>102</sup>

### **St Andrews Doctor of Laws**

Among the other notable incidents of Fleming’s later years in St Andrews was the University’s honouring him with the distinction of Doctor of Laws. Paton notes: “Though never garbed in the picturesque academic gown so familiar in the quiet city streets, David oft trod the College Courts as a seeker of hid treasure; and in bestowing upon him the . . . Doctor of Laws, the University of St Andrews paid honour to itself.”<sup>103</sup> The degree was conferred on Fleming on 25th March 1898, just before his forty-ninth birthday. Though by now having acquired a name for scholarship, he had never been to University and was largely self-taught; indeed the only secondary education he had experienced was at Madras College. Professor Meiklejohn, in introducing him, said that, “he had devoted the best part of his life to the study of archaeological history connected with Scotland and especially St Andrews; he was a member of the Scottish History Society, and a Fellow of the Antiquarian Society, and had published several works, his last being a work on Mary, Queen of Scots”.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> *Critical Reviews*, op. cit., pp, vii-viii.

<sup>101</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 88.

<sup>102</sup> Cited in Paton, op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>103</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>104</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 29.

## Leaving the Free Church – joining the Original Secession Church

Whilst he was being honoured by the University, Fleming had become increasingly dissatisfied with the Free Church of Scotland. The Church which began with such promise at the Disruption in 1843 had been retreating from its historic position for several decades: exclusive psalmody had been abandoned in 1872; musical instruments had been permitted in public worship from 1883; whilst in 1892 the Church had seriously weakened its relationship to its Confession of Faith by the adoption of a Declaratory Act. This movement for confessional revision, though it started with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1878, had become by the mid-1890s a widespread phenomenon amongst worldwide Presbyterian Churches. The issue, however, that seems to have caused the most concern to Fleming, and which had resulted in his making repeated remonstrances to the Kirk Session, was the congregation's departure from Second Reformation principles. What he had particularly in view was the Free Church's permitting the observation of Romish inventions such as Christmas, Easter and other religious festivals. When the Martyrs' Church changed the posture in public prayer from standing to sitting, Fleming and his wife continued the old practice. A fascinating autobiographical insight into the Flemings' commitment to the old practice of the Scottish Church is seen in a letter that he wrote to the *Original Secession Magazine* in March 1931. He observes: "When Professor J. R. Mackay<sup>105</sup> was taking his Arts Course at St Andrews University, he worshipped in the Free Church in that city and was sorry to see that in such a large congregation<sup>106</sup> all the people, with three exceptions, sat during the prayers. The three exceptions were an elderly man in the gallery and a young couple in the body of the Church. Needless to say, Mr Mackay made a fourth exception, as long as he was in St Andrews. But, by and by, he left, the elderly man died, and the young couple<sup>107</sup> were left to testify alone, which they faithfully continued to do."<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> J. R. Mackay (1865-1939) attended St Andrews University from 1885-8. He was ordained as the Free Presbyterian minister of Gairloch in 1893 and was translated to Inverness in 1900. In November 1918 he joined the Free Church of Scotland, being elected Professor the following year.

<sup>106</sup> The membership roll of Martyrs' Free Church in St Andrews stood at 485 in 1900. See Ewing, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, p. 152.

<sup>107</sup> The young couple whose identity Fleming kept anonymous were himself and his wife.

<sup>108</sup> *Original Secession Magazine*, Vol. 31, pp. 84-85, March 1931.

The final break with the Free Church came when instrumental music was introduced into the public worship of the Martyrs' congregation; he now felt he could no longer worship in that congregation and so, severing his connection with the Church of his boyhood, he sought admission to the membership of the congregation of the United Original Seceders, worshipping in Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. Both Fleming and his wife were admitted to membership of the Original Secession Church on 28th October 1899. The minister of the Victoria Terrace congregation was John Sturrock. The Flemings had heard him preach on several occasions and regarded him as a sound preacher. He was also one whose tastes were similar to those of Hay Fleming himself. His biographer notes, "The pure and simple Evangel appealed to his inmost soul . . . the unadorned simplicity of Scottish Presbyterian worship satisfied his taste. From his Bible, which he had specially bound for him without hymns or paraphrases, he extracted Divine food."<sup>109</sup>

### **Edinburgh friendships**

Having now become members in an Edinburgh congregation, the Flemings began to search for a suitable residence in the Scottish capital. They would stay for a week at a time in Edinburgh, either with Mr and Mrs John Gibb or the Sturrocks. John Gibb, like Fleming, was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and possessed, again like Fleming, a very large library of 40,000 volumes. Paton records that Fleming, Gibb and Sturrock, three book lovers, would share anecdotes with great gusto of the bargains they had acquired and in the midst of this, Mrs Sturrock was known to remark: "We never hear about those they paid too much for."<sup>110</sup> In these years of visiting the capital Fleming made further lasting friendships, one of which was Lord Guthrie, the Court of Session judge and the son of Thomas Guthrie – a leading minister in the Disruption Free Church.<sup>111</sup> Though Guthrie's views

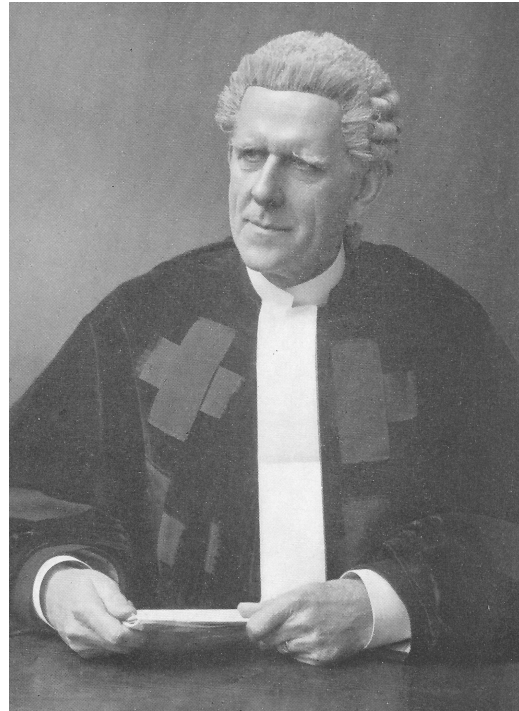
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<sup>109</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>110</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>111</sup> Charles John Guthrie (1849-1920) was educated at Edinburgh Academy and Edinburgh University and admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1875. Guthrie became a Q.C. in 1897 and ten years later was appointed a judge in the Court of Session and created a life peer. From 1881 to 1900 he was legal adviser to the Church of Scotland and was later part of the legal team of the United Free Church in its great law case with

diverged at times from Fleming's they both had a high regard for John Knox and they worked together in a number of societies. When Guthrie was writing articles or pamphlets or if he was preparing an address he delighted to consult Fleming and valued his advice. He wrote on one occasion: "If you can save me from any pitfalls in fact or argument, I shall be much obliged; I know there are things in it with which you won't agree, but I also know that I shall have your sympathy on the general lines of the paper."<sup>112</sup> Perhaps the most unique distinction given to Fleming's historical ability was a result of



*Lord Guthrie.*

Guthrie's estimate of his worth. He was asked by a bench of seven judges for advice on the interpretation of an Act affecting a case in the Inner House. After giving his assessment Guthrie wrote, "My colleagues and I are much indebted for the great service you have rendered us by the admirable letter I received yesterday, written with such promptitude and so great clearness and force."<sup>113</sup>

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the minority Free Church after the 1900 union of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church. Along with his brother the Rev David K. Guthrie they wrote/edited the standard two volume life of their father, *Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie, D.D. and Memoir*, London, 1874. He was also the author of *John Knox and his House*, published in 1898, and was the editor of an edition of John Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland*. In one of his first trials as a judge, Guthrie misdirected the jury. The trial was the celebrated case of Oscar Slater (born Leschziner) who had been charged with murder. Slater was sentenced to death in 1909, but a petition for clemency was organised and signed by 20,000 people, as a result of which the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on the day scheduled for his execution. Slater was subsequently freed on appeal, eight years after Guthrie had died, after being in prison for twenty years, and was awarded £6,000 compensation. The case is regarded as one of the worst miscarriages of justice in Scottish legal history. The standard biography of Guthrie is, R. L. Orr, *Lord Guthrie: A Memoir*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1923. There is an obituary of Guthrie in *The Times* of Thursday, 29th April 1920, p. 18.

<sup>112</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*

Paton, who knew Fleming well and assisted in some of his research projects, says, “There was an attractive catholicity about these friendships. He admitted to his circle of intimates ‘fellow students of all schools of opinion’, as Dr Nicoll described them. However severe his controversy with the views they held, or the systems to which they were subservient, he never allowed distinctions of class or creed to mar the favour of his personal contacts or correspondence with them. Notwithstanding his denunciations of all prelatical systems, one of his dearest friends was Bishop Dowden;<sup>114</sup> and among his own kith and kin could be numbered more than one Roman Catholic.”<sup>115</sup>

Our knowledge of the Flemings’ domestic affairs in the years after his resignation from the Free Church is very scant. One thing, however, is plain; they became increasingly desirous to find a house in Edinburgh. The search began in earnest in 1901 but it was to be another four years before they were able to move. One of the main obstacles was to find a house large enough to accommodate his library. Meanwhile the research and writing from his St Andrews base continued unabated; one of his last published works before his move to Edinburgh was his handbook for senior classes on the subject of *The Scottish Reformation*, published in 1903. It has been rightly acclaimed as a marvel of compactness and focusing on the essential narrative.

Fleming’s determination to move to Edinburgh is reflected in his application in April 1904 for the post of librarian of the Signet Library<sup>116</sup> that had become vacant following the death of Thomas Graves Law on 12th March 1904.<sup>117</sup> The library is maintained by the Society of Writers to Her Majesty’s Signet, which is a private society of Scottish solicitors that dates back to 1594. The Signet Library is housed as part of the Parliament House complex in Edinburgh. The building, with its lower

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<sup>114</sup> Rt Rev John Dowden (1840-1910) was the Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh. He was the author of several books including, *The Celtic Church in Scotland*, SPCK, 1894; *History of the Theological Literature of the Church of England*, SPCK, 1897; *The Correspondence of the Lauderdale Family with Archbishop Sharpe*, Scottish Church History, Part of Vol. 15 First Series 1893. He also edited two further volumes for the Scottish History Society.

<sup>115</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>116</sup> The Signet Library is to this day a premier legal information resource besides holding an extensive collection of non-legal material.

<sup>117</sup> Thomas Graves Law (1836-1904) was the great grandson of Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle. His father was William Towry Law (1809-1886) who originally served in the Grenadier Guards but then in 1831 entered Peterhouse, Cambridge and subsequently became a Church of England minister. In 1851 William Towry Law joined the Roman

and upper libraries, was completed in 1822 in time for the visit to Edinburgh of King George IV who described the upper library as “the finest drawing room in Europe”. Fleming’s application for the post was endorsed by several distinguished scholars, such as Professor Masson, Professor Hume Brown, Principal Donaldson, Principal Stewart, Andrew Lang and Sir William Robertson Nicholl. His candidature was, however, unsuccessful; doubtless owing to the still unsettled question of obtaining a house in Edinburgh.<sup>118</sup>

### **Lecturer in Church history**

In October 1900, a year after Fleming joined the Original Secession Church, an incorporating union took place between the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church. The new denomination was called the United Free Church of Scotland. A small body of the Free Church ministers and people – mostly from the Highlands – refused to enter the union, asserting that they, unlike the uniting majority, had retained the original principles of the old Free Church. They then took their case to the courts, claiming the entire property of the old Church. After a protracted period of litigation, the House of Lords found in favour of the minority – who retained the Free Church of Scotland name.<sup>119</sup> The 1901 Free Church General Assembly appointed a Training of the Ministry Committee to review the Church’s arrangements for training ministerial students. At the outset the Committee had to rely on outside help to train their students. Accordingly, Fleming was asked if he would stand in the breach and lecture to Free Church students on

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Catholic Church which necessitated his son leaving Winchester College. This led to him studying at University College, London, where he had Francis Newman among his teachers. In 1853 Thomas Law became a Roman Catholic and entered the Romanist College at Stonyhurst. Under the influence of his father’s friend, Frederick Faber, he moved to Brompton Oratory in 1855 where he was ordained a priest in 1860. He remained in the Oratory until, owing to his loss of faith, he left the Catholic Church in 1878. A year later, Law, who had devoted himself to historical and literary study, was appointed keeper of the Signet Library partly through the recommendation of William Ewart Gladstone. He remained in the post until his death on 12th March 1904. In 1886 along with Fleming he was one of the founders of the Scottish History Society and acted as its secretary. Law’s main historical interests were in the sixteenth century, and especially in its religious and ecclesiastical aspects. In his treatment of contending religious forces, he is regarded as being remarkably free from partisanship.

<sup>118</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

<sup>119</sup> For the history of the 1900 Free Church of Scotland see, Alexander Stewart and John Kennedy Cameron, *The Free Church of Scotland 1843-1910*, Edinburgh, 1910.

Church History. He was, of course, especially qualified to discharge this task and did so for the 1904-1905 academic session. Assistance was also given by his friend, Robert Morton, of the Original Secession Church, James Kerr of the United Presbyterians and William Menzies Alexander, who joined the Free Church in 1904.<sup>120</sup>

### **St Andrews farewell**

When it became clear that Fleming was leaving St Andrews and moving to Edinburgh the civic authorities were determined to show their appreciation of one who had so wholeheartedly espoused the cause of his native town and enhanced its popularity with his *Guides* to St Andrews. Accordingly, they found a suitable opportunity on the eve of his departure for holding a public dinner in his honour on the 27th April 1905. The dinner was held in the Students Union and a large representative gathering listened with interest and a great measure of sorrow to Fleming's farewell address. To the toast proposed by Principal Stewart he replied with what Paton describes as an animated speech. He did not think that any Jew was more attached to Jerusalem than he was to St Andrews. He spoke of his desire to write its history and of the material he had amassed for that purpose. He narrated tales, as only he could, of some of its worthies.<sup>121</sup> He also spoke of his beloved books, which now numbered so many that the work of packing them had been very arduous. Once he had moved to Edinburgh, he stated that the thought of repeating the process was sufficient in itself to prevent his return to St Andrews, however much he might desire to do so. Professor Musgrove in conclusion assured Fleming that though this dinner was in his honour, it was nothing like the one that would be given him if he came back to St Andrews.<sup>122</sup> On the following day, 28th April 1905,

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<sup>120</sup> On the early history of the Free Church ministerial Training see, Donald Macleod, *Free Church College 1900-1970* in David F. Wright, Gary D. Badcock, *Disruption to Diversity*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1996, pp. 221-222. See also G. N. M. Collins, *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland 1900-1986*, not dated, pp. 4-7.

<sup>121</sup> One of these was of a shepherd, who was fond of attending the yearly catechisings held by the minister in the old days. His attendance was not so much to gain instruction but rather to have a bout with the minister. On one occasion the minister had a stranger to help him, whom he informed of this troublesome man who could easily answer the questions put to him, but with the reply always put back in a question to the minister that was difficult to deal with. The assistant volunteered to try his hand, and asked: Can you tell me, Thomas, how long Adam remained in a state of innocence? Thomas immediately replied, "Till he got a wife. Can you tell me how long after?" Paton, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>122</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 32-33.



the Flemings proceeded to Edinburgh and took up residence in their new home.

#### IV. FLEMING AS A SCHOLAR IN EDINBURGH

##### Moving a library to Edinburgh

His long search for a residence in Edinburgh was finally resolved in 1905 when he acquired the house in which he would live for the rest of his life. It was 4 Chamberlain Road in the Bruntsfield district of Edinburgh. Paton describes the house as, “situated about a mile south-west from the centre of the city, in an elevated and salubrious district richly provided with trees. It stands in about an acre of ground; but its chief attraction for the Doctor was its possession of a number of fairly large rooms in which he might cram his voluminous library.”<sup>123</sup> His biographer explains Fleming’s priorities when the move from St Andrews took place, “While Mrs. Fleming attended to the multitude of business associated with the ‘flitting’, the Doctor’s whole attention must have been engrossed in a suitable allocation of his books to their appropriate quarters”.<sup>124</sup> He had a tender regard for his library and called the multitudinous volumes his “bairns”; when the removal firm employed to move his belongings to Edinburgh offered to pack his books he could not tolerate the idea, fearing they might handle them harshly. He determined the only safe way was to pack them himself. Fleming’s concern was to know where every book was so that it could be easily located. It took him three weeks of hard work and then he had the task of unpacking and rearranging them. His books would eventually fill eight rooms of his new Edinburgh home.<sup>125</sup> A year before the move to Edinburgh, Paton records that his library contained “more than 5,000 carefully selected volumes”, including “many rare and unique works”. In yearly issues of *Who’s Who*, his recreations were stated to be “Archaeology and Bibliography”.<sup>126</sup> Paton adds, “One might justly have expanded the

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<sup>123</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>124</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Paton notes regarding Fleming’s “bairns” that they were a “somewhat hefty offspring by this time and grew more lusty as the years progressed”. Fleming’s mother “regarded his first purchase (whilst he was still in his teens) with disfavour; it was an old book, for which he had paid a great deal, and she chided him for throwing away money on an old thing like that”. Paton, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>126</sup> See, *Who was Who*, Volume III, 1929-1940, p. 455.

latter to include, ‘Book-hunting’.” He could never pass a bookstall without surveying its contents, and booksellers’ catalogues came to him by the hundred. His biographer was later to record, “It amazed many of his visitors to find that, despite the wealth of his material, the Doctor could in the dark lay hands on almost any volume he wanted”.<sup>127</sup> Like any lover of books, if he lent them out he kept a strict record of such loans, so that his “bairns” might in due time return home.<sup>128</sup>

### **Knox commemoration**

It was just days before his fifty-sixth birthday when Fleming arrived in the Scottish capital. The move accomplished, he could resume his uninterrupted tasks. The first of these was a lecture given on the “Life and Work of Knox” to the Original Secession Synod, meeting on 18th May 1905. The Synod had decided that a series of four lectures should be given in 1905 to commemorate Knox’s birth that had occurred in their view four hundred years earlier. The lectures were given by three ministers and Fleming.<sup>129</sup> It must have been with a measure of consternation for the Synod when Fleming began his lecture by demonstrating conclusively that the celebrations were being held in the wrong year, that Knox was born not in 1505 but in either 1514 or 1515.

### **Levi Stone's lectureship**

For twenty years Fleming had been active in writing critical reviews for the *British Weekly* and the *Bookman*. After the move to Edinburgh, with a few exceptions, this activity largely stopped and he turned his attention to writings that succeeding generations will undoubtedly regard as of greater importance to the Church. Fleming’s reputation as an exponent

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<sup>127</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>128</sup> His solicitude for his books prompted this remark from William Robertson Nicholl, the editor of the *British Weekly*: “Your book is quite safe, and I will send it back to you. If you get all the books sent in to you that I get you might perhaps burn some of them.” Paton, op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>129</sup> The lectures given were as follows, the “Opening Address” by Thomas Matthew of Kilwinning, “The Dawn of the Reformation” by John Sturrock, “The Life and Work of Knox” by D. Hay Fleming, and “The Legacy of Knox” by Alexander Smellie. The four lectures were subsequently printed by request of the Synod, *John Knox: Appreciations by United Original Seceders*, Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, Edinburgh, 1905. Fleming’s main work on the date of Knox’s birth was an article, “The Date of Knox’s Birth”, published in the *Bookman* for September 1905 and reprinted in the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* (Philadelphia), Vol. 3, No. 4, December 1905 pp. 186-192.

of Scottish ecclesiastical history had clearly spread from his native Scotland to the citadel of Presbyterian and Reformed orthodoxy in America – Princeton Theological Seminary. Around the time of his move to Edinburgh, although we do not know the precise date, he was invited by Benjamin B. Warfield to deliver the Stone Lectures in 1907-1908 on the subject of “The Reformation in Scotland”. The Stone lectureship had been set up in 1871 by a director and trustee of the seminary, Levi Payson Stone.<sup>130</sup>

A native of Wendell, Massachusetts, Stone was born on 1st May 1802, the son of Levi and Betsy (née Kidder) Stone. He was of Welsh descent on his father’s side whilst his mother’s ancestors were from East Grinstead in England. Stone was educated first at a public school and then at Amherst Academy. He became a highly successful businessman, eventually moving to New York City in 1836 where he formed a co-partnership in a dry goods business under the name Stone, Wood & Starr. It became one of the largest dry goods houses in the city and continued, with the subsequent admission of junior partners, for more than a quarter of a century with Stone at the head. He retired in 1866 but retained an interest in the business for several more years.

Stone was a man of deep religious convictions and during his residence in New York was a member of the famous Brick Church in which he served first as a deacon and then as an elder. He later moved to Brooklyn where he was connected with the Second Presbyterian Church, and then to Orange in 1857 where he assisted in organising the Central Presbyterian Church and was a member of the original session. Stone contributed to the success of the enterprise not only by his active participation in the work of the Gospel but by his liberal financial support. It was said of him that he was always found in his place, both on Sabbath and weekday services and endeavoured to “redeem the time”.

Stone’s benefactions were not confined to his own church or to the community where he resided. Among the institutions of learning in which he became intensely interested was Princeton Theological Seminary. He was a director of the seminary from 1869 and then six years later he became a member of the Board of Trustees of Princeton

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<sup>130</sup> For brief biographical details of Stone see: Henry Whittemore, *The Founders and Builders of the Oranges: Comprising a history of the outlying districts of Newark known as the Orange*, Newark, 1896, pp. 321-322.

until his death in 1884.<sup>131</sup> Stone took a lively interest in the welfare of the seminary and was held in high esteem by the professors and was an important influence in its management. He established the lecture course at Princeton, which by consent rather than by the desire of the founder bears his name – “the L. P. Stone lectureship”. He left money so that the lecturers would receive a payment for their labours. In 1903 and 1906 the endowment was increased through the generosity of Stone’s sisters. Over half the Stone Lectures have been published in book form.<sup>132</sup> Among the distinguished scholars who had given lectures previous to Fleming was Abraham Kuyper, whose discourses in 1898 were later published as his celebrated *Lectures on Calvinism*.<sup>133</sup> By considering the calibre of men who held the lectureship both before and after Fleming, an indication is given of the esteem in which he was held by the Princeton Faculty. James Orr was the lecturer in 1903-1904 and Herman Bavinck the year after Fleming, while in 1921-1922 Louis Berkhof was the lecturer. Fleming accepted the invitation and, according to Paton,<sup>134</sup> his time was now largely taken up in preparing the discourses he was to deliver in America.

### **Secretary of the Scottish History Society**

Amidst these researches a matter arose nearer home to which he felt he must provide whatever assistance he could. Though he had failed to secure the librarianship of the Signet Library in succession to Thomas Graves Law, he was to replace him in another of his roles. At the urgent request of the Scottish History Society, he accepted the post as its secretary and took up his duties in October 1905. Fleming expressed his appreciation of Law in a review in the *Bookman* of his *Collected Essays and Reviews*, edited with a Memoir by Peter Hume Brown.<sup>135</sup> Fleming said of Law that he was “honoured and esteemed not only as a genuine worker, but as one of the most courteous and obliging of librarians. He had been head of the Signet Library for almost twenty-five years before he died

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<sup>131</sup> Joseph H. Dulles, *Princeton Theological Seminary: Biographical Catalogue*, Trenton, 1909, pp. 1 and 16.

<sup>132</sup> Kenneth J. Ross, *The L. P. Stone Lectureship*, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1988, p. 1 (unpublished manuscript in Princeton Theological Seminary Library).

<sup>133</sup> Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, Hoveker & Wormser, Amsterdam, 1899.

<sup>134</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>135</sup> *Collected Essays and Reviews of Thomas Graves Law*, Editor P. Hume Brown, Edinburgh, T. & A. Constable, 1904.

and was a worthy successor to Macvey Napier and David Laing. As the secretary of the Scottish History Society he also did excellent and abiding work.”<sup>136</sup> After three years Fleming found that the duties of the Secretary of the Scottish History Society demanded more of his time than he could afford to give to them. Fleming was constantly busy with his historical researches; even during his summer holidays he could let neither mind nor pen relax. The result of a holiday excursion to Ayrshire in September 1906, when he visited Lochgoin, the home of John Howie, the author of *The Scots Worthies*, was a most interesting article on “John Howie of Lochgoin: His forebears and his Works”. The article was subsequently printed in the *Princeton Theological Review*.<sup>137</sup>

### **Fleming’s first series of Stone Lectures**

On Saturday, 21st September 1907, Fleming and his wife set sail on board the *Caledonia* from Glasgow to New York in order to deliver the Stone Lectures. At the time they set off Fleming was far from well and it was hoped that the journey would assist in restoring his health. In a letter from Robina to her cousin, Helen Buchanan, she told her that the journey had been made in pleasant weather, and as they neared their destination, whilst being thankful for their safety she was relieved that her husband was “so much better and stronger than when we left home”.<sup>138</sup> They arrived at New York on the Sabbath around midday and their luggage was taken to Central Station. The Flemings held very strong views about the necessity of Sabbath keeping and would not take a taxi; hence they made a long and somewhat tiresome walk through some ugly streets to their hotel. Prior to going to Princeton the Flemings spent a fortnight sightseeing. They spent a day in New York, which Robina describes as “a lovely city as far as we saw, and a busy one”. On the Tuesday they went to Niagara where they “had glorious weather and saw the falls at their best”. On the Thursday they travelled to Toronto, and then on Saturday after a long slow journey they reached Clifford in

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<sup>136</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Critical Reviews relating chiefly to Scotland*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1912, p. 474.

<sup>137</sup> See the *Princeton Theological Review*, Vol. 7:1, pp. 1-28. It was also printed as a pamphlet. The article contains an insight into the riches of Fleming’s library; J. C. Johnston in his *Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, Edinburgh, 1887, p. 452, says that “No copy is known to exist of the original edition of *Scots Worthies*”. In a footnote to this comment Fleming observes, “I happen to know of eight copies, two of which are in my own collection”, p. 13.

<sup>138</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 37.

Ontario, Canada where they stayed for almost a week with relatives. Robina records that her husband regaled the friends with many anecdotes and stories.

The following Friday they began their 550 mile journey to Princeton, going first to Philadelphia, breaking their journey by staying a night in Buffalo. They then made the last leg of the journey by travelling from Philadelphia to Princeton. Robina described Princeton Railway Junction as “a much more desolate place than Leuchars”.<sup>139</sup> Whether Fleming fully realised the condition of the American Presbyterian Church in the northern States when he went to deliver his first series of Stone Lectures at Princeton we do not know. He was, however, going to a seminary whose leaders had been defeated in their attempt to stop a revision of the Westminster Standards and union of the northern Presbyterian Church with the non-Calvinistic Cumberland Presbyterians.

As we have noted, in the last quarter on the nineteenth century worldwide Presbyterianism was loosening its attachment to Calvinism and the Westminster Confession of Faith. It was not many years after the reunion in 1869 of the Old School and the New School to form the northern American Presbyterian Church that voices were raised calling for the revision of the Westminster Confession. Edwin H. Rian commenting on the union says it “should never have taken place for it brought together two parties who disagreed fundamentally as to doctrine. It was one of the tragic events in Presbyterian history.”<sup>140</sup> At the very time the Free Church of Scotland was working on its Declaratory Act, the American Presbyterian Church in the north was moving in a similar direction. The agitation to revise the Confession began in 1889.<sup>141</sup> An overture to the General Assembly of 1888 from the Presbytery of Nassau on Long Island on revising the Confession was, in the rush of business, referred to the next Assembly. The revision movement received considerable support from men like Charles Augustus Briggs, Philip Schaff and Henry Van Dyke. Schaff, the

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<sup>139</sup> For the sightseeing in north America and the journey to Princeton see, Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>140</sup> Edwin H. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1940, p. 16.

<sup>141</sup> The Confession had already been modified in America. In 1788 chapters XX, XXIII and XXXI concerning the powers of Synods, Councils and the civil magistrate were amended. In 1886-87 the clause forbidding marriage with a deceased wife's sister had been removed from chapter XXIV section 4 of the Confession.

distinguished historian, announced that the General Assembly of 1889 had opened a new chapter in the history of American theology. "The old Calvinism," he said, "is fast dying out. . . . We need a theology and a confession that will . . . prepare the way for the great work of the future – the reunion of Christendom in the Creed of Christ."<sup>142</sup> There were two main reasons for the defeat of this attempt to revise the Westminster Confession: the first was strong opposition from Princeton Theological Seminary led by Francis L. Patton, Benjamin B. Warfield and John De Witt, and the second was the heresy trial of Charles Briggs.<sup>143</sup> The charges against Briggs proved to be the stronger reason as they highlighted the doctrinal viewpoint of one of the leaders in the agitation for revision. The movement to modify the Confession was temporarily brought to an end at the 1893 General Assembly when the necessary two-thirds majorities to effect a revision were not obtained.<sup>144</sup>

A second revision movement began in 1900; twenty-three Presbyteries overtured the General Assembly to establish a new and shorter creed while fifteen Presbyteries asked for a revision of the Confession of Faith and a new creed.<sup>145</sup> The 1900 General Assembly appointed a "Committee of Fifteen" to draft amendments to the Confession and to draw up a brief non-technical statement of the Reformed Faith. B. B. Warfield, Professor of Theology at Princeton Seminary, was appointed to the committee but declined, stating, "It is an inexpressible grief to me to see it [the Church] spending its energies in a vain attempt to lower its testimony to suit the ever changing sentiment of the world about it".<sup>146</sup> The chairman of the committee was Henry Van Dyke, the Professor of English literature at Princeton University; his father had been one of the leaders in the earlier revision movement.

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<sup>142</sup> P. Schaff, *Creed Revision in the Presbyterian Churches*, New York, 1890, p. v, 40, 42. Cited in L. A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church: a study of theological issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1957, p. 42.

<sup>143</sup> For Briggs' Case see, Carl E. Hatch, *The Charles A. Briggs Heresy Trial*, New York, 1969; Mark S. Massa, *Charles Augustus Briggs and the Crisis of Historical Criticism*, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 1990.

<sup>144</sup> L. A. Loetscher, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>145</sup> *Minutes of the General Assembly*, 1900, pp. 35, 46 cited in Rian, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>146</sup> Benjamin B. Warfield, *Revision or Reaffirmation?* 1900, p. 3. This is a four-page letter to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Dr William Henry Roberts, which Warfield printed and made public. It is a rare document that has been made available online by the Presbyterian Church in America Historical Center. The document can be accessed at [www.pcahistory.org/documents/subscription/warfield.html](http://www.pcahistory.org/documents/subscription/warfield.html).

Twenty years later Van Dyke gave up his pew at the First Presbyterian Church in Princeton as by then he could no longer tolerate the orthodox Christianity which J. Gresham Machen was preaching whilst stated supply of the congregation.<sup>147</sup> The committee's proposals for revision were sent down to presbyteries following the General Assembly of 1902. The following year presbyteries, by an overwhelming majority, adopted the overtures. The effect of the revision was to tone down the distinctive Calvinism of the Confession in a similar way that the other Declaratory Acts had done in worldwide Presbyterianism.<sup>148</sup> Warfield's opposition to the revision<sup>149</sup> continued to the end, whilst his colleague William Brenton Greene spoke of the changes as "theologically inaccurate and rhetorically mediocre".<sup>150</sup> Geerhardus Vos, like others on the Princeton Seminary faculty, put himself on record as against the revision. He thought that one of the gravest symptoms of the revision movement was its lack of serious appeal to Scriptural authority for the confessional changes it advocated.<sup>151</sup>

The revision of the Confession was a major factor contributing towards the northern Presbyterian Church union with the non-Calvinistic Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1906.<sup>152</sup> In a series of articles in *The Presbyterian* in April and May 1904 Warfield had argued that the Cumberland Confession of 1814 and 1883 was unquestionably

<sup>147</sup> Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A biographical Memoir*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1954, pp. 356-360. In a newspaper release he stated, "The few Sabbaths that I am free from evangelical work to spend with my family are too precious to be wasted listening to such a dismal, bilious travesty of the gospel". See Stonehouse, op. cit., p. 375.

<sup>148</sup> See the article by John Murray, "Shall we include the Revision of 1903 in our creed?" in the *Presbyterian Guardian*, 26th September 1936, pp. 249-251.

<sup>149</sup> When the revision was completed Warfield was surprisingly positive in his judgement of the revision material. See his "The Confession of Faith as revised in 1903" in Benjamin B. Warfield, *Selected Shorter Writings*, Vol. II, pp. 370-410. The article first appeared as a pamphlet published in Richmond Virginia in 1904. For a discussion of Warfield's view of the revision see David B. Calhoun, *Princeton Seminary: The Majestic Testimony 1869-1929*, Vol. 2, Banner of Truth, Edinburgh, 1996, pp. 189-191.

<sup>150</sup> Quoted in, Ned B. Stonehouse, "What was back of the revision of 1903?" in the *Presbyterian Guardian*, 26th September 1936, p. 248.

<sup>151</sup> Loetscher, op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>152</sup> The result of this union was that 90,000 Cumberland Presbyterians joined the ranks of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The effect was to weaken the testimony of the denomination to the Bible and the Calvinism of the Confession. It helped further to entrench the position of those who wanted both the Confession and the Church modernised. See Rian, op. cit., p. 26 and Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 24.



Arminian. He asserted that none of the five points of Calvinism remained in it, except for the perseverance of the saints, and that “inconsistently”.<sup>153</sup> At a conference held at Princeton Seminary in the autumn prior to the union, William Brenton Greene addressed the issue of Church union in a paper entitled “Broad Churchism and the Christian Life” in which he asserted that Broad Churchism was not a friend, but rather a foe, of Christian living. Greene asserted that an attitude that ignores or minimises doctrinal thinking is “essentially sinful”.<sup>154</sup> In spite of the vigorous opposition of Princeton the union went ahead, weakening the testimony of the northern Presbyterian Church to the Bible and the Calvinism of the Confession. It was to a seminary that had lost on these two vital issues that Fleming went merely a year later to deliver his first Stone Lectures. It appears that the Flemings spent just over a week at Princeton; regrettably Paton’s account of the stay is very brief. Although not stated explicitly by his biographer, it seems that they stayed in the home of B. B. Warfield and his invalid wife. If this was the case we can be sure that the Old School Warfield and the Original Seceder Fleming would have discussed at length the ecclesiastical scene on both sides of the Atlantic and the drift that was taking place from Evangelical Calvinism.

On their arrival at the seminary, Fleming was quite unwell. His wife wrote: “David is not very fit; his severe attack of dysentery has left him a perfect skeleton.” Her account of Fleming’s first lecture is most interesting. “David has got his first lecture over, and he is not tired after it. The Miller Chapel is a nice place and easy to speak in, and David spoke very well, and seemed to have a most interested audience – principally students with a sprinkling of ladies. He is feeling better, but has a terrible shake, and is as thin as a post. Dr Warfield and Professor De Witt, who introduced David, are very charming men and most kind.” On the 18th October she again wrote, “David has got four of his Lectures past, and the attendance is well kept up, certainly increased as to students. He has, however, been much out of sorts, and yesterday Dr

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<sup>153</sup> Calhoun, *op. cit.*, p. 250. In order to avoid disputes over Reformed teachings, the Cumberland Presbytery allowed its candidates to subscribe to the Westminster Confession only “so far as they deemed it agreeable to the Word of God”. Old School clergy stood aghast at this flagrant disregard of the Reformed system of faith. See Longfield, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>154</sup> William B. Greene, “Broad Churchism and the Christian Life” in *The Princeton Theological Review*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 306-316.



*The Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary the year after Fleming delivered his first series of Stone Lectures. Front row (left to right): Francis L. Patton, William M. Paxton, John DeWitt. Middle row: Geerhardus Vos, William B. Greene Jr., Benjamin B. Warfield, John D. Davis, Robert Dick Wilson. Back row: Henry W. Smith, Joseph H. Dulles, William P. Armstrong, J. Oscar Boyd.*

Warfield sent in his doctor, who gave him pellets and pills to take.”<sup>155</sup> The Flemings left Princeton on 21st October and travelled via Washington to Philadelphia, where it had been arranged that he would deliver again one of the lectures that he had given at the seminary. They set off back from New York on 2nd November 1907. The winter and spring of the following year were spent writing some reviews and beginning the massive undertaking of preparing his Princeton Stone Lectures for the press.

### **Lady Grisell Baillie**

In August 1908, when pursuing his studies on the Covenanters and most probably his work on the Covenanter leader, Archibald Johnston of Wariston, Fleming visited Mellerstain House, near Kelso in the Scottish borders. The purpose of his visit was to examine the documents and records preserved there and to see what light they would shed on Covenanting history; he wanted specifically to examine the

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<sup>155</sup> For Fleming’s first series of Stone Lectures see, Paton, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

correspondence of Lady Grisell Baillie (1665-1746), the daughter of staunch Presbyterians, who occupied a prominent place in the martyrology of the Covenanting movement.<sup>156</sup> Mellerstain House had been bought in 1643 by George Baillie, the father of Robert Baillie of Jarviswood. The younger Baillie was the nephew of Johnston of Wariston and married Johnston's daughter, Rachel, by whom he had nine children. Lady Grisell Baillie was the daughter of Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth and became the wife of George Baillie (1664-1738), the son of Baillie of Jarviswood, in 1691. As a



*Lady Grisell Baillie.*

twelve-year-old girl she had carried letters from her father to his friend Baillie of Jarviswood, who was then in prison for his Covenanter sympathies. In 1684 Robert Baillie was hanged at the Mercat Cross in Edinburgh on the charge of treason, having allegedly been involved in the Rye House Plot of 1683 to assassinate either the king or his Catholic heir (James II). Grisell's father, like Robert Baillie, was caught up in the aftermath of the plot and fearing similar treatment concealed himself in the family vault in Polwarth Church. For a month Grisell kept him supplied with food and drink, putting food from her own plate at dinner into her lap in case servants should suspect. Later along with a trusted servant she excavated a hiding place for him beneath the family house.<sup>157</sup> These actions, according to Henry Grey Graham, bracketed Grisell Baillie in the pantheon of Scottish heroines.<sup>158</sup> Though only absent from home for a night, Fleming wrote to his wife; after first

<sup>156</sup> See the accounts of Grisell Baillie in: James Anderson, *The Ladies of the Covenant; Memoirs of distinguished Scottish female characters embracing the period of the Covenant and the Persecution*, London, 1850, pp. 546-587, and the account by her daughter Lady Murray of Stanhope in Robert Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution*, Glasgow, 1830, Vol. 4, pp. 505-509; see also pp. 509-511 for a brief account of her husband.

<sup>157</sup> Sir Patrick Hume later fled to Holland, where Grisell and the family joined him, only returning to Scotland after the 1688 revolution.

<sup>158</sup> See the article on Lady Grisell Baillie by Barbara C. Murison in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

enquiring about her health he informs her that he was impressed by what he found among Grisell Baillie's correspondence; "I hope that you are feeling hungrier and better. There are lots of letters here by Lady Grisell's husband to her when he was in London and she was at home. What an anxious-minded man he was, expecting a letter from each post, and because he received none for two posts he was in a terrible state of agony, fearing that something was wrong, and that little Grissy must be dead; he asked her to let him know the worst at once."<sup>159</sup> As Paton observes, the topic had something strangely prophetic about it.

### **Death of Robina Fleming**

A shadow was soon to fall over Fleming's earthly comfort; he would become a widower at the age of fifty-nine. Robina's strength was declining. She had contemplated a visit to the continent with Miss Buchanan and other friends, but it proved impossible. In the summer of 1908 Fleming took her to Ilkley, in Yorkshire, for her health and they had several walks together. Her weakness increased and she suffered considerable pain. In a little diary of "days to be remembered", Fleming has this entry on 22nd October 1908, "Robin was out for the last time".<sup>160</sup> For a couple of months her husband kept an anxious vigil until she was taken from him on 12th January 1909. She died at the young age of fifty-one; the cause of death is stated on her death certificate to be "malignant disease of the oesophagus and larynx".<sup>161</sup> She was buried in the Cathedral burying ground of St Andrews. Paton observes, "Twice in his long life the Doctor was destined to suffer a stroke calculated to plunge him almost into despair. The first had now fallen upon him, and to his latest days he confessed that from that time he was never the same." In a letter of sympathy to his biographer when his wife died, Fleming wrote: "For nearly fourteen years this has been an empty world to me, with little to live for except my work. . . . My greatest comfort has been in looking forward to a happy reunion in Immanuel's Land where there is neither pain nor parting, sorrow nor sickness."<sup>162</sup>

Fleming's Stone Lectures were published in 1910; in the dedication of the book he puts into words an estimate of his loss: "To the Memory

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<sup>159</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>160</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>161</sup> Accessed from [www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandsppeople.gov.uk) on 11th November 2010.

<sup>162</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

of R. A. H. F.<sup>163</sup> who had a clear head and clever hands, was God-fearing, courageous and gentle, knew no guile, no vanity, no selfishness, delighted in making others happy, honoured the upright and conscientious, held the trimmer and the time-server in contempt, admired all that was beautiful, abhorred all that was mean, loathed all that was vile.”<sup>164</sup> Two years later when his book, *Critical Reviews*, was published the dedication is similar, it read: “To the memory of R. A. H. F. my dear and devoted helpmeet (9th July, 1885 – 12th January, 1909). In God’s house for evermore her dwelling place shall be.”<sup>165</sup> Paton says, “These tributes were no mere outcome of the Doctor’s own emotion, but were supported by the testimony of all who had the privilege of Mrs Fleming’s friendship. He continued ever afterwards to wear her portrait framed in a locket, on the back of which were engraved the words of John Knox: ‘In joy shall we meet where death may not dissever us.’”<sup>166</sup>

In the days and months following his bereavement, Fleming had the needful incentive to work. The immediate task occupying his time was correcting the proofs of his 666-page Stone Lectures on *The Reformation in Scotland* that were passing through the press when Robina died. In addition Princeton Theological Seminary had invited him to give a second series of Stone Lectures. William Robertson Nicoll wrote to him: “I am sure your friends would all strongly advise you to accept the offer of Princeton for the Stone Lectureship. I know how savourless it will appear now. At the same time what you need above all things is the sense that you have some object and some duty left in life, and this will help you to collect your thoughts. Also, you know that Mrs Hay Fleming would have wished you to undertake it.”<sup>167</sup>

### Three projects

Though feeling the tremendous loss of his wife, Fleming accepted for a second time the Stone Lectureship at Princeton. The intervening five years of his life before he sailed again to America were occupied with

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<sup>163</sup> The initials represent Robina Agnes Hay Fleming.

<sup>164</sup> Dedication in D. H. Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland, causes, characteristics, consequences*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1910.

<sup>165</sup> Dedication in D. H. Fleming, *Critical Reviews relating chiefly to Scotland*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1912.

<sup>166</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>167</sup> Cited in Paton, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

three main projects. The first was his heavy involvement in the work of the Knox Club that was formed on 4th June 1909. Fleming was one of three Vice Presidents. The Club's main objects were dear to Fleming's heart. They were: (1) To promote the study of Scottish history, particularly in the period of the Reformation; (2) To maintain the Protestant Succession to the Throne; (3) To resist the efforts of Romanists to regain influence in Scotland. The movement was to gain significant support not least due to several important historical pamphlets written by Fleming and published by the Knox Club.<sup>168</sup>

The second project to occupy the bereaved husband was one that would engage him for practically the rest of his life. He was invited to undertake the editorship of the *Register of the Privy Seal*, as a Record Office Publication. One volume had already been issued under the editorship of the Deputy Keeper of the Records, Matthew Livingstone. Fleming took up his duties in August 1910 after three weeks' holiday in Helensburgh with his friend W. T. Oldrieve, who was His Majesty's Architect for Scotland. To enable the work to be done a room was provided for his use in H.M. General Register House. For the next fifteen years he was a familiar figure in the corridors of the Register House, researching and editing the *Register of the Privy Seal*.

The privy seal was originally the Scottish monarch's own personal or private seal and was used in respect of financial and household matters. It later came to be used for mandates to the Chancellor requiring him to issue charters under that seal. Accordingly, writs passing under the privy seal were recorded in the *Register of the Privy Seal*. The earliest register began in 1488 by which time the seal was used for authenticating the sovereign's written commands. Grants issued under the seal fell into two main groups. Firstly there were those passed on the strength of a warrant under the signet (the explicit authority of the sovereign's ring). These were mainly charters, remissions and legitimations and were written in Latin. The second main group were grants passed on the authority of a warrant under the sign manual where the privy seal alone was sufficient authority. These included grants of pensions, leases of crown lands, gifts of movable property that had fallen to the crown and appointments to minor offices in local government, university chairs and presentations to benefices. These were generally

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<sup>168</sup> See Appendix II to this paper for a detailed description of Fleming's involvement with the Knox Club.

written in the vernacular. So long as his health lasted this was the heavily antiquarian project in which Hay Fleming spent a very considerable amount of his time.<sup>169</sup> The research and editing to produce the second volume of the *Register of the Privy Seal* took him ten years to complete.

The third project was the preparation of his second series of Stone Lectures. The subject he chose was “Sir Archibald Johnston – Lord Wariston”.<sup>170</sup> Dr Warfield had left it to Fleming to select the topic of his lectures; he doubtless chose this topic because he had been for some time editing for the Scottish History Society a portion of Wariston’s *Diary* for publication.

### **Sabbath controversy**

From 1884 Fleming had been a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Towards the end of 1913, just before he went to Princeton for the second time, the Council of the Society recommended the partial opening of the National Museum connected with the Society on Sabbath afternoons from 2 to 4 in winter and from 2 to 5 in summer. There were, however, two essential conditions: no interference with opportunities for public worship on the part of the museum staff, and due provision that they should have in the seven days a full day’s rest.<sup>171</sup> At the Anniversary meeting of the Society on 1st December 1913, Fleming rose and addressed the meeting, drawing attention to the omission from the Secretary’s Report of any reference to the recent action of the Council in communicating to the Board of Trustees a desire that the National Museum should be opened to the public on Sunday. At this point the Chairman (Sir Robert Maxwell) interposed, pointing out that though he was willing to hear any remarks Fleming had to make on this matter, any motion without previous intimation was out of order. Accordingly, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be afterwards adjourned for a

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<sup>169</sup> *The Register of the Privy Seal, 1488-1584* (Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum) has been published in eight volumes. Fleming edited the second volume covering the period from 1529-1542 and was joint editor with James Beveridge of the third volume that covered the period from 1542-1548. These volumes are available from Tanner Ritchie Publishing of Canada in a digital edition that retains the original print edition format but is now fully searchable.

<sup>170</sup> Johnston was a Covenanter politician. From the start of the revolt against Charles I in 1637 he was at its centre. Johnston and Alexander Henderson were joint authors of the National Covenant of 1638.

<sup>171</sup> See R. L. Orr, *Lord Guthrie: A Memoir*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1923, p. 190.

fortnight so as to allow the following motion put forward by Fleming to be voted on:

In the opinion of this General Meeting, the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland should not be opened on Sabbath, and the Council should consider the advisability of opening it on the evenings of other days in summer.<sup>172</sup>

At the adjourned meeting Fleming moved his motion which was seconded by his friend, W. T. Oldrieve, a Vice President of the Society. Doubtless to Fleming's surprise and disappointment, a countermotion to permit Sabbath opening and support the Council's recommendation was moved by Lord Guthrie, the son of the Free Church leader Thomas Guthrie. The countermotion carried by 43 votes to 24. At this stage Fleming entered a dissent for himself and any who adhered with him, asking that it be recorded in the *Proceedings* of the Society.

The dissent is most interesting and reflects Fleming's Christian steadfastness and his regard for the sanctity of the Sabbath. As he requested, it was printed in the Society's *Proceedings* and was in these terms:

To the President and Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

In my own name, and in name of all the Fellows of the Society who adhere to me, I dissent from and protest against the decision of the Society, at its adjourned General Meeting on the 15th instant, in favour of the opening of the National Museum of Antiquities on the Lord's Day, because:

1. No section of the community has ever publicly expressed a desire to have the Museum opened on that day.
2. Such opening is quite unnecessary.
3. The Council has not sufficiently, if at all, considered the propriety of opening the Museum on the evenings of week-days, although, prior to October 1890, fully two hundred and twenty-six thousand visitors patronised it between 7 and 9 o'clock on the Saturday evenings, during twenty-nine of the years that it was housed in the Royal Institution.

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<sup>172</sup> *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. XLVIII, pp. 9-10.



4. The public will have more than ample opportunity of inspecting the Museum if it is opened on week-day evenings.
5. The national desire has long been to have the first day of the week preserved (except for works of necessity and mercy) as a day of rest.
6. This is our impression, which was not contradicted at the Meeting, that one of the reasons for wishing to have the Museum opened on the Lord's Day is to obtain from the Treasury an increase of wages for the employees, who would naturally expect special pay for "Sunday" labour. If these men are at present underpaid, this should be met on its own merits.
7. Being neither a work of necessity nor of mercy, the opening on the Lord's Day would, on the part of the attendants, be a direct breach of the fourth commandment; and, although the present *employees* may have no religious scruples in the matter, when successors have to be appointed the most suitable and reliable men then eligible may, on conscientious grounds, refrain from applying.
8. This proposed opening on the Lord's Day, never mooted in the Society until now, has introduced discord; and, if persevered in, is likely to disturb seriously the harmony which has prevailed for more than a century.
9. Those who, on conscientious grounds, are opposed to the opening on the Lord's Day may withhold donations from the Museum, or, although possessed of excellent qualifications, may decline to join the Society. The statement made by Lord Guthrie, on behalf of the Council, that the proposed hours of opening on the Lord's Day (from 2 to 4, or 2 to 5, in the afternoons) would be so carefully restricted that there need be no fear of further encroachment, is, on the face of it, fallacious. This is the thin end of the wedge. Successors in office may extend the hours, and introduce other innovations, such as a public lecturer on Museum objects, lantern displays, and refreshments.

It is hoped that this Dissent and Protest, with the reasons thereof, will be printed in the *Proceedings* of the Society.

D. Hay Fleming – 19th December 1913.<sup>173</sup>

### **Fleming's second series of Stone Lectures**

Fleming sailed from Liverpool on 25th September 1914 on the Allan liner *Hesperian*. The First World War had begun in the summer of that year<sup>174</sup> and the journey to America was very different from the one he had taken with his wife seven years earlier. On his return he wrote an article in which he details some incidents of the voyage for the local newspaper, the *St Andrews Citizen*.<sup>175</sup> Every porthole and window had to be covered over at night to prevent any lights being seen by enemy boats. Describing the voyage, Fleming wrote, “One evening the gentlemen who shared my room suggested that we should open the window slightly to get a little more fresh air. It was accordingly opened until it stood about one inch ajar, the canvas covering being, as we thought, still an effective covering. Many minutes had not elapsed ere a steward came with the reproof, ‘your window is open, sir’. On being asked how he knew, he replied that he had got a message from the bridge. ‘How did they know on the bridge?’ I asked. ‘Oh,’ he said, they saw the reflection on the water.’”<sup>176</sup>

When Fleming eventually landed at Quebec he did a little sightseeing, and then spent a week with relatives in Ontario before journeying down to Princeton. The seminary to which he returned in 1914 was significantly different from the one he had visited seven years earlier when he gave his first series of Stone Lectures. In 1907 the faculty

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<sup>173</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 431-432. After his brief account of this incident, Fleming’s biographer enlarges on his regard for the Sabbath. “Writing to a friend in 1925, Fleming stated, ‘Last autumn I spent a fortnight in Drymen . . . and was perfectly appalled by the Sabbath desecration. The number of private motors, motor cycles and char-a-bancs that passed through the village on the Lord’s Day was lamentable. . . . It would be dreadful anywhere; but in Sabbath-loving Scotland it is unspeakably sad. The War seems to have loosened the morality of the country.’ Ten months before he died his help was enlisted in January 1931 on behalf of those citizens in Edinburgh who sought to interdict the authorities in Edinburgh regarding the opening of picture-houses (cinemas) on the Lord’s Day.” Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>174</sup> The United Kingdom declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914.

<sup>175</sup> The article was printed in the *St Andrews Citizen* of 14th November 1914. It was afterwards reprinted as a booklet.

<sup>176</sup> Cited in Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

had just lost an early skirmish in the battle to preserve the old orthodoxy in the denomination at large. In the intervening years the battle had now come to the doors of Princeton. Warfield and the conservatives were now fighting to preserve the Evangelical Calvinism at the seminary itself. Little did either Fleming or the faculty realise that when Fleming returned to Princeton he would be witnessing the battle lines being drawn that in 1929, two years before his death, would result in the seminary being lost to the modernists.

Fleming would have been well aware of the issues. The fight now beginning in earnest in American Presbyterianism at large, and at Princeton in particular, was similar to the one Fleming had witnessed in Scotland twenty years earlier. The Confessional revision movement in Scotland had taken the form of the declining Churches adopting a Declaratory Act. The underlying motivation of departure from a full commitment to old-school Calvinism was the same on both sides of the Atlantic. The revision movement, and the departure from “Second Reformation principles” in Scotland, had been the reason why Fleming had left the Free Church, on the eve of its merger with the United Presbyterian Church, to join the firmly Calvinistic Original Secession Church.

The challenge to orthodoxy at Princeton began almost innocuously with criticism of the curriculum.<sup>177</sup> The cry for change had two strands. The first was a desire for a more practical approach to theological education with far greater stress on the English Bible than on the acquisition of the original languages in which scripture had been written. The second strand of criticism was that the Princeton curriculum was fixed and did not give students options to choose specific courses – there were no elective course options. The student body had petitioned the directors and faculty as early as 1903, which resulted in the directors appointing Charles Rosenbury Erdman (1866-1960)<sup>178</sup> as Professor of Practical Theology in 1906. Erdman’s main role was to

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<sup>177</sup> One of the best accounts of the events leading up to the seminary’s fall into the hands of modernism is the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Ronald Thomas Clutter, *The Reorientation of Princeton Theological Seminary 1900-1929*, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1982. Chapter IV deals with “The challenge to the Princeton curriculum”.

<sup>178</sup> Charles Erdman was the son of William J. Erdman, a New School Presbyterian minister who had developed a close friendship with the evangelist Dwight Lyman Moody. For three years, between 1875 and 1878, whilst Moody was on his first mission to the United Kingdom, he was the minister of his church in Chicago. The evangelist’s impact on Charles was second only to that of his father. He provided a model for Erdman who

develop the English Bible programme so that it might become more fully a part of Princeton curriculum rather than being an extra-curricular pursuit. With Erdman's appointment, however, a man was on the faculty who had little sympathy with the position of old Princeton and would eventually play a leading part in the seminary's reorganisation.

Dissatisfaction with the curriculum surfaced again in 1909 with a student rebellion. A number of students in the junior and middler classes petitioned the Board of Directors, complaining about the way some classes were taught. This time they went so far as to name three professors whose classes were singled out for criticism. These were the classes of Francis Landey Patton, the President of the seminary, William Park Armstrong, the Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis and John D. Davis, the Professor of Oriental and Old Testament Literature.<sup>179</sup> The students involved in the petition appointed sub-committees to meet with certain faculty members to seek a solution to their problems. In response to the student unrest the directors of the seminary set up a sub-committee to investigate the situation. Warfield defended the Princeton curriculum handed down to him by Archibald Alexander, Samuel Miller and Charles Hodge and was for the most part successful. A programme focused on the English Bible had begun, despite the objections of Warfield and others on the faculty. Erdman's courses were not regarded by Warfield and his conservative colleagues as proper courses for the seminary. This resulted in a tension that foreshadowed future conflicts between the practically minded Erdman and the theologically minded faculty majority.<sup>180</sup> Change, however, would soon come following the seminary's centennial in 1912.

Francis Patton resigned as President in 1913 after leading the centennial celebrations and Warfield served as interim President whilst a search was conducted for a man to take permanently the reins at

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remarked of his mentor, "Mr Moody's preaching was not only Biblical it was positive. With negations he had little to do. He avoided controversy, and believed it did more harm than good. . . . Mr Moody was seeking to save souls, and he knew that controversialists do not usually win followers for Christ or encourage others to study the Bible." Charles Erdman, *D. L. Moody: His Message for Today*, New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1928, p. 84. For an account of Erdman's role in the events leading to the reorganisation of Princeton see, Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates*, Oxford University Press 1991, pp. 128-161.

<sup>179</sup> Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1954, p.149.

<sup>180</sup> Clutter, op. cit., p. 87.

Princeton. The directors' Committee on the Presidency recommended one of its own members, Joseph Ross Stevenson (1866-1939), to replace Patton. Stevenson was not a Princeton trained man. He had spent most of his career in the pastorate except for a period of eight years when he taught ecclesiastical history at McCormack Seminary. The recommendation of the Committee on the Presidency was not without opposition as a minority report recommended that Warfield be elected president. After much discussion and balloting several times the directors elected Stevenson by a majority of one vote.<sup>181</sup> It was to be a choice many directors would regret a decade later, during the theological controversy in the denomination in the 1920s.<sup>182</sup> Ned Stonehouse declares that 1914, the year of the election and installation of Stevenson as President of Princeton, "marks a dividing line in the history of the seminary".<sup>183</sup> Paul Woolley looks further back to 1902 when Stevenson was elected to the Board of Directors and writes, "It was an evil day for the seminary, for pious and believing though he was, he had no understanding of, or love for, the great tradition which the theologians of Princeton had been building for ninety years."<sup>184</sup>

Stevenson was inaugurated as President on 13th October 1914. Shortly after his inauguration there was another move to change the curriculum. This time it was driven on by Stevenson and carried regardless of the objections of Warfield, Geerhardus Vos, Casper Wistar

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<sup>181</sup> Rian, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>182</sup> William K. Selden, *Princeton Theological Seminary: A Narrative History 1812-1992*, Princeton University Press, 1992, p. 86.

<sup>183</sup> Stonehouse, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>184</sup> Paul Woolley, *The Significance of J. Gresham Machen Today*, Nutley, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1977, p. 11. Edwin H. Rian makes the following perceptive observations with respect to Stevenson: "His spirit of doctrinal inclusivism and his great zeal for church union even when based upon vague and meaningless theological statements, marked his whole career at Princeton and brought an alien viewpoint to the institution. It was plain to any objective observer that Dr Stevenson and most of faculty were far apart in their understanding of Princeton's place in the Christian world. The conflict between the two viewpoints was a logical result which men like Dr Warfield foresaw and which made them so reluctant to welcome Dr Stevenson's appointment as president" (op. cit., p. 65). W. J. Grier recounts a story regarding Warfield and Stevenson's wife: "A prominent lady of Princeton met him during the sessions of the General Assembly and said: 'Dr Warfield, I hear there is going to be trouble in the Assembly. Do let us pray for peace.' 'I am praying,' replied Dr Warfield, 'that if they do not do what is right, there might be a mighty battle.'" "Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, D.D., L.L.D., Litt.D." in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. XXII. No. 2, April 1950, p. 121.

Hodge and William Brenton Greene. Just weeks before Stevenson's inauguration, in the midst of all this turmoil, Fleming arrived at Princeton to deliver his second series of Stone Lectures. This time he was not the guest of his friend B. B. Warfield but of president-elect Stevenson. After his first visit and his stay with the Warfields we can be reasonably sure Fleming was aware of the situation in the Church at large and the implications for the seminary. There can be little doubt that he would have been wholly sympathetic with Warfield and the Old School section of the faculty. Whilst he was at the seminary delivering his Stone Lectures the conflict over the curriculum was raging. Five days after Fleming sailed from New York, Warfield was making his case to the Committee of the Board of Directors on the Curriculum and stating that the real problem which Princeton faced was that college students were coming to the seminary inadequately prepared. Warfield desired that the seminary take these men, and meet their needs, not by lowering requirements but by preparing them to meet the established standards.<sup>185</sup> Stevenson and Erdman held broad evangelical views but were seriously lacking in strong Calvinistic convictions. Once they were together it was their policy that eventually led to the fall of the seminary fifteen years later to modernism. They were the two men within Princeton that bear the greatest responsibility for this event.

On their first visit to Princeton, Robina Fleming by her letters and diary had provided insights on the seminary, the lectures and the journey. On his second visit Fleming seems to have gone alone and no further insights about Princeton at this crucial time of transition in the history of the seminary have been recorded by his biographer. He returned on a White Star liner, the *Adriatic*, which left New York on 28th October. In Liverpool his books and manuscripts were regarded as suspicious by the war-time customs officials. They examined them very

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<sup>185</sup> Benjamin B. Warfield to the Committee of the Board of Directors on the Curriculum, 3rd November 1914, cited in Clutter, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-98. Ned B. Stonehouse states that Warfield ceased to attend faculty meetings in disgust at the course developments were taking (*op. cit.*, p. 219). Clutter who had access to the faculty minutes corrects this; he writes: "Warfield did not cease to attend all of the faculty meetings. He attended very seldom until Stevenson took a leave of absence for six months in order to minister to men in the Armed Forces in World War I. For these six months, Warfield the senior member of the faculty is the first person named as present at every faculty meeting. Stevenson returned to the seminary in April 1919, and Warfield was conspicuous by his absence once again. He only attended two meetings from that date until his death in February 1921" (*op. cit.*, p. 103).

carefully before they were satisfied it was not material that would be helpful to the Germans, and that a little metal box he had bought for a present was not a bomb. Regrettably, the second series of Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary were never published. All we have from his pen on Wariston is the forty-one page introduction to the second volume of the *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston (1650-1654)*,<sup>186</sup> published by the Scottish History Society in 1919. Beyond the article in the *St Andrews Citizen* about the war-time journey to America, there is no written material by Fleming flowing from his second series of Stone Lectures.

### **Fleming's housekeeper**

The following year Fleming was to suffer a further bereavement; his wife's cousin, Helen Buchanan, died on 14th October 1916 after suffering from cancer for two years – according to Fleming's biographer, it was “a long and painful illness”.<sup>187</sup> She was the same age as Fleming (they were both sixty-seven) and had lived with the Flemings after Robina's father, James Hart, had died in April 1902. Since his wife's death in 1909 Helen had been his housekeeper and companion. She was buried in the Eastern Cemetery at St Andrews beside the remains of Robina's parents. Her death was reported by Fleming who states his relationship to her to be cousin-in-law. Her place as his housekeeper was taken, six months before she died, by a Miss Gordon of whom we know very little. Paton notes, “She ministered sympathetically and efficiently to him for the remaining fifteen years of his life”.<sup>188</sup> His debt to her was very considerable for, as we shall notice, the last four years of his life were ones of illness and considerable suffering in which Miss Gordon cared for him, going far beyond the role of housekeeper.

### **Scottish Reformation Society**

In 1916, Fleming was elected a Vice-president of the Scottish Reformation Society. Three years later he became its President in succession to the Earl of Moray. This office he held until his death.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> See, *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, Scottish History Society, Edinburgh, 1919, Vol. II, pp. ix-lii, for Fleming's introduction. From p. lii it is clear that Fleming's future biographer Henry M. Paton assisted him in making a transcript of Wariston's diaries.

<sup>187</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 46.

<sup>188</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 46-47.

The organisation is labelled by John Wolffe, in his article on the Society in the *Dictionary of Scottish History & Theology*, as the principal Scottish anti-Catholic society.<sup>190</sup> It was formed on 5th December 1850, just over a year after Fleming was born, in the Edinburgh Music Hall. Its constitution is interdenominational, although in practice in the first few decades of its existence it was led by members of the Free Church of Scotland, particularly James Begg and James Aitken Wylie. Initially the Society was primarily a political pressure group concerned to resist further concessions to Catholicism. The Society's journal, *The Bulwark*, has appeared continuously since 1851. As the years passed the political side of its witness receded and the promotion of a consciousness of the Reformation heritage became the most prominent part of the Society's work.

As an ardent Protestant, Fleming supported the Society for almost all his adult life. When he became a member of the Society is not entirely clear. However, Paton states he was a member of its committee for nearly forty years. This implies committee membership since the early 1890s when he was in his early forties. In support of its aims Fleming both contributed extensively to its journal, *The Bulwark*, and wrote a number of pamphlets on behalf of the Society. From Paton's bibliography of Fleming's writings he lists two booklets written for the Society and fifteen articles, six of which were reprinted as booklets.

The articles submitted to *The Bulwark* were almost entirely exposing the errors of Romanism. They include the following: *Modesty and the Confessional* (September 1921), *The Church from which the Reformation delivered Scotland* (July-August 1922), *The Pope's dispensing power in marriage* (December 1924), and *Jesuit Morality* (September 1930).

### **Antiquarian researcher**

Following his second visit to Princeton, Fleming continued with his antiquarian researches. The volume which he edited of *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*<sup>191</sup> was published in 1921 – a massive work of antiquarian erudition and scholarship of nearly a thousand pages,

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<sup>190</sup> J. R. Wolffe, "Scottish Reformation Society" in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Editor Nigel M. De S. Cameron, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 760-761.

<sup>191</sup> *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, Vol. II, 1529-1542, edited by David Hay Fleming. He began work on Volume III (1542-1548), but died in the early stages of the editing work. The volume was completed by James Beveridge.



including a thirty-five page introduction by Fleming with copious references and footnotes on almost every page. No sooner was this completed than Fleming proceeded with the preparation of another volume. In addition, whilst on holiday in his ancestral home in Glengairn,<sup>192</sup> he agreed to work on another antiquarian project, the making of a calendar of the Charters and other documents in the municipal archives of St Andrews. For many years these two projects, along with revision of his *Guide to St Andrews*,<sup>193</sup> occupied a very considerable portion of his time. Another antiquarian project he felt he must at all costs accomplish, and into which he put all his available energy, was the finishing of his *Catalogue of the Cathedral Museum*.

The St Andrews correspondent to the *Scotsman*, writing immediately after Fleming's death, supplies the following interesting information:

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that he knew every stone of its ancient ruins. St Andrews is especially indebted to him for the influence he brought to bear upon H.M. Board of Works to repair the old ruins. During his lifetime, every ancient ruin in the city was repaired, and what time has left of these ruins is now in a perfect state of preservation. For a number of years he was honorary custodian of the ancient buildings in St Andrews, which come under control of the Board of Works. It was an ambition of his that a museum should be built at the Cathedral grounds for the housing of the relics of antiquity, and in that matter, he persuaded the officials of the Board of Works to erect in 1908 the Cathedral Museum which stands behind the south wall of the chapter house.<sup>194</sup>

Because Fleming had urged that such a museum be set up, he felt it to be his duty to catalogue its contents. The arduous task of arranging and cataloguing the exhibits was undertaken by him as a labour of love.

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<sup>192</sup> Glengairn is situated west of Aberdeen in Deeside. This was where the sister of the wife of his father's older brother William lived. Fleming made visits to them as a young man. See Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 9, 47.

<sup>193</sup> The final edition of this *Guide* was issued in the summer of 1924.

<sup>194</sup> *Scotsman*, 9th November 1931, p. 8. After Fleming moved to Edinburgh, H.M. Office of Works made a grant to meet his travelling and incidental expenses, so that on periodical visits to St Andrews he might examine the state of the fabric and make helpful suggestions (Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 93).



*St Andrews Cathedral and the church of St Regulus.*

The published volume, replete with illustrations, deals with every exhibit at the time of its publication. It was the copestone of Fleming's antiquarian labours. He completed it in December 1930 and it was published by Oliver & Boyd the following year. It was to be one of his very last productions and was dedicated to his mother.<sup>195</sup>

With hindsight, those who appreciate Fleming's valuable contribution to ecclesiastical history have cause to regret his engrossment in antiquarian studies in the last decade of his life. In 1922, when he was seventy-three years of age, he had written to a friend saying that the books on which he had set his heart would take twenty years' steady work, and as there was no hope of his being spared that time, he felt he must "trachle on" to the end of his days.<sup>196</sup> He had publicly stated that he intended to complete his life of Mary Queen of Scots. In the preface to the published volume he wrote, "In another volume I purpose to deal with Mary's life in England, and in connection with the conferences at York and Westminster the Casket letters will be discussed".<sup>197</sup> William Robertson Nicoll was continually reminding him of this commitment<sup>198</sup> and a contributor to the *Glasgow Herald* wrote, "More than a quarter of a century has elapsed. . . . All through these years students have waited, with lessening hopes, for the promised volume, and up till now in vain. . . . But hopes are brightening by the announcement that Dr Hay Fleming 'hopes soon to write' the second volume."<sup>199</sup> In addition it was always understood that Fleming was working on a biography of John Knox. In the preface to the published volume of his first Stone Lectures he wrote, "There are several things which are touched upon lightly: these I intend to discuss thoroughly in my *Life of Knox*."<sup>200</sup> With regard to this volume, like to that of the continuation of his life of Mary Queen of Scots, Fleming was asked time and again respecting the progress he was making. Before he went to Princeton for the second time, Nicoll wrote, "By the way I hope you will be able to send me the complete manuscript of John Knox before you

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<sup>195</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>196</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>197</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Mary Queen of Scots: From her birth to her flight to England*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1898, pp. vii-viii.

<sup>198</sup> See the references in Paton, op. Cit., p. 80.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> D. H. Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland: Causes, Characteristics, Consequences*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1910, p. ix.

sail". Then after his return Nicoll had this further counsel: "I am so very anxious that you should push through with John Knox to finish it. That would be a monumental work for you, and it is time you did it. The years come upon you as they do upon the rest of us and your long years of labour are not adequately represented in print." Four years later Nicoll is still urging him on in these terms, "But the great question, my dear fellow, is how is that Life of John Knox getting on?".<sup>201</sup> There can be little doubt Fleming's antiquarian researches on the *Privy Seal Register*, cataloguing the Cathedral Museum and documenting the Charters and other documents in St Andrews' municipal archives so absorbed his time that the expectations of both scholars and the wider Christian public with respect to these two great ventures, particularly a "Life of John Knox", were never fulfilled. Henry Paton observes, both with respect to a further volume on Mary Queen of Scots and a Life of John Knox, "It must be regarded in many quarters as little short of a tragedy, that towards the fulfilment of expectations of scholars regarding these two great ventures, the Doctor seems to have left behind him nothing substantial in the way of manuscript".<sup>202</sup>

That Fleming was an authority on Knox is plain from his many lectures and pamphlets on the Reformer. When William Croft Dickinson was producing his definitive version of John Knox's *History of the Reformation in Scotland* he examined the notes of David Laing, the editor of *The Works of John Knox*, and adds this comment in his foreword: "I have taken full advantage of David Laing's notes and of a number of additional notes made by Hay Fleming in his own copy of Laing's edition now in the Hay Fleming Memorial Library at St Andrews."<sup>203</sup>

## V. FLEMING'S LAST DAYS

All this activity began to take its toll on Fleming. He had little sleep and frequently during the winter months he suffered from colds. In February 1925 he underwent treatment for an ulcer. For a month he was unable to

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<sup>201</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>202</sup> Paton adds, "It is true that his library contains many rare works relating to both these personages, and there may be annotations here and there; but nothing either of outline or connected narrative has been discovered". Paton, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

<sup>203</sup> William Croft Dickinson (Editor), *John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1950, Vol. 1, p. xiii.

read or write. In October of the same year he ceased to work at the Register House on the *Privy Seal Register* because of eye trouble. Then, for over a year, he suffered considerable pain while seeking to prepare material for publication – on occasions it was clear the only answer was a complete rest. The following year his health improved and on a visit to West Linton with his sister he was able to go for quite long walks. This was not to continue long as his health was soon to take a significant turn for the worse. For a considerable period he had visited St Andrews once a month to attend to various affairs, most of which were antiquarian. Though not detailed by Paton, these visits doubtless also involved the collection of the rental income on his properties. In July 1927, returning to Edinburgh from St Andrews by train after a regular visit, he gave up his seat in a crowded compartment to a lady and stood by a window. At the time, it was believed that the draught of cold air brought on an attack of shingles, which was followed by acute neuritis in the back of the head, neck and right shoulder. This resulted in pain which became at times almost unendurable and holiday plans had to be abandoned.<sup>204</sup>

On 29th February 1928, a commemoration meeting was held in St Andrews to mark the four hundredth anniversary of the martyrdom of Patrick Hamilton. Forty-one years earlier Fleming had written a sketch of Hamilton's life in his *Martyrs & Confessors of St Andrews*. This was a meeting where Fleming would have rejoiced to have been present and to have taken an active part in the proceedings; he was, however, unable to attend. His presence was sorely missed and a telegraph of sympathy was sent to him in these terms: "This crowded meeting at St Andrews expresses deep regret at the absence of Dr David Hay Fleming, and hopes that he will soon recover and be enabled to continue his invaluable service to the cause of Protestant principles and accurate historical writings."<sup>205</sup>

Over the next few years many efforts were made to secure relief from pain by a variety of treatments; all of which gave him very little respite. Fleming was to spend his remaining days in this world, to use Paton's words, "in extreme suffering".<sup>206</sup> For two years he was virtually prevented from working or undertaking any research. When relief came he would start working again, only to find the effort was too much for

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<sup>204</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>205</sup> Cited in Paton, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>206</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 48.

him. Paton observes, "One task after another was laid aside; but oh! How reluctant he was to confess to being beaten".<sup>207</sup> Clearly, he still hoped that further years of service might still be possible. Only with the greatest reluctance did he agree to a colleague being appointed in his editorial work on the *Privy Seal Register* at the Register House.<sup>208</sup>

Amidst great pain Fleming's patience and courage won the admiration of a large circle of friends. He had, however, a very great aversion to the use of drugs and would rather endure pain than take them. Coupled with this he had little faith in medical practitioners, since in his view they had killed his brother by overdosing him with medicines of various kinds. However, due to the extremity of his pain he had to consult them in the hope of relief. He even tried, what in the 1920s were experimental treatments, electric massage and the application of sun rays. The effect of all this was very slight. It was then thought a change of air might help the sufferer, so in May 1928 he went with his sister Christina to Bridge of Allan hydropathic baths. This also proved of little effect as he had an altercation with the authorities over his dress. Though Paton does not elaborate, it is almost certain that he refused to wear a bathing costume as he, along with many other conservative Presbyterians, regarded such dress as unseemly. A further sad effect of his illness was his inability to attend Church for considerable stretches at a time. The loss of Christian fellowship pained him, and visits by the minister of Victoria Terrace Original Secession Church and members of the congregation were a source of real joy. Friends would copy out sermons for him which he would read on Sabbath, along with those of his favourite preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

As a result of the solicitation of friends he was persuaded to go to the French Riviera early in 1930. It had been suggested by a medical friend that three months of sunshine would cure him.<sup>209</sup> Accompanied by his sister and his housekeeper, Miss Gordon, he went in the middle of February, to Nice and then to Monte Carlo. Although Fleming's party was in the South of France for three months, the excursion had little

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<sup>207</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>208</sup> The third volume of the *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland* was edited jointly by Fleming and James Beveridge. It was not published until five years after his death.

<sup>209</sup> Excursions to the sunny climate of the continent with the object of recovering health were common at that time. Similar journeys were undertaken by both John Kennedy of Dingwall who went to Italy and by Charles Spurgeon who frequently went to Mentone on the Mediterranean.

effect on the sufferer's health. The amount of sunshine did not meet expectations. On their way home, due to Fleming's weakness they had to abandon an intended visit to Avignon<sup>210</sup> and Arles. Travelling via Lyon and Paris they eventually reached London, where they hoped to see a medical specialist in Fleming's complaint. To their sadness, this also was unsuccessful as the doctor was away from home. Greatly disappointed they arrived back in Edinburgh after a long journey, the object of which had in almost every aspect failed.

During these years of suffering, Fleming in no way lost interest in current affairs and, as his health permitted, he wielded his pen in defence of the Protestant cause by writing articles for the Scottish Reformation Society's magazine, *The Bulwark*. Henry Paton observed: "Nothing so kindled his eye and enthused his spirit as the sight of a fox breaking from covert – in the shape of some Jesuitical attack on historical truth."<sup>211</sup> The exercise helped him to forget his affliction and he was comforted that at least some of his natural force had not abated.<sup>212</sup> Unquestionably, Fleming was a man with a motive, and that motive was by fair historical analysis to defend Protestantism against its critics. At the end of March 1931, the Scottish Reformation Society sent to its President an expression of sympathy and thanked him for the services he had rendered to the Society. In September of the same year Fleming was engaged in a controversy about the Wigtown Martyrs. The historicity of the account had been called in question by a contributor to the Galloway Press. This was precisely the sort of issue that would stir Fleming into action; his historical scholarship would be harnessed to defend the memory of the righteous.

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<sup>210</sup> This was no doubt to see the scene of the Avignon papacy from 1305 to 1377 and the impressive papal palace. Following the strife between Pope Boniface VIII and Philip IV of France, and the death after only eight months of Boniface's successor, a deadlocked conclave finally elected Clement V, a Frenchman, as pope in 1305. Clement, who had previously been Archbishop of Rouen, refused to move to Rome. He insisted on remaining in France, and in 1309 moved his court to the papal enclave at Avignon, where it remained for the next 68 years. A total of seven popes reigned at Avignon; all were French, and all were increasingly under the influence of the French crown. Finally in 1377 Gregory XI moved his court to Rome, officially ending the Avignon papacy.

<sup>211</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 52, 114.

<sup>212</sup> Articles written at this time included, *Were Cardinal Beaton and Archbishop Hamilton not Libertines?* and *Jesuit Morality*. Both first appeared in *The Bulwark* and were later published as booklets.

The day of his departure to glory was, however, drawing near. On Friday, 6th November 1931, after receiving a number of visitors, he was rather exhausted but felt less pain. He then engaged in preparing notices to his tenants in St Andrews informing them that their rents were due. By eight in the evening the notices were written in time to catch the evening post. Necessary tasks having been completed he retired to bed to take what sleep he could. At five the following morning he rang for his housekeeper, Miss Gordon, complaining of pains in his chest. She did what she could to alleviate the pain and he lay down, but several minutes later he rang for her again. She then went to prepare him a cup of tea, and returned to find him half out of bed, not quite fallen to the floor. A physician – Dr A. Ninian Bruce – was called who pronounced that David Hay Fleming was dead. The cause of death is stated on the death certificate to be angina pectoris. The death was reported by his sister Christina Clendinnen.<sup>213</sup>

The funeral took place on Wednesday 11th November. Paton notes that, “a large gathering of mourners attended the service held at nine in the morning at his house. Afterwards, his remains were conveyed by road to St Andrews; a number of friends travelled thither by train.”<sup>214</sup> The cortege was met at the Cathedral burying ground by a considerable number of St Andrews men, including the Principal and several members of the University and other prominent citizens. The organisations of which he was a member sent representatives to his funeral. Those who survived of Fleming’s old associates bowed their heads in silence as his body was consigned to the ground in the hope of a glorious resurrection. In accordance with his clearly expressed wish, no service was held at the graveside.<sup>215</sup> His biographer ends the narrative portion of his volume with these words: “He sleeps in . . . the very centre of that ancient fane whose walls and pillars he would have loved to have

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<sup>213</sup> Death certificate of David Hay Fleming accessed from [www.scotlandscotlandpeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandscotlandpeople.gov.uk) on 14th June 2010.

<sup>214</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>215</sup> This was in line with the practice of the Reformed Church in its best days. Graveside services were associated with Romanism and the Romish practice of prayers for the dead. *The Directory for the Public Worship of God*, produced by the Westminster Divines, emphasises and articulates the practice of the Reformed Church: “When any person departeth this life, let the body, upon the day of burial, be decently attended from the house to the place appointed for publick burial, and there be interred, without any ceremony.” *Westminster Confession of Faith and related documents*, Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland edition, 1962, p. 390.



seen restored to their pristine glory. His body sleeps; his spirit dwells within Immanuel's Land with her he loved: where is no severance, for former things are passed away."<sup>216</sup> On the tombstone on which his name is inscribed are the words of the Shorter Catechism, which at the time of his wife's death he had caused to be engraved at its base, "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection."<sup>217</sup>

Following his death, tributes to Fleming's abilities<sup>218</sup> were very extensive. We give excerpts from three sources: the first is from the *Scotsman*, a second is from two of the learned societies of which Fleming was a member, and the third from one of the most conservative Scottish Presbyterian Churches. The *Scotsman* of Monday 9th November 1931 contained a detailed obituary that begins as follows –

The death of David Hay Fleming, LL.D., in Edinburgh on Saturday, at the advanced age of 82, is probably the greatest loss Scottish historical scholarship has sustained since the passing of Andrew Lang, almost twenty years ago – Andrew Lang once referred to Hay Fleming . . . as his "friend and constant trouncer". . . . In 1883 he retired in order to devote himself to the study of Scottish history. For nearly half a century this was the absorbing interest of his life, and as a result of his untiring labours he made many contributions of outstanding importance to the elucidation of the Reformation and Covenanting periods. No more laborious or painstaking worker in the field of Scottish historical research ever lived. Indeed, it may well be doubted if there is another monument of historical learning in our national literature that can

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<sup>216</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 54.

<sup>217</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 114-115. The *Shorter Catechism's* answer to Question 37, "What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?"

<sup>218</sup> The tributes to Fleming's abilities at the time of his death are in marked contrast to how Fleming is currently viewed in some sections of modern Scottish academia. Richard G. Kyle and Dale W. Johnston in their book *John Knox: An introduction to his Life and Works*, Wipf & Stock, Eugene, 2009, p. 192, n. 46, after citing Fleming as an authority, make the following observation in a footnote: "We fully appreciate that reference to D. Hay Fleming fits into the category of the politically incorrect. Some Scottish reviewers discredit any piece of scholarship merely for referencing him as a source. For many years Hay Fleming was a 'card carrying' officer of the Knox Club which existed in large part to thwart Roman Catholicism in Scotland." For further analysis see also D. W. B. Somerset, "David Hay Fleming and historical bias" in *The Bulwark*, April-June 2010, pp. 3-8.

compare with his biography of Mary Queen of Scots, a work, unfortunately, which he has not lived to carry beyond the flight of Mary to England.<sup>219</sup>

The Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, of which he had been a member for thirty-five years and its President in the 1906-7 session, made the following tribute:

His memory will be recalled as that of one whose unique knowledge was placed with unfailing generosity at the service of the Society and of all engaged in kindred studies; while his personal friends in the Society will dwell on the simplicity and uprightness of a character founded on principles which he defended with rare knowledge and conviction.<sup>220</sup>

Another organisation of which he was a member – the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland – paid tribute to him as “the most learned of Scottish bibliographers and spoke of his unique collection of books, pamphlets and manuscripts relating to Scottish history, [as] the most valuable private collection in Scotland”.<sup>221</sup> Donald Beaton, the editor of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, begins an extended tribute as follows:

Dr Hay Fleming occupied the front rank of Scottish historians. His wide knowledge of documents and records, particularly of the pre-Reformation and post-Reformation periods, was amazing. He had no sympathy with the Cavalier-type of Scottish historians, who, unfortunately are far too numerous. As was naturally to be expected from a member of the Original Secession Church, he was in hearty sympathy with the contending of the Reformers and Covenanters, which many a careless writer knew to his cost when he ignorantly attacked the men who purchased for us our civil and ecclesiastical liberty.<sup>222</sup>

We have noticed that the Society of Antiquaries spoke of Fleming’s Library as being a unique collection of books, pamphlets and manuscripts relating to Scottish History and described it as “the most

<sup>219</sup> *Scotsman*, 9th November 1931, p. 8.

<sup>220</sup> It was the tribute of the Society’s president, Dr W. K. Dickson, cited in Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>221</sup> *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, Vol. LXVI, p. 9. See also Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>222</sup> *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 36, pp. 353-354.

valuable private collection in Scotland”.<sup>223</sup> This collection Fleming bequeathed to his beloved St Andrews in these terms:

I hereby leave and bequeath the residue of my whole means and estate . . . for the purpose of founding and maintaining in St Andrews a public reference library, of which my collection of books, pamphlets, engravings and manuscripts shall be taken to form the nucleus . . . my collection of antiquities shall be preserved in it. As I am specially anxious to encourage and facilitate the study of Scottish history, I desire that the proceeds of the endowment spent in increasing the said library shall be mainly devoted to the purchase of works bearing directly or indirectly on the civil, political, ecclesiastical and social history of Scotland.<sup>224</sup>

When the library was moved from Edinburgh to St Andrews the books weighed twelve tons.<sup>225</sup> The collection was catalogued and classified by St Andrews University Library staff in the 1930s, and is available through a dedicated guard book catalogue, with additional card subject indexes.<sup>226</sup> In 1936 there was an inauguration ceremony when the University, who had temporarily held the books whilst they were being indexed, passed them over to town to form the nucleus of a public library according to Fleming’s wishes. The library was housed in Kinburn House, St Andrews. The ceremony was chaired by Sir Francis J. Grant, LL.D., at which the Vice Chancellor of the University, Sir James C. Irvine spoke of the work that had been accomplished by the University staff in referencing the collection for the use of St Andrews and hoped that it would meet with general approval. He spoke of Fleming as “a typical Scot, a man who loved Scotland and loved St Andrews, and who loved books”.<sup>227</sup>

Fleming’s library has been subsequently transferred into the custody of St Andrews University Library. This occurred in 2000. The

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<sup>223</sup> *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries*, Vol. LXVI, p. 9.

<sup>224</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 105-106. The passing of his estate to St Andrews was subject to his sister having an interest in the income during her lifetime. She renounced this interest and the entire estates went directly to St Andrews. See the *Scotsman*, 8th December, 1931, p. 5.

<sup>225</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>226</sup> An article on the library has been written by Anthony Rodden, “The Hay Fleming Reference Library”, *Special Libraries Association News*, 1974 (122), pp. 109-133.

<sup>227</sup> The *Scotsman*, 18th November, 1936, p. 18.

University describes the manuscripts as being eclectic in nature, ranging from medieval trades books to nineteenth century local and university records, with a strong emphasis on ecclesiastical history. Fleming's personal papers include many letters, notebooks and other research materials. The collection consists of around 13,000 volumes. The books are chiefly of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but there is one document printed before 1501 and many pre-1800 items including a volume bound for James Stewart (*c.* 1531-1570), Earl of Moray (the Regent Moray). The bulk of the collection is devoted to Scottish history, both general and ecclesiastical, and it is especially strong in material relating to Mary Queen of Scots, and local history relating to Fife and St Andrews.<sup>228</sup>

We conclude with Paton's words as he reflected on his short account of Fleming's life:

Those who were privileged to be his friends will join in this small tribute to the life and character of a most Christian gentleman, from the hand of one to whom his last handshake and his last smile are imperishable memories. Something inherited from a long and noble line of ancestors; something imbibed from the home of his childhood; something inspired by the vital principles of a pure Scottish Calvinism – these all combined to make the man whose merits we have sung.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> See, [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/Rarebooks/Namedspecialcollections](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/specialcollections/Rarebooks/Namedspecialcollections).

<sup>229</sup> Paton, *op. cit.* p. 115.

## APPENDIX I FLEMING'S MEMBERSHIP OF SOCIETIES

THE only office Fleming accepted in the Churches of which he was a member was that of deacon in the Martyrs' Free Church, St Andrews. In later life he was elected to the eldership on two occasions, both of which he rejected on the grounds of his sense of unfitness and the pressure he was under due to his extensive historical and antiquarian researches. It does, however, seem somewhat strange that a man with such pronounced convictions, both with respect to theology and the regulative principle, should shun office entirely in the Original Secession Church and devote the greater part of his time to researches on behalf of the societies of which he was an active member. It would appear that he saw his service for Christ to be that of writing ecclesiastical history and publishing his work in the journals of the societies of which he was a member, vindicating the godly of past generations and using his skill as an historian to raise a witness against Romanism. On the basis of the information in Paton's sketch of his life he appears to have been a member of at least nine societies. This Appendix and Appendix II detail the societies in which he was actively involved.

### **Literary and Philosophical Society of St Andrews**

From its location in Paton's account of Fleming's life this appears to have been one of the first societies of which he became a member. Paton states that he contributed several papers to the Society's journal. Two papers he read to the Society were later reprinted as booklets. They were: *The MS Records of St Andrews* which was a paper read before the Society on 24th February 1883 when Fleming was thirty-four, and *Ye doingis of ane Antient Craft*, an account of the Hammermen<sup>230</sup> of St Andrews from pre-Reformation times until the end of the 1700s. The latter was a paper read to the Society on 12th April 1884 and printed in the local newspaper, the *St Andrews Citizen*. It was later reprinted as a rather large sixty-two page booklet.

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<sup>230</sup> The craft of Hammermen comprised blacksmiths, silversmiths, furriers, gunsmiths, coach-makers, watchmakers, brass and iron founders, harness and saddle makers, jewellers and goldsmiths, cutters, tinsmiths and plumbers. The Guild motto of the Perth Hammermen was "By hammer and Hand all Arts do Stand".

### **The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland**

In 1884 Fleming was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and when he came to reside in Edinburgh, he was for several years a regular attendee at the Society's meetings and served for a period on the Council. Throughout his life Fleming retained a strong and abiding affection for his native city, St Andrews. It was natural, therefore, that his first efforts in the field of historical and antiquarian research should be to elucidate its history and antiquities, a work which he performed with meticulous care and exactitude. It had long been one of his ambitions to have a museum in the Cathedral grounds to house the numerous relics found within its precincts, or taken from other ecclesiastical buildings in the city, and his wish was gratified in 1908 when H.M. Office of Works acceded to his request. The museum contains a wide selection of Celtic stonework which was preserved largely due to Fleming's efforts. For several years before he died he was busy preparing a catalogue of the museum's contents, and, though handicapped latterly by a severe illness, it was a source of gratification, both to Fleming and to Scottish archaeologists, that it was completed and published just before his death.

Accompanied by friends, Fleming often took long walks around St Andrews in search of antiquarian relics. Every nook and cranny of St Andrews was carefully explored.<sup>231</sup> His biographer records an incident whilst Fleming was guiding some friends round the sights of St Andrews:

Those of the Doctor's friends who had the privilege of being personally conducted over the familiar ground will recall how the hours passed all too quickly while their guide discoursed of his treasures. . . . One thing that never failed to amaze the Doctor's guests on a conducted tour, was the nonchalant way in which he would scale ladders and traverse lofty ramparts without turning a hair. . . . A friend of his narrates that on one occasion Hay Fleming was conducting two Australian ladies round the sights, and on reaching a point in South Street observed a workman doing some repairs to a belfry at the end of a steep sloping gable. In response to his call, the man informed him that an inscription had been discovered; at which nothing could refrain the Doctor's eagerness

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<sup>231</sup> Paton notes that, "One day he reached home with all the appearance of having been rolled in clay, and explained that he had been exploring a passage in the Castle grounds, in the footsteps of Bishop Wordsworth's daughter". *op. cit.*, p. 91.

to ascend. His friend said he would go instead, and proceeded tremblingly up the ladders till he reached the belfry; only to observe, on looking back, the Doctor's face appearing above the rhone. Having satisfied his curiosity, Fleming gleefully shouted down and waved his hand to the ladies, who were doubtless gazing up speechless with fear.<sup>232</sup>

Regarding his contributions to the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* his biographer observes, "Although he . . . communicated notes to its *Proceedings* regarding discoveries in St Andrews, his larger contributions were more historical and bibliographical than archaeological".<sup>233</sup> Fleming's last and most important contribution was an exhaustive and learned account of the famous Supplication and Complaint against Laud's Liturgy.<sup>234</sup> From Paton's bibliography he seems to have contributed nine articles to the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* in addition to the long article on Laud's Liturgy.

### **Scottish History Society**

This Society was formed in 1886. It had its origin in a letter from Lord Rosebery<sup>235</sup> to the *Scotsman* which appeared in the issue of 3rd February 1886. Public discussion had arisen with regard to the publications of the Scottish Text Society. After referring to this, Lord Rosebery went on to say:

I think this is an excellent opportunity for making a suggestion which is constantly present to my mind. We should have a Society

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<sup>232</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

<sup>233</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>234</sup> D. H. Fleming, "Scotland's Supplication and Complaint against The Book of Common Prayer (otherwise Laud's Liturgy), The Book of Canons and the Prelates" in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. LX (1925-1926), pp. 314-383. This important and valuable paper was read by Fleming to the Society on 10th May 1926. After being published in the *Proceedings* it was later published as a substantial pamphlet.

<sup>235</sup> Archibald Philip Primrose (1847-1929), the 5th Earl Rosebery, was a Liberal politician. In 1886 he was the Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's third brief ministry. He served again as Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's fourth administration from August 1892 to March 1894. When Gladstone retired in March 1894 he succeeded him as Prime Minister, an office he held for little more than fifteen months until June 1895. Rosebery, though wealthy in his own right, married Hannah de Rothschild, the only child of the Jewish banker Baron Mayer de Rothschild, the greatest heiress of her day.



*Lord Rosebery.*

in Scotland for printing the manuscript materials for Scottish history, especially social history, which are believed to exist in abundance among us. I allude not to charters, which gratify but few. I am thinking rather of letters or diaries of the seventeenth, eighteenth, or early nineteenth centuries. There is, I believe, a vast collection of these in existence; but every day brings peril to them of some kind or another, from too negligent or too scrupulous custodian(s). . . . Why should we, then, not start such a Manuscript Society?<sup>236</sup>

Lord Rosebery's proposal was supported by a letter from the Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr John Dowden, cordially endorsing his suggestion. Dowden and Fleming would later become close friends. Rosebery had a deep interest in Scottish history, and as the first president of the Society he defined its work as "the humble and unobtrusive task of letting everyman know, in so far as in us lies, and so far as documentary evidence exists, how our forebears lived and worked and carried on the business of their country in their separate spheres".<sup>237</sup>

This was an object with which Fleming heartily sympathised and he became at the age of thirty-seven one of the founder members of the Society. In a further historical survey of the Society printed in 1967, Grant G. Simpson makes this observation: "From its foundation the Society was fortunate in having as its editors, councillors and office-bearers a body of remarkable men. The first three Honorary Secretaries,

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<sup>236</sup> Cited in W. K. Dickson, *Scottish History Society: Fifty Years, 1886-1936*, which was included in the Society's volume, W. C. Dickinson, *The Court Book of the Barony of Carnwath 1523-1542*, Third Series, 1937. The article is available at [www.scottishhistorysociety.org](http://www.scottishhistorysociety.org), accessed 1st November 2010.

<sup>237</sup> Cited from the section on the Society's history on its website as detailed in the previous note, accessed on 1st November 2010.



for example, who spanned a period of thirty-four years from 1886 to 1920, were Thomas Graves Law, Librarian of the Signet Library, David Hay Fleming, historian of the Scottish Reformation, and John Maitland Thomson, Curator of Historical Records at the Register House.”<sup>238</sup>

Fleming edited three volumes for the Society. The first two were *The Register of the Kirk Session of St Andrews, Part 1, 1559-1582*, which was the fourth publication of the Society, printed in 1889, and *The Register of the Kirk Session of St Andrews, Part 2, 1583-1600*, the Society’s seventh publication printed in 1890. These volumes extend together to over a thousand pages of register and a most instructive 106-page introduction by the editor that is worthy of reprinting as a separate book. They are a remarkable piece of editorial work, revealing Fleming’s outstanding ability in this field of research. In addition to his introduction he has supplied footnotes on almost every page, some of which are both long and detailed.

The third volume he edited for the Society has been referred to already on several occasions; it is the second volume of the *Diary of Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, covering the period 1650-1654. This is volume 18 of the second series of the Society’s publications and was one of the two volumes published in 1919. It has another informative forty-three page introduction and the text is again supplied with copious footnotes. In his introduction Fleming points out that there is an eleven-year gap in the diary except for a fragment covering the period from May 1639 to August 1640, which had been included in volume XXVI of the Society’s publications.<sup>239</sup> Commenting on the original diary, Fleming writes, “The handwriting, except in an odd place here and there, shows many signs of haste, is small and crabbed, and often badly faded”.<sup>240</sup>

The first volume of Johnston’s *Diary*<sup>241</sup> covering the period from 1632-1639 was edited by Sir George Paul and published in 1911. The final volume of the *Diary* was not published until 1940 – nine years after Fleming’s death, and covers the period from 1655-1660. It was edited by J. D. Ogilvie who begins his seventy-eight page introduction with these

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<sup>238</sup> Grant G. Simpson, “An Historical Survey of the Scottish History Society”, printed in R. S. Barclay, *The Court Books of Orkney and Shetland*, Fourth Series, Volume 4, 1967. This article is also available at [www.scottishhistorysociety.org](http://www.scottishhistorysociety.org).

<sup>239</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, Vol. II, 1650-1654, 1919, p. ix.

<sup>240</sup> *op. cit.*, p. lii.

<sup>241</sup> G. M. Paul, *Johnston of Wariston’s Memento Quamdiu Vivas and Diary from 1632-1639*, Edinburgh, 1911. It was volume 61 of the first series of the Society’s publications.

words: “The second volume of the *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston* closed with the month of August 1654. The remaining notebooks cover, with sundry gaps, the period from mid-April 1655 to May 1660. It is much to be regretted that Dr Hay Fleming was unable, on account of long and painful illness, to bring to the editing of these his intimate knowledge of these men and events of Wariston’s time which so characterises the second volume and makes it a fit continuation of the earlier volume edited by George M. Paul.”<sup>242</sup>

### **Edinburgh Architectural Association**

Fleming was held in honour within Scottish architectural circles and became an affiliated member of the Edinburgh Architectural Association and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland. Architects paid tribute to his “long and valued services rendered to art and architecture”. As an illustration of his knowledge in this discipline, he devotes over a hundred pages of his *Reformation in Scotland* to the subject of the destruction of abbeys and churches and in so doing provides many technical details.<sup>243</sup> In 1909 he contributed an article to the Society’s journal on “Historical Notes on the Destruction of Scottish Ecclesiastical Buildings in the Fourteenth Century”.<sup>244</sup>

In April 1907 he conducted a vigorous correspondence regarding the proposed restoration of the Chapel Royal at Holyrood. Just before his death, Fleming wrote several letters, to use Paton’s words, “to those responsible for certain alterations in the Church of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, pointing out anachronisms in their project and at the same time asserting his Protestantism”.<sup>245</sup> His counsel was often sought over schemes to modify or construct church buildings. During Fleming’s long illness prior to his death, a frequent visitor was William Davidson, a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects. It was Davidson who

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<sup>242</sup> J. D. Ogilvie, *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, Vol. III, 1655-1660, 1940, p. vii. With regard to the third volume, Ogilvie points out, “For the present volume it has been judged expedient to print the diaries with much abridgement, and to include only such passages as reflect Wariston’s life in relation to the times, his motives as revealed by himself, and the working out of them as he followed the slippery paths to which he set himself, until his fall, so much greater because of the heights he had attained” (ibid.).

<sup>243</sup> D. H. Fleming, *Reformation in Scotland: Causes, Characteristics, Consequences*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1910, Chapters 10 and 11, pp. 314-428.

<sup>244</sup> *Transactions of the Edinburgh Architectural Association*, 1909, Vol. V, pp. 141-149.

<sup>245</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 97.

urged that the words “Historian and Antiquarian” be inscribed on his gravestone in St Andrews. Davidson regarded Fleming’s wise criticism of his own work as invaluable.<sup>246</sup>

### **Edinburgh Bibliographical Society**

The Society began at the initiative of the printer and stationer George Waterston III. It met for the first time on 16th January 1890, when Archibald Constable (the grandson of the publisher with the same name) was elected president and George P. Johnston<sup>247</sup> was chosen as secretary – a position he held for forty-two years. Among the objects of the Society, detailed in the circular setting up the organisation, were these: the reading of papers, the discussion of subjects connected with books and for mutual assistance in such directions as the bibliography of writers of note; providing notices of eminent collectors and collections of books; celebrated book sales, etc. The Society would give prominence to subjects connected with Scotland, and papers connected with Scottish bibliography should be preserved in the institution’s library.<sup>248</sup>

The early members of the Society were the Edinburgh literary circle of which Fleming was a member. An article on the history of the Society by Johnston<sup>249</sup> mentions that in 1890 the following men were among the Society’s membership: Lord Rosebery, W. B. Laikie (the head of the printing firm of T. & A. Constable) and three of Fleming’s close friends – John S. Gibb,<sup>250</sup> Thomas Graves Law, the Librarian of the Signet Library, and the Rev John Sturrock, the minister of the Victoria Terrace congregation of the Original Secession Church of which

<sup>246</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 97-98.

<sup>247</sup> Johnston, who was an antiquarian bookseller, died in 1938; and Paton, whose account of Fleming was published in 1934, speaks of him as one of the Doctor’s oldest surviving friends. Johnston’s obituary in the *Scotsman* written by his successor as secretary, William Beattie, was reprinted in *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, Number 1, 2006, pp. 118-119. Beattie was librarian of the National Library of Scotland from 1953 to 1970 and died in 1986.

<sup>248</sup> George P. Johnston, “The Story of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society”, *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, op. cit., pp.109-110 (see next note).

<sup>249</sup> George P. Johnston, “The Story of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society” printed in the Publications of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, XV, *Papers of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society (1930-35)*, pp. 77-86. It has been reprinted in the *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, op. cit., pp. 109-117.

<sup>250</sup> Following Gibb’s death, Fleming supplied a note, on his friend, to the *Scottish Historical Review*, of April 1912.

Fleming and his wife were members. Fleming became a member of the Society in 1896 and took an active part in its meetings. He was president of the Society for the 1906-1907 Session.<sup>251</sup>

William Beattie supplied Paton with a list of Fleming's contributions to the public meetings of the organisation over a period of a quarter of a century. They were as follows:

*10th January 1901:* Read a paper on Patrick Walker, author of the *Six Saints of the Covenant*.

*13th December 1906:* Read a note on the circulation of *God and the King*, issued in 1616 by command of King James.

*10th January 1907:* Exhibited a copy of the *Psalms of David in metre*, printed by Edward Raban in 1926.

*14th March 1907:* Exhibited several Proclamations and Acts printed at Edinburgh between 1667 and 1676.

*9th January 1908:* Showed several copies of Gilbert Burnet's *Vindication*, 1673.

*13th February 1908:* Exhibited a letter super-scribed "Charles R.", and dated 30th June 1637, which came into the possession of a St Andrews golfer.

*12th February 1914:* Read a paper, on some subscribed copies of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, which was later printed in the Society's *Proceedings* for 1918 and then as a separate pamphlet.

*15th January 1920:* Showed copies of the New Testament printed by R. Young in 1633 and 1638, illustrated with a series of seventeenth century engravings.

*8th February 1923:* Read a paper on John Howie of Lochgoin, and his writings. A paper by him on this topic had already appeared in the *Princeton Theological Review* of January 1909.

*10th December 1925:* Showed some early editions of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.<sup>252</sup>

Fleming was also a member of the Glasgow Bibliographical Society.

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<sup>251</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 103.

<sup>252</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 104.

### **Knox Club**

In 1909 Fleming was intimately involved in the formation of the Knox Club. He was a Vice President of the Club during its entire existence from 1909 to its closure in the 1920s. Appendix II deals at some length with Fleming's contribution to this organisation which was set up to oppose Romanism.

### **Scottish Reformation Society**

The Society's aims dating back to December 1850 were, "To resist the aggressions of Popery; to watch over the designs and movements of its promoters and abettors; and to diffuse sound and scriptural information on the distinctive tenets of Protestantism and Popery".<sup>253</sup> These were aims with which Fleming was in agreement. As we have noted he was elected Vice President of the Society in 1916 and became its President three years later. He retained this office until his death in 1931. During those years he wrote a number of pamphlets that were published by the organisation, that included such titles as: *The Church from which the Reformation delivered Scotland*,<sup>254</sup> *Were Cardinal Beaton and Archbishop Hamilton not Libertines*,<sup>255</sup> and *Jesuit Morality*.<sup>256</sup> Paton adds, with respect to Fleming's Protestant witness, that he not only supported all Protestant Movements at home, but gave what help he could to Protestant Churches abroad and that he was a committee member of the Waldensian Mission Aid Society.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> See, J. R. Wolfe, "Scottish Reformation Society" in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Editor Nigel M. De S. Cameron, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 760-761.

<sup>254</sup> Scottish Reformation Society, 1922. Reprinted from *The Bulwark*, July-August 1922.

<sup>255</sup> Scottish Reformation Society, 1929. Reprinted from *The Bulwark*, June-August 1929 with additions.

<sup>256</sup> Scottish Reformation Society, 1930. Reprinted from *The Bulwark*, September 1930 with additions.

<sup>257</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 113-114.

## APPENDIX II

### FLEMING AND THE KNOX CLUB<sup>258</sup>

THE Knox Club was an organisation formed in 1909 to oppose the advance of Roman Catholicism in Scotland. The event that highlighted the need for the organisation was an Act passed by the UK Government in 1908. The Act gave School Boards the option to either give or withhold funding for text books from local government resources to voluntary schools over which rate payers had no control. This optional clause was the basis for a great deal of strife in the educational arena – particularly in Scotland. The issue came to a head when the Edinburgh School Board proposed to grant free books from public funds to Roman Catholic Schools, over which there was no public control. This proposal led to a revival of Protestant sentiment and a determination to contest the April 1909 School Board elections with a view to electing Protestants opposed to the measure. The plain principle that was being argued for by those who opposed giving free books was that there should be public control where public money is given.<sup>259</sup>

A majority of Protestants were elected and the proposal was defeated. This campaign was a means of bringing together a number of prominent citizens who believed that this striking victory should be extended by forming an organisation, on popular lines, capable of exposing the danger and folly of further concessions to Roman Catholicism.<sup>260</sup> A letter sent to the *Glasgow Herald* with the heading “A

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<sup>258</sup> This rather lengthy appendix is included for two main reasons: (i) In Henry Paton’s sketch of Fleming’s life only a paragraph is given to his involvement in the Knox Club (op. cit., p. 43). As Fleming was heavily involved in the organisation, and heartily approved of its objectives, this does not appear adequate. (ii) Very little has been written about the history of the Knox Club itself; there is a brief article by David Wright in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Editor Nigel M. De S. Cameron, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, pp. 464-465. The Club produced fifty-six publications during its fifteen-year history. The writer has had access to three leather bound volumes that contain the first forty-six of these publications along with the early correspondence of the Club. These cover the first eight years of the Club’s existence and its most active period. The volumes are now in the possession of Dr Somerset, the editor of this journal, who has kindly given me extended access to them. It seems most probable that the original owner was the first Treasurer/Secretary of the Knox Club – F. J. Robertson – who had the documents bound in this way. The last publication in Volume III of the set details Robertson’s resignation in May 1917 due to pressure of his other commitments.

<sup>259</sup> *Roman Catholics & their Schools*, Knox Club Publication 37, Edinburgh, c. 1914.

<sup>260</sup> Letter of the five office bearers of the Knox Club publicising the organisation, dated Edinburgh, 19th June 1909, p .1.

Knox Club for Scotland” had been printed in the issue of 14th May 1909. It articulated quite clearly the need for such an organisation. The letter was written by F. J. Robertson, who is described in one of the Club’s early publications as a “rising Scottish politician and President of the Young Scots’ Society”.<sup>261</sup> Robertson would become the Club’s General Secretary and Treasurer for the first eight years of its existence.

The Club was formed by eight gentlemen on 4th June 1909.<sup>262</sup> Although we cannot be absolutely certain, it seems very probable that David Hay Fleming was active in the opposition to the Edinburgh School Board proposal to give free books to Roman Catholic Schools from public funds and that he was one of the eight gentlemen who formed the society. The basis for this assertion is that in the Club’s first letter, publicising its activities and written just fifteen days after the Club’s formation, there were just five office bearers – a President, three Vice Presidents and the General Secretary/Treasurer. Fleming was one of the three Vice Presidents.<sup>263</sup> Throughout the Club’s existence Fleming was to take a leading role and produced a number of booklets that provided the intellectual and historical basis for many of the organisation’s campaigns. By 1920 Fleming was not only an active Vice President; he was also a member of the Club’s National Council.<sup>264</sup>

The three main objects of the Knox Club were dear to Fleming and received his hearty approval. They were: (1) To promote the study of Scottish history, and, in particular, the period of John Knox; (2) To maintain the Protestant Succession to the Throne, and all existing safeguards thereto; (3) To resist the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church to regain influence in Scotland.<sup>265</sup>

Within weeks of the Club being formed it had added an array of distinguished honorary officials and a National Council to its letterhead. At first there was one Honorary Vice President, Alexander Whyte – the Principal of New College – and a National Council of twelve officials. Soon there would be over forty Honorary Vice Presidents and a National

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<sup>261</sup> Hector MacPherson, *The Knox Club, A new Protestant Movement to work for Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1909, p. 7.

<sup>262</sup> *First Annual Report of the Knox Club*, Edinburgh, 1910, p. 1.

<sup>263</sup> Letter of the five office bearers of the Knox Club, dated Edinburgh, 19th June 1909, p. 1.

<sup>264</sup> See the rear cover of the 1920 Knox Club Publication, *Italy and the Vatican*.

<sup>265</sup> Letter of the five office bearers of the Knox Club, dated Edinburgh, 19th June 1909, p. 2.

Council of fifteen with Lord Kinnaird<sup>266</sup> as the Honorary President. Among the list of Honorary Vice Presidents were the Moderators of most of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches<sup>267</sup> and the senior officials of the Scottish Baptist, Congregational and Wesleyan Churches along with the Principals of the Church of Scotland, United Free Church and Free Church theological training colleges – among these was the higher critic George Adam Smith. Along with these officials were other leading churchmen like Hugh Ross Mackintosh of New College, William Mair, the author of *A Digest of Church Laws*,<sup>268</sup> and Oliphant Smeaton (George Smeaton's younger son). Professor John Macleod of the Free Church College was a member of the National Council – Macleod had left the Free Presbyterians to join the Free Church four years earlier.<sup>269</sup> Other Free Church members of the National Council were the elders Walter R. T. Sinclair and Archibald MacNeilage. The list of Vice Presidents and the National Council membership from the beginning included men whose theological convictions were far from that of the historic Reformed Faith. There were those associated with the Club from the outset who were higher critics, modernists and Arminians. What united this somewhat diverse group was their opposition to Romanism. This united stance is markedly different from the position a century later where modernism in theology is almost invariably linked to an ecumenism that embraces Romanism.

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<sup>266</sup> Arthur Fitzgerald Kinnaird, the eleventh Lord Kinnaird of Inchtute (1847-1923) was born in London and educated at Cheam, Eton, and Cambridge. Kinnaird then became a banker in an institution that was a forerunner of Barclays Bank. When Barclays was formed in 1896 Kinnaird became a director and the principal director of the local head office in Pall Mall. While in London he began his work for voluntary associations, inspired by the example of his parents and his father's friend, Lord Shaftsbury. Kinnaird was President of the London Evangelical Council under whose auspices the "R. A. Torrey – C. M. Alexander" London campaign was organised in 1905. He was involved with the Boys Brigade, the YMCA and establishing homes for working boys. It was estimated that he held some twenty presidencies of voluntary organisations and over forty vice presidencies and thirty treasurerships. He is best remembered in the world of sport for his key role in the development of association football and was considered one of the most able of the first generation of public school footballers. See the article on Kinnaird in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>267</sup> An exception to this was the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. None of their ministers or elders appears to have been involved with the Knox Club although they would have been sympathetic to its aims.

<sup>268</sup> William Mair, *A Digest of Laws and Decisions Ecclesiastical and Civil relating to the Constitution, Practice and Affairs of the Church of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1912, Fourth Edition.

<sup>269</sup> Among the list of Vice Presidents from 1911 was the Rev Henry Paton, the father of Henry Macleod Paton who was Fleming's biographer.



The Knox Club sought to distinguish itself from some of the more militant organisations that were opposed to Romanism. The mover of the resolution to adopt the Club's Fourth Annual Report in May 1912 stated in his adoption speech that,

He appreciated the work of the Club because of its moderation. The day was past when faddists and extremists would succeed in any cause. He had noticed that, from the beginning of the work of the Club, they had carefully guarded against extremes. Aggressively militant tactics were quite a mistake. Stirring up strife did much more harm than good. The educative and enlightening element of such work as that carried on by the Club was thoroughly in keeping with the modern spirit.<sup>270</sup>

The officials described the organisation as a "Forward Movement".<sup>271</sup> This was a rather vague term that was in vogue at that time in English Nonconformist circles describing the duties that the young believed their elders had neglected, to bring the uncared-for masses back to God and to relate more positively to contemporary thought and society.<sup>272</sup> The Club's first publication was a little eight-page pocket sized booklet explaining the purpose of the organisation.<sup>273</sup> It states that the main object of the Club was to oppose the political side of Romanism.

The inaugural meeting of the Knox Club took place on Wednesday 24th November 1909 in the United Free Church Assembly Hall at 8.00 p.m. The date was significant; it was the anniversary of the day on which John Knox died. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Club, Dr Thomas Burns,<sup>274</sup> who following an opening psalm and

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<sup>270</sup> *Fourth Annual Report, Knox Club*, Edinburgh, 1913, p. 6.

<sup>271</sup> Letter of the five office bearers of the Knox Club, dated Edinburgh, 12th July 1909, p. 2.

<sup>272</sup> See the article "Forward Movement" in the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, op. cit., pp. 332-333; K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*, London, 1963, pp. 70-71; and H. D. Rack, "Wesleyan Methodism 1849-1902" in R. Davies, A. R. George and G. Rupp (Editors), *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, Volume III, London, 1983, p. 139.

<sup>273</sup> Hector MacPherson, *The Knox Club: A new Protestant Movement to work for Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1909. The booklet was a reprint of an article in the *Edinburgh People's Journal*.

<sup>274</sup> Thomas Burns DD, FRSE, FSA Scot. (died 15th January 1938) was from 1882 the Minister of Lady Glenorchy's South Church, Edinburgh. In 1890 he became a governor of George Heriot's Trust; in 1894, the Chairman of the Royal Blind Asylum (Burns went on to do extensive work on behalf of the blind, being involved in several organisations).

prayer addressed the meeting. The meeting went on to pass two resolutions, the first of which recorded the meeting's gratitude to Almighty God for the life and labours of John Knox, believing the civil and religious liberty enjoyed by Scotland was due to the Reformation and resolving to promote, by all appropriate means, the interests of Protestantism. The second came to the heart of the rationale for the Club's existence. It read as follows: "That this meeting in view of the political, educational, and religious activity of the Church of Rome, approves of the objects of the Knox Club, and pledges itself to support the Club in its efforts to maintain the supremacy of the Reformed Faith in this Protestant country."<sup>275</sup> Each motion had a mover, a seconder and a supporter. David Hay Fleming is listed in the inaugural brochure as proposing a vote of thanks to the speakers after the second resolution had been approved. He was, however, confined to the house with a "nasty chill" and another had to take his place.<sup>276</sup> The meeting was brought to a conclusion by the singing of a paraphrase and the pronouncement of the benediction. We can be sure that had Fleming been present he would have been silent whilst the paraphrase was sung.

The Knox Club was to be in existence for around fifteen years in which it issued fifty-six publications, many of which had a very large circulation. It is an indication of Fleming's commitment to the organisation that its first sizeable booklet and its final publication were both written by him. During its short life the Club took up several major campaigns in which they harnessed Fleming's ability as a careful historian to provide the essential intellectual basis for the positions they were defending. The first two of these campaigns in which Fleming took a leading part concerned the Monarch's Protestant declaration and opposition to the Pope Pius X's *Ne Temere* decree.

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His many services for them were commemorated by naming a home for blind women after him.) In 1903 he became the Deputy Chairman of the Edinburgh School Board. Burns was clearly involved in opposing the free school books for Romanist schools. He published, in 1896, his book *Old Scottish Communion Plate*. For information on Burns see, Hew Scott (Editor), *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae*, Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1950, Volume 8, p. 13; D. P. Thomson, *Lady Glenorchy and her Churches*, Crieff, 1967, pp. 73-76; A. Ian Dunlop, *The Kirks of Edinburgh 1560-1984*, Scottish Record Society, Edinburgh, 1989, p. 373.

<sup>275</sup> See *Inaugural meeting leaflet*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>276</sup> See Paton, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

### **The Coronation Oath and accession declaration**

It was clear from the very first letter publicising the Knox Club that Romanist attempts to modify the Monarch's accession declaration would be something the Club would strongly resist.<sup>277</sup> Indeed, the two main reasons for the formation of the Knox Club seem to be a campaign against the revision of the accession declaration, along with opposition to supplying free books to Catholic schools from public funds.

The Protestant accession declaration was a subject on which Cardinal Herbert Vaughan (1832-1903), the Archbishop of Westminster, held very strong views; a whole chapter is devoted to the topic in his biography by J. G. Snead-Cox.<sup>278</sup> Vaughan was the leader of British Catholics when Queen Victoria died in 1901. He was so eager to see the accession declaration removed that when it became apparent that the Government would take no action, due to the strength of Protestant feeling, he wrote personally to the future King Edward VII imploring him to refuse to take the declaration. This was in effect asking him to forfeit the throne. The request was refused and Edward made the accession declaration.

There were several elements of the declaration to which Catholics took objection. The Monarch denied the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation. The invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint and the sacrifice of the mass, as they are now used in the Church of Rome, were declared to be superstitious and idolatrous. The Monarch also asserted that in making this declaration he or she did so without any evasion, equivocation or mental reservation whatsoever and that he or she had not received a dispensation from the pope to make the declaration.

Edward's making the declaration resulted in a concerted campaign by Romanists for the removal of the accession declaration. In 1909 John Redmond, the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party and a Roman Catholic Member of Parliament, introduced the *Roman Catholic Religious Disabilities (Removal) Bill* into the House of Commons, the main object of

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<sup>277</sup> In F. J. Robertson's letter to the *Glasgow Herald* of 14th May 1909, which led to the formation of the Knox Club, he stated that if the Government gave encouragement to abolishing the accession declaration, "the question will become one of the first importance. It will be the dominating issue; matters of leading interest at the present moment will subside into secondary positions."

<sup>278</sup> J. G. Snead-Cox, *The Life of Cardinal Vaughan*, London, 1912, Volume 2, pp. 231-260.

which was to abolish altogether the Protestant accession oath and declaration. The second reading of the Bill took place on 14th May 1909<sup>279</sup> when Redmond's younger brother William, the Member of Parliament for Wexford, made the motion for the second reading. The Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, took part in the debate, whilst the main speech on the Protestant side came from Charles McArthur.<sup>280</sup> The Bill received its second reading and was remitted to a committee of the whole house which resulted in delay. There was clearly a desire for change, but a considerable amount of uncertainty as to what would form a suitable alternative.

From its formation the Knox Club mounted a vigorous campaign against any modification of the anti-Romanist accession declaration. All the letters promoting the Club referred to the matter. Articles were put in the Scottish press. Leaflets were printed and distributed and they joined with other Protestant Societies in opposing any weakening of the security of the Protestant succession to the British throne. They also arranged a series of public meetings; the one held on 30th May 2010 in the former United Presbyterian Synod Hall was addressed by the City Treasurer of Edinburgh. The meeting passed motions, moved and seconded by Scottish members of Parliament, protesting against any change in the declaration. The press reported that Dr Hay Fleming was on the front of the platform party and moved the acceptance of the First Annual Report of the Club in which any revision of the declaration was condemned. Further public meetings were arranged by the Club with the purpose of highlighting the significance of weakening the Monarch's accession declaration. From the Club's reports it is clear that such meetings were arranged in Haddington, Leith, Aberdeen, Crieff, Dumfries, Arbroath, Leven, Montrose, and Motherwell. Interestingly, one was held in Bruntsfield School, Edinburgh, the district in which Fleming lived, and was doubtless organised by him.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> Two days earlier on 12th May 1909 Charles McArthur presented a petition to Parliament bearing 738,116 signatures against the Bill.

<sup>280</sup> Charles McArthur (1844-1910) entered parliament after making his mark as a marine insurance broker and the author of a book on the *Policy of Marine Insurance Popularly Explained*. He became a Member of Parliament in 1897 as a Liberal Unionist member for the Exchange division of Liverpool. He lost his seat in 1906 and was returned for another division of Liverpool in September 1907. McArthur was an evangelical and took a leading part in Church questions. His views were set out in his book, *The Evidences of Natural Religion and the Truths Established Thereby*, London, 1880. See the article on McArthur in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004.

<sup>281</sup> Though the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland took no part in the Knox Club, they were very active in opposing the change in the Monarch's declaration. As early as

At the centre of the campaign, providing the intellectual basis for the Knox Club's contendings, was a booklet written by Fleming with the title, *Historical Notes concerning the Coronation Oaths and the Accession Declaration*, which went through three editions in 1910. In it Fleming marshalled his historical scholarship to give in great detail, with citations of all the authorities, a complete account of the declarations provided by both Scottish and English monarchs from King David II of Scotland down to the present time. The Knox Club's campaign was not to be successful, for, unknown to them, the matter was exercising the minds of both the Royal Family and the Government with an increasing urgency.

The issue took an altogether different tone and became a major political issue when King Edward died at Buckingham Palace on 6th May 1910. Immediately after the King's death, John Redmond wrote to Asquith urging him to bring forward the Government's own legislation to alter the terms of the Royal declaration. In addition, the heir to the throne, George V, the grandfather of Queen Elizabeth II, whilst he was Prince of Wales had made it clear that he was anxious to see the declaration amended and had discussed the matter informally with Asquith and Randall Davidson, the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>282</sup> Adding to the pressure on Asquith to revise the declaration was the result of the January 1910 General Election. In the 1906 General Election the Liberals, led by Henry Campbell-Bannerman, had a massive overall majority in the House of Commons. Campbell-Bannerman after suffering two heart attacks resigned on 1st April 1908 and was succeeded by Asquith. The January 1910 Election resulted in a hung Parliament with Asquith's Liberals having just two more seats than Arthur Balfour's Conservatives. The Liberals were kept in office by the Irish Nationalist home-rulers, led by Redmond, with seventy-four seats and the Labour Party with forty-two seats. Redmond's party were the ones leading the agitation to change the accession declaration.

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1901, when change was being discussed after Queen Victoria's death, a Free Presbyterian petition was sent to Parliament containing over 15,500 signatures. When change was actually determined the Clerks of the Presbyteries sent out a letter to their several congregations appointing a Fast Day and the Northern Presbytery sent a petition to Asquith. For a comprehensive lecture comparing the Old and New Declarations by the Rev John R. Mackay, highlighting the significance of the changes, see the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 15, pp. 184-192. It was originally published in the *Northern Chronicle* of 27th July 1910.

<sup>282</sup> See, G. K. A. Bell, *Randall Davidson*, London, Oxford University Press, 1938, p. 613.

Instead of the original Bill brought forward by the Irish Nationalists, the Government brought forward its own Bill which was introduced to the House by Asquith on 28th June 1910, and was then hurried through all its stages of Parliamentary procedure. The Knox Club regarded this as a way of stifling discussion. On 27th July Asquith moved the second reading and the revised declaration became law on 3rd August 1910 using wording supplied by Randall Davidson. It had gone through all the stages of Parliamentary procedure in little over a month. The original lengthy anti-Catholic declaration was replaced by a very simple declaration in which the Monarch stated “that I am a faithful Protestant, and that I will, according to the true intent of the enactments which secure the Protestant succession to the Throne of my realm, uphold and maintain the said enactments to the best of my powers and according to law”. In the original draft Davidson and the Bishops had not used the words “I am a faithful Protestant”, but “I am a faithful member of the Church by law established in England”. The changed wording to “faithful Protestant” was made to satisfy English Nonconformists and members of the Church of Scotland.<sup>283</sup> Significantly, though his father had died in May 1910, George V did not take the accession oath until after the new declaration had become law.

Though the Knox Club was unsuccessful in stopping the modification of the accession declaration it did not let the matter rest there. At the 1910 Annual meeting held on 24th November (the anniversary of John Knox’s death), three months after the new declaration had become law the President, Dr Thomas Burns, delivered and later published an address with the title, “A call to Arms!”. Commenting on the new declaration Burns said, “It eliminated all repudiation of Roman doctrine, the very essence of a Royal Declaration. In spite of all protests and without consultation with the electors, the Bill was rushed through the House of Commons and the House of Lords. The electors are not likely to forget that action. It was a dark day in the history of our country when so many of her Parliamentary representatives ignored the expressed views of her constituents, and

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<sup>283</sup> For Davidson’s correspondence with Asquith on the topic see, Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 616-617. On the change to satisfy Nonconformists and the Church of Scotland see, G. I. T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches of Great Britain 1869 to 1921*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1987, p. 295, and footnote 17 for extensive references. Herbert Asquith was himself a Congregationalist.

voted for a measure for which no mandate was given.”<sup>284</sup> They then issued the *National Manifesto of the Knox Club against the Accession Declaration Act*.<sup>285</sup> The leaders of the Knox Club realised that there was likely to be another General Election quite soon due to the indecisive result of the January 1910 Election. The *Manifesto* went on, “It is necessary to test public opinion at the next General Election to ascertain decisively if those who supported the abolition of the old Protestant Declaration acted in accordance with the views of their constituents.”<sup>286</sup> The *Manifesto* listed a series of ten questions to be put to all candidates for political office, with the exhortation vigorously to oppose those who supported the aggressive claims of the Roman Catholics. The first two of these questions were, “Are you in favour of the Repeal of the Accession Declaration Act?” and “In the event of a Bill being introduced into the House of Commons to add to the new Accession Declaration a clause repudiating Roman Catholic doctrines will you give it your support?” The *Manifesto* ended by naming the thirty Scottish Members of Parliament who supported the demands of the Roman Catholics, and voted for the Bill which abolished the old Protestant Declaration. In the list was the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, the member for East Fife and Dr A. Rolland Rainy, the son of Principal Robert Rainy, the member for Kilmarnock Burghs.

### **The *Ne Temere* Decree**

The second of the early campaigns of the Knox Club in which Fleming took a leading part was opposition to Pope Pius X’s (Giuseppe Melchiorre Sarto) decree *Ne Temere*.<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Thomas Burns, *A Call to Arms!* Knox Club Publication No. 13, Edinburgh, c. 1910, p. 2. The proponents of the changed declaration asserted that the wording was changed in preparation for the Coronation of George V. The object of the new declaration was to reduce the offensiveness to Catholics by making a positive statement of express adherence to the Protestant faith instead of non-adherence to the Catholic faith. See the brief paper by Lucinda Maer and Oonagh Gay, *The Coronation Oath*, Standard Note SN/PC/00435, House of Commons Library, 27th August 2008.

<sup>285</sup> *National Manifesto of the Knox Club against the Accession Declaration Act*, Knox Club Publication No. 11, Edinburgh, c1910.

<sup>286</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>287</sup> The Latin term *Ne Temere* means “Not rashly”. These were the opening words of the decree from which it took its name.

The Council of Trent prescribed for Romanists the formal mode of celebrating marriage by issuing a decree.<sup>288</sup> The aim of the decree, that was called *Tametsi*,<sup>289</sup> was to suppress clandestine marriages. It laid down that, in places where the decree was promulgated, a marriage between baptised persons (whether Roman Catholic or not) was valid only when it took place in the presence of the Roman Catholic parish priest or the local Ordinary (the diocesan bishop), or a priest appointed by one of these, and before at least two witnesses. As the effect of *Tametsi* in Protestant countries would have been to reduce all unions between men and women to illicit cohabitations, it was prescribed that before coming into operation in any parish the decree had to be formally published in that parish. Hence, it was not normally promulgated in Protestant countries; it was never brought into operation in England, Scotland or Wales.<sup>290</sup>

*Tametsi* was finally superseded by the provisions of the *Ne Temere* decree issued under the authority of Pope Pius X on 10th August 1907 and came into effect at Easter the following year, 19th April 1908. Unlike *Tametsi*, *Ne Temere* did not require to be published in each parish to have force. It was held as legitimately published and promulgated by its being sent to the Romish diocesan bishop. Rome regarded it as binding on all persons baptised in the Roman Catholic Church, on those who had converted to Romanism – even if they later fell away, and on all cases of betrothal or marriage of Roman Catholics with non-Roman Catholics, even when a dispensation had been given to permit the mixed marriage. The only nation exempted from the decree was Germany.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> For the Council of Trent's teaching on marriage see, Philip Schaff (Editor) revised by David Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom with a History and Critical Notes*, Vol. 2, pp. 193-198. Trent considered the question of marriage in November 1563 in the twenty-fourth and final session of the Council. It approved in this final session a doctrinal statement, twelve canons and the decree *Tametsi*.

<sup>289</sup> The Latin term *Tametsi* means "Although". This was again the opening word of the decree from which it took its name.

<sup>290</sup> F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (Editors), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 1576.

<sup>291</sup> The *Ne Temere* became a major issue in several jurisdictions as it declared marriages invalid that were recognised as valid by the State. It raised political and judicial issues in Canada, especially Quebec, and in Australia. In New South Wales the legislature came within one vote of making a criminal offence the promulgation of the decree. On the situation in Canada see, John S. Moir, "Canadian Protestant Reaction to the *Ne Temere* Decree", *CCHA Study Sessions 48* (1981), pp. 78-90, accessed at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges>, 21st September 2010. For an interesting account of the



The effect of the *Ne Temere* decree was to make additions to *Tametsi* and give it worldwide application except in Germany. *Ne Temere* was summarised in four points by the Jesuit, John Charnock, in a pamphlet published by the Catholic Truth Society as follows:

1. The marriage of all Catholics (both parties Catholics) before a [Protestant] minister or civil magistrate is no marriage at all.
2. The marriage of all fallen away Catholics (who have become Protestants or infidels) before a [Protestant] minister or civil magistrate is no marriage at all.
3. The marriage of a Catholic to a non-baptised person is never a real marriage unless the Church grants a Dispensation.
4. The marriage of a Catholic to a Protestant (one never baptised in the Catholic Church) before a [Protestant] minister or civil magistrate is no marriage at all.<sup>292</sup>

The practical result of this was it made civil marriages difficult for lapsed Catholics. It also meant that Romish priests could refuse to perform mixed marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, or alternatively the priest could impose conditions, such as an obligation for children resulting from the marriage to be baptised and brought up as Roman Catholics, and for the non-Roman Catholic partner to submit to religious education with the aim of converting them to Roman Catholicism.

Protestant organisations seem to have been a little slow in realising the implications of the *Ne Temere* decree. The Knox Club, however, was to play a major role in drawing attention to and opposing its operation in the United Kingdom. The Second Annual Report (for the year 1910-1911) stated, “The action of the Church of Rome in putting into operation in this country the *Ne Temere* decree has been vigorously opposed”.<sup>293</sup> On 21st February 1911 a crowded meeting of Protest was held in the Synod Hall in Edinburgh. The two speakers were Rev J. Howard Murphy,

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Protestant opposition in Australian New South Wales see, Edmund Campion, “People and Politics: The Australian Catholic Tradition”, in *Australian Politics Catholic Perspectives*, Discussion Paper No. 6, Jesuit Social Justice Centre, p. 6. Available at [www.uniya.org](http://www.uniya.org), accessed 21st September 2010.

<sup>292</sup> Cited in *The Ne Temere Decree*, Knox Club Publication No. 14, Edinburgh, not dated, p. 4.

<sup>293</sup> *The Knox Club, Second Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1911, p. 10.

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and the Rev William Corkey, the Minister of Townsend Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

Corkey delivered an address that was later published as a booklet by the Knox Club titled *The McCann Mixed Marriage Case*.<sup>294</sup> Alexander McCann, a Roman Catholic, had married Agnes Jane Barclay in a Presbyterian Church. Agnes McCann was a member in Corkey's Belfast Congregation. McCann's priest informed him of his duty in consequence of the *Ne Temere* decree. The Romanist view of the implications of the decree for McCann was articulated quite starkly by an apologist for the Church of Rome, Father Finlay, in the *New Ireland Review*. Finlay asserted, "He [McCann] was conscientiously bound to separate from the Presbyterian woman, unless she consented to re-validation of the marriage, and he is under the greatest obligation to see that his children are brought up Catholics."<sup>295</sup>

Agnes McCann refused to believe that her marriage was invalid in the sight of God. The Romanists told her that all she had to do was to breathe in the presence of the priest looking at McCann, "I take you as my husband". This she refused to do. Corkey in his address eloquently stated her position regarding breathing these words before a Romish priest when she had already been married for several years. "What woman in Scotland would breathe them? What woman would acknowledge she had been living in shame for three years? What mother in Scotland would brand her children as illegitimate? What honest man or woman would stand up before a priest and acknowledge that the rites and ceremonies of his or her own Church were null and void?"<sup>296</sup> Due to the intervention of the Romish priest McCann left his wife in October 1910 and took their two children, one of which was an infant just a few weeks old. Though the Roman Catholic authorities stoutly denied they had broken up the marriage, they were nonetheless adamant regarding the implications of *Ne Temere*. A Father Hubert in a sermon before a large Belfast congregation referring to the McCann case said, "that the man

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<sup>294</sup> William Corkey, *The McCann Mixed Marriage Case*, Knox Club Publication No. 17, Edinburgh, 1912. The booklet quickly went through six editions. See also Corkey's assessment of the part he played in opposing the *Ne Temere* decree in his autobiography, published when he was aged eighty-five in 1962. William Corkey, *Glad did I live: Memoirs of a Long Life*, The Belfast News-Letter Limited, 1962, pp. 151-168.

<sup>295</sup> Corkey, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>296</sup> Corkey, op. cit., p. 6.

and woman affected by that law, if they lived together were living in sin, and to defend them even by appeals to humanity and the sanctity of motherhood was to defend concubinage".<sup>297</sup>

The McCann case was a *cause celebre* and was referred to in both Houses of Parliament.<sup>298</sup> At the time McCann was criticised for being weak-kneed. Corkey, however, points out in an appendix to his booklet that he had been threatened with excommunication. His authority for this was a letter in the *Yorkshire Post* of 31st December 1910 by a Father Courtney. Corkey printed the fearful words of a Bull of excommunication recently pronounced on a priest who had become a Protestant and observed, "The fearful terror of such a threat of excommunication in the mind of a conscientious Catholic cannot be easily imagined by those brought up in the Protestant faith".<sup>299</sup>

Similar meetings to that held in Edinburgh, drawing attention to the implications of the *Ne Temere* decree, were organised by the Knox Club in Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen. On all occasions William Corkey was one of the speakers. These meetings seem to have been one factor in branches of the Knox Club being organised at those three locations in 1910-11. In addition, Corkey addressed the annual meeting of the Knox Club in May 1911 and further protest meetings against the *Ne Temere* decree in Greenock and Perth.<sup>300</sup> In its Fourth Annual Report the President of the Knox Club could report with accuracy and a measure of satisfaction, "The Knox Club had already established itself as a necessity in the public life, maintaining the cause of Protestantism in a way in which Scotsmen have every reason to be proud. Its attitude is one of unceasing vigilance. To its watchfulness may be credited the country's knowledge of the *Ne Temere* Decree and other movements. Its work is far reaching, much more so than meets the public eye."<sup>301</sup>

Though up to now we have not referred to Fleming, it was his research that again provided the historical and intellectual basis for the

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<sup>297</sup> *Northern Whig* of 23rd December 1910 cited in Corkey, op. cit., p. 9. The Romish authorities sought to slander Agnes McCann and asserted that the reason for the marriage break-up was quarrelling in the McCann household. Corkey rebuts these allegations with documentary evidence to the contrary.

<sup>298</sup> The McCann case and the *Ne Temere* decree were debated in the House of Lords in February 1911. See *Hansard*, 28th February 1911.

<sup>299</sup> Corkey, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>300</sup> *The Knox Club, Third Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1912, p. 6-7.

<sup>301</sup> *The Knox Club, Fourth Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1913, p. 6.

Club's opposition to *Ne Temere*. Before Corkey's booklet was published, Fleming had written a substantial booklet that was published by the Knox Club with the title, *The Church of Rome and Marriage*.<sup>302</sup> This meticulously researched booklet begins by detailing the preposterous extensions of the Levitical prohibitions of inter-marriage propounded by Rome until 1215. It was asserted that the marriage of those who were related to one another to the seventh degree of consanguinity or affinity was forbidden. From the Lateran Council of 1215 this was reduced to the fourth degree. Fleming with undoubted accuracy points out that not one in a hundred would know the names of such distant ancestors; and fewer still could tell the names of all their descendants living in the same generation as themselves. Yet these artificial restrictions were used as means of declaring marriages null and void. They could, however, be surmounted by paying the Roman Church for a costly dispensation. Such dispensations, though hopelessly beyond the reach of the poor, were fruitful means of swelling the coffers of the Church. Fleming's comment on this procedure is, "If marrying the third cousin or a spiritual<sup>303</sup> relation was so iniquitous that such marriages might be declared null and void, what right had the Church to grant dispensations for money?"<sup>304</sup> The booklet goes on to detail and discuss the *Tametsi* and *Ne Temere* decrees. In the midst of detailing Rome's teaching, Fleming makes clear his own position with respect to the implications of the *Ne Temere* decree on mixed marriages. Two citations will illustrate this: "Most genuine Protestants disapprove of mixed marriages; but that is no reason why they should sit calmly by, and see injustice done to those

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<sup>302</sup> D. Hay Fleming, *The Church of Rome and Marriage*, Knox Club, Edinburgh, 1911. The booklet went through four editions by 1912. A fifth edition with a lengthy supplement appeared in 1927, and a final edition after Fleming's death in 1941.

<sup>303</sup> According to Romanists, among the bars to marriage were spiritual consanguinity and spiritual affinity. These relationships were produced by baptism and confirmation. As Rome attached saving efficacy to baptism, in cases of a pressing emergency laymen and women were enjoined to administer the rite of baptism. Romish teaching on spiritual consanguinity and affinity meant that the baptiser could not marry the baptised, nor could the baptiser's children marry the person baptised. A godparent could not marry his or her godchild, or a parent of that godchild. The same restrictions were produced by confirmation. Such was spiritual consanguinity. Spiritual affinity nullified marriage between the widow or widower of the godparent and the person baptised or confirmed, and between the widow or widower of the godparent and either of the parents of the person baptised or confirmed. See, D. Hay Fleming, *The Church of Rome and Marriage*, Fourth edition, p. 4.

<sup>304</sup> D. Hay Fleming, *The Church of Rome and Marriage*, Fourth edition, p. 6.

who have been foolish enough to enter into such unions.”<sup>305</sup> His comment with respect to Rome requiring the re-validation by a priest of a mixed marriage originally conducted by a Protestant or by the civil authorities is devastating: “Marrying an idolater is no justification for bowing in the house of Rimmon”.<sup>306</sup> The booklet concludes by explaining how Rome views marriage as a sacrament and by pointing out the undertakings non-Catholics were asked to give when marrying a Romanist.<sup>307</sup>

### **Fleming's publications for the Knox Club**

In addition to his booklets, *Historical Notes concerning the Coronation Oaths and the Accession Declaration* and *The Church of Rome and Marriage*, Fleming wrote a further six booklets that were published by the Knox Club. They are as follows:

*Illustrations of Antichrist's rejoicing over the Massacre of St Bartholomew*, Knox Club Publication No. 29, 1912.

This is the reprinting of an exceedingly rare tract<sup>308</sup> giving the order of a papal thanksgiving service at Rome following the Massacre of St Bartholomew with a lengthy prefatory note by Fleming. In the prefatory note Fleming details the historical background to the massacre of a whole generation of French Protestants. It includes several photographic reproductions of frescoes and medals celebrating the massacre. In reviewing the booklet, the *British Weekly* noted, “Dr Hay Fleming contributes a very valuable and important ‘prefatory note’ which no student of the period can afford to neglect”.

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<sup>305</sup> op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>306</sup> op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>307</sup> In many instances they were required to sign a declaration. Fleming provides the text of one of them: “I, the undersigned, do hereby solemnly promise and engage that I will not interfere with the religious belief of N., my future (wife or husband), nor with (her or his) duties as a Catholic; that I will allow all the children, of both sexes, who may be born of our marriage to be baptized in the Catholic Church, and to be carefully brought up in the knowledge and practice of the Catholic religion (Signature)”. op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>308</sup> The title of the tract published in 1572 and printed in Rome, was *Order of the Most Solemn Procession made by the Pope in the august city of Rome*. Fleming observes, “The little tract of four pages is now so rare that, some sixty years ago [i.e. circa 1852], the Bodleian Library paid £4 for a copy” (p. 19).

*The Last Days of John Knox*, Knox Club Publication No. 35, 1913.

This is a reprint of an account of Knox's last days by his "faithful servitor" Richard Bannatyne, with a prefatory note and footnotes by Fleming. The purpose of the reprint is to counteract Romish lies that Knox died with his mouth and face so deformed and contorted that his countenance was more like a dog than a man, and that his thoughts were not on death but on sin. Fleming begins his prefatory note with these words: "The Church of Rome has been long distinguished for its hatred and abuse of those who have left its corrupt communion. It was only to be expected, therefore, that, as it feared and detested Knox while he was alive, its spokesmen would vilify him after he was dead" (p. 5).

*A Jesuit's Misconception of Scottish History and a Fellow-Jesuit's Apology for the Inexactitudes exposed*, Knox Club Publication No. 39, 1916 (two editions).

This pamphlet is the reprint of a review by Fleming, originally published in the *British Weekly*, of a book by the Jesuit, Father Forbes Leith, titled *Pre-Reformation Scholars in Scotland in the XVIIth Century: their Writings and their Public Services with a Bibliography and list of Graduates from 1500 to 1560*. The book seeks to disprove the charge of ignorance of the Romish clergy. Fleming's assessment is, "he miserably failed. For his failure he cannot be blamed. Success was impossible" (p. 3).

The review begins with a matchless and devastating sentence, "Father Forbes Leith's well-deserved reputation for chronic inaccuracy will be greatly enhanced by his latest production, an attractive looking but slovenly compiled and absolutely worthless book" (p. 3). The penultimate paragraph of the review is in a similar vein, "The paper is excellent, the typography is perfect, most of the illustrations are good as well as interesting, and the binding is neat. Otherwise the book is the most wretched bit of work that it has ever been my lot to examine critically. It would disgrace a school-boy" (p. 11).

An aspect of this review that highlights the extent of Fleming's scholarship is the interaction with Forbes-Leith on the number and identity of the pre-Reformation Romish clergy. His familiarity with the Romish literature is bewildering as he exposes inaccuracies

and double counting by Forbes-Leith in the identity of the Romish clergy.

*The Influence of the Reformation on the Social and Cultured Life in Scotland*, Knox Club Publication No. 46, 1917.

This is a reprint of a carefully researched paper originally printed in the *Scottish Historical Review* of October 1917. The substance of it was originally given as a Knox Club lecture.

*John Knox cleared from the Slanders of the Rev W. L. Sime*, Knox Club Publication No. 54, 1922.

This pamphlet was a reprint of an article that had previously appeared in *The Bulwark*.

*George Wishart the Martyr: a Reply to Father Power and Rev W. L. Sime*, Knox Club Publication No. 56, 1923.

This pamphlet was also a reprint of an article that had previously appeared in *The Bulwark* with additions.

### **Knox Club lectures**

In the winter of 1911-1912 the Glasgow branch of the Knox Club organised a series of lectures on the life and witness of John Knox. The last lecture of the series was given by Fleming on 19th March 1912 on the topic, "John Knox the historian".<sup>309</sup> The following year the lecture series was repeated in Edinburgh when Fleming gave his lecture in Rainy Hall, New College, on 21st March 1913. In the lecture Fleming observed that he had "tested several of the documents as preserved by Knox, and that the minute accuracy with which these had been reproduced puts to shame some moderns who profess to write history scientifically".<sup>310</sup> Following the 1912-1913 lecture series in Edinburgh, the Knox Club followed a similar procedure for a number of years, in each of which Fleming gave one of the lectures. They all centred on the Scottish

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<sup>309</sup> *The Knox Club, Third Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1912, p. 12. The President of the Glasgow Knox Club was Rev Donald Macmillan (1855-1927), minister of Kelvinhaugh from 1891-1923. His lecture "John Knox and His Message for the Times", delivered on the anniversary of Knox's death in 1912, was published by the Glasgow Knox Club in 1913.

<sup>310</sup> *The Knox Club, Fourth Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1913, p. 16.

Reformation in general and the life of John Knox in particular. They were as follows:

27th March 1914: *The Influence of the Reformation on the Social and Cultured Life of Scotland*.<sup>311</sup>

Due to the commencement of World War I, no lecture series was held in the winter of 1914-1915. Fleming, however, gave a single lecture on 22nd January 1915 on *Knox and Queen Mary*.<sup>312</sup>

18th April 1916: his lecture was on *Knox's Five Years' Work as a Preacher in, and Reformer of England*.

Reflecting his own extensive researches, in the course of the lecture, Fleming asserted, "His biographers had stated, with wonderful unanimity, that he was one of the Royal Chaplains; but this was not borne out by the evidence".<sup>313</sup>

24th November 1916: Fleming delivered an address at the Knox Anniversary service in the Common Hall of New College in Edinburgh on *Knox in France, Switzerland and Germany*.<sup>314</sup>

It appears from these lectures that Fleming was heavily involved in research to produce a life of Knox, yet, as we have noted, such a volume never appeared.

After the resignation of F. J. Robertson as Secretary and Treasurer in May 1917, our main source of information about the Knox Club dries up. Forty-five publications had been issued between 1909 and May 1917, but only a further eleven publications were produced in the next six years, three of those being Fleming's listed above. The Club published nothing after 1923 and presumably became defunct about that time. The first four editions of Fleming's *The Church of Rome and Marriage* had been published by the Knox Club but the fifth edition of 1927 was not.

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<sup>311</sup> *The Knox Club, Fifth Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1914, pp. 7, 9-10.

<sup>312</sup> *The Knox Club, Sixth Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1915, p. 4.

<sup>313</sup> *The Knox Club, Seventh Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1916, p. 4.

<sup>314</sup> *The Knox Club, Eighth Annual Report*, Edinburgh, 1917, p. 2.



### APPENDIX III

## FLEMING AS AUTHOR AND EDITOR

WE noted at the beginning of this paper, that whilst the biography of Fleming by Henry M. Paton is rather slender and lacks the detail one would desire in such a work, the volume does contain an excellent bibliography of Fleming's work as an author and editor. It details two hundred and fifty items that were either written by Fleming or edited by him under the following captions:

1. Books written by him – Items 1-16.
2. Pamphlets – Items 17-53.
3. Articles (some of which were later printed as pamphlets) – Items 54-117.
4. Critical reviews – Items 118-229.
5. Volumes edited by Fleming or with introductions by him – Items 230-241.
6. Poetry – Items 242-243.
7. Additions to the bibliography – Items 244-250.

All we intend to do in this Appendix is to list the major volumes of which Fleming was either the author or the editor. The reader is directed to Paton for a more or less complete bibliography, and for details of the many pamphlets and articles he wrote, some of which are of crucial historical importance.<sup>315</sup>

History was Fleming's particular province. He was reared in an area which for so many centuries had been at the centre of the ecclesiastical and academic life of Scotland. He was nurtured in a home where Reformation literature took first place on the shelves. Added to this, as Fleming had a natural passion for books, it was not surprising

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<sup>315</sup> Paton, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-136. Among items missed by Paton we would mention the following: "Grave Stone of Andrew Gullan", reprinted from *St Andrews Citizen*, 26th December 1885; "History of Early Scottish Education", *British Weekly*, 23rd September 1893; "Two unpublished Documents of Mary Queen of Scots", *Bookman*, April 1900; "A Leaflet on Scottish Church Music in Olden Times", *Scottish Art and Letters*, May-July 1902, pp. 34-36; "The Date of Knox's birth" (see note 129); "History of Modern Liberty", *Bookman*, May 1906; "A Whitehorn Procession", *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 29, 1924, pp. 268-271, reprinted from *The Bulwark*.

that his mind was stored with historical lore.<sup>316</sup> Local history had a special appeal to him, and in this he had an enthusiastic supporter in the editor of the local newspaper, who urged him to contribute liberally to its pages. Fleming delved into the municipal records of St Andrews and brought to light many interesting memorials of the burgh. This resulted in a number of contributions to the local newspaper, the *St Andrews Citizen*. Some of these are listed in Paton's bibliography, but he adds, "It is impossible to enumerate all his articles to the local press".<sup>317</sup> A number of these articles were later reprinted as booklets. Paton lists fourteen such booklets in his bibliography.<sup>318</sup>

### Volumes written by Fleming

The major volumes he wrote are as follows:

1881 – *The Alphanumeric Guide Book to St Andrews*.

This volume was reprinted and updated on many occasions. The last edition during Fleming's lifetime was in 1927, but it continued to be reprinted at least until 1980. In later editions it was renamed, first as *The Tourist's Hand-Book to St Andrews and its Neighbourhood* and later still as the *Hand-Book to St Andrews and Neighbourhood*. It was a volume to which Fleming attached great importance; in it he details in a popular way the history of the town of his birth, emphasising in particular its ecclesiastical history. From a book of seventy-five pages in 1881 it grew to two hundred and forty pages in the 1910 edition.

As we have noted, it was a lifelong object of Fleming's to write a history of St Andrews. Though his pen never slackened during the years of his residence in the town, such a history was never written. Paton wrote regarding Fleming's attachment to St Andrews, "From early youth he became absorbed in the relics, ruins and architectural remains not only of St Andrews but in the regions around; and his enthusiasm grew until he was able to say that he did not think any Jew was more attached to Jerusalem than he was to the old city."<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 73.

<sup>317</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 92.

<sup>318</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 74, 119-121.

<sup>319</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 22, 89.

1883 – *Charters and other documents concerning the right of the City of St Andrews to the Mussel Scalps on both sides of the Eden.*

This book resulted from his election to St Andrews Council and was research on the old charters of the town defending its rights to the mussel-scalps in the Water of Eden.

1886 – *Guide to the East Neuk of Fife, embracing all the Towns and Villages, Antiquities and places of Interest between Fifeness and Leven.*

The object of this *Guide* is the same as his *Hand-Book on St Andrews* only it covers a wider area. It has many illustrations and provides a great deal of useful information about the towns and villages from Crail to Leven. The local authorities of both St Andrews and the East Neuk of Fife must have been grateful to Fleming for the publicity he provided to his native area by these volumes. They were high quality tourist guides with a distinct ecclesiastical content.

1887 – *The Martyrs & Confessors of St Andrews.*

The material in this book originally appeared in the columns of the *Fife Herald*, the *St Andrews Citizen*, and the *Fife News*. It is a substantial volume of two hundred and eight pages and is an account of those heroes of the faith to whose memory the famous martyrs' monument was erected in St Andrews in 1842. The book contains biographical sketches of thirteen men martyred at St Andrews, including Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart and Walter Myln. Fleming sent a copy of this book to Arthur Balfour, the Leader of the Conservative Party, who was Prime Minister between 1902 and 1905.

1897 – *Mary Queen of Scots from her Birth to her Flight to England: A Brief Biography: with Critical Notes, a few Documents hitherto unpublished, and an Itinerary.*

Paton regarded this book as Fleming's *magnum opus*.<sup>320</sup> As the title suggests, it is not a complete life of Mary Queen of Scots. The verdict of an historian, cited by Paton, is, "not only a mine of wealth, by reason of the amazing collection of documentary

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<sup>320</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 77.

evidence (the notes and appendices extend to 367 pages), but it displays such clear perception of the essentials of the Marian controversy that it is indispensable for all who wish to get a grip of this period of national history".<sup>321</sup> A second edition was issued in 1898.

1903 – *The Scottish Reformation (Handbooks for Senior Classes)*.

This little volume has been described as a marvel of compactness and essential information. Ten editions were published in Fleming's lifetime and a twelfth edition in 1960.

1904 – *The Story of the Covenants in Outline*.

This is an enlarged reprint of the introduction to J. H. Thomson's *Martyr Graves of Scotland* (1903).

1910 – *The Reformation in Scotland: Causes, Characteristics, Consequences*.

This is the published version of the first series of Fleming's Stone Lectures that he delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1907. Immediately after its appearance, a Jesuit priest wrote a scurrilous letter to the *Glasgow Herald* of 3rd March 1910, in which he described Knox as a man of the lowest moral character. Fleming replied on 10th March 1910. James S. Sinclair in the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* describes the conflict: "Dr Hay Fleming . . . had no difficulty in showing that the Jesuit priest had a few points to learn in Scottish Reformation history. A Jesuit can make a little knowledge go a long way without ever realising its danger, but when he is confronted by an historian of Dr H. Fleming's standing – it is the case of the mouse facing the lion. The antics of the former may be nimble enough, but once the paw of the king of beasts comes down on the tiny creature – it is as near annihilation as anything we have in this world."<sup>322</sup>

1912 – *Critical Reviews relating chiefly to Scotland*.

*Critical Reviews* is a book that displays the rich fruit of a great deal of Fleming's literary labours. It contains around one hundred and twenty important critical reviews collected by him and published

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<sup>321</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>322</sup> *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. 14, April 1910, p. 479.

as a separate volume of over six hundred pages. The volume contains reviews of major publications by eminent authors, including Charles G. M'Crie, Alexander Taylor Innes, Alexander Whyte, Andrew Lang and Peter Hume Brown.

1931 – *St Andrews Cathedral Museum*.

This is regarded as the copestone of Fleming's antiquarian labours and was ready for publication just eleven months before his death. It catalogues and describes the various exhibits in the museum and is a monument to patient and persevering industry. This was his last book and was dedicated to his mother.

### **Volumes edited by Fleming**

The major volumes that Fleming either edited or wrote introductions to are as follows:

1889 – *Register of the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Christian Congregation of St Andrews*, Vol. 1, 1559-1582.

This volume and the subsequent one were edited for the Scottish History Society. The two volumes together extend over a thousand pages, with introductions by Fleming in the two volumes totalling one hundred and six pages.

1890 – *Register of the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Christian Congregation of St Andrews*, Vol. 2, 1582-1600.

1897 – William James Taylor (Minister of the Free Church in Flisk), *Saint Andrews in Olden Time*.

In this book Fleming supplied the footnotes after the author's death.

1900 – Alexander F. Mitchell, *The Scottish Reformation* (The Baird Lecture for 1899).

Mitchell was the Professor of Church History at St Andrews University. After the delivery of his Baird Lectures his health prevented him preparing the manuscripts for the press. Accordingly he asked Fleming, who was a friend, to edit them for publication. Mitchell died at St Andrews on 22nd March 1899.

1901 – Patrick Walker, *Six Saints of the Covenant*, 2 Vols. Edited by Fleming, with Illustrative documents, Introduction, Notes and Glossary.

These volumes were edited by Fleming who added a twenty-two page historical introduction and extensive historical and bibliographical footnotes (Volume II contains one hundred and three pages of footnotes) referencing and explaining Walker's biographical accounts. Fleming also added thirteen pages of illustrative documents, a glossary and a list and account of the sixteen editions of Walker examined by him for the reprint. In the introduction, among those he thanks for their help is John Sturrock, the minister of the Victoria Terrace Original Secession Church, of which he had become a member two years prior to the publication date.

Fleming was no less an expert on the Second Reformation period as he was on the period of John Knox and the First Reformation. Paton says: "He approached the subject not only with critical erudition but with infinite sympathy, for he belonged to the order of ecclesiastical die-hards whose banner is still that of the Covenants."<sup>323</sup> His biographer records: "Of one so deeply attached to the Covenanted Reformation, it need not surprise the reader to be told that a banner not infrequently floated over No. 4 Chamberlain Road, and that banner a replica of the flag that was carried at Bothwell Brig by one of the units of the Presbyterian army. It was sewn and embroidered by Mrs Fleming, and displayed as closely as possible the faded colourings of the original."<sup>324</sup>

1903 – J. G. Thomson, *Martyr Graves of Scotland*.

Fleming wrote an introduction to this volume by Thomson of Hightae. It was afterwards enlarged and published separately in 1904 as *The Story of the Scottish Covenants in Outline*. In addition he wrote a thirteen-page appendix containing a complete list of the Dunnottar Prisoners.

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<sup>323</sup> Paton, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>324</sup> Paton, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

1911 – George Bartoli, *The Bible in Relation to the Church of Rome and The Higher Criticism*. Edited with a preface by Fleming (Knox Club Publication No. 18).

Dr Bartoli of Rome had sought Fleming's help in connection with his propaganda against Romanism. This resulted in Fleming arranging for Bartoli to deliver a series of lectures under the aegis of the Knox Club. These lectures were later edited by Fleming and published by the Knox Club.

1919 – *Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston*, Vol. II. Edited by Fleming with an introduction for the Scottish History Society.

As we noted, Fleming was engaged in editing the second volume of Johnston of Wariston's diary when B. B. Warfield asked him to deliver a second series of Stone Lectures. As a result he chose the Life of Johnston as his subject. All we have from Fleming's pen on Johnston is the forty-three page, heavily referenced, biographical introduction he supplied to this volume. The volume of the diary has extensive footnotes supplied by Fleming and is clearly a work of historical scholarship by an editor that was very familiar with the Second Reformation period in Scottish history.

1921 – *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, Vol. II. Edited by Fleming and issued as a Record Publication by H.M. General Register House.

We noticed earlier that Fleming was invited to undertake the editorship of the remaining volumes of the *Register of the Privy Seal*, as Record Office Publications. Fleming began work on the second volume in August 1910. The editing of this volume and the subsequent one was a monumental task of antiquarian scholarship. It took him over a decade to edit the second volume – including the indices the volume extends to 948 pages. Fleming prefaced the work with a detailed thirty-two page introduction and almost every page is supplied with footnotes either providing appropriate references or explaining the text.

1936 – *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, Vol. III. Edited by Fleming up to his death and completed by James Beveridge. Issued as a Record Publication by H.M. General Register House.

James Beveridge begins his introduction to Volume III with this tribute to Fleming: "Volume II of *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, edited by Dr Hay Fleming was issued in 1921. He then began work on this present volume, but the interruptions caused by other calls upon his time and by his failing health prevented much progress being made. Of the first 1,300 warrants all with the exception of some longer ones were transcribed, but not revised. In the autumn of 1930 the present editor was appointed to collaborate in the editorship, but Dr Hay Fleming's bad health prevented him from taking an active part in the work. His death in November 1931 deprived Scottish historical scholarship of a painstaking student, who had acquired a unique knowledge of the period preceding the Reformation, and left a vacancy in the circle of research scholars which it will be difficult adequately to fill."<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> *The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, Vol. III, edited by D. H. Fleming and James Beveridge, H.M. General Register House, 1936, p. v.