

National Records of Scotland

Summary

Source: Notes and Queries
Assisted by: Claude AI
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Claude

NOTES AND QUERIES · PRINTED SOURCE SUMMARY

Fleming of Ferme in Notes and Queries

The Dinwiddie manuscript and Sigma's pedigree of the Fleming baronets, 1885-1886

The sources

Notes and Queries was a London weekly in which readers asked and answered questions on history, genealogy and literature. Cokayne's reference “N&Q, 7th S, I, 116” is to Seventh Series, volume I, page 116. That note is the third in a short exchange about the Flemings of Ferme, and its author, signing as Sigma, mentioned the family twice more later in 1886.

Citation	Issue	Item	Author
6th S. xii. 207-208	12 Sep 1885	“Fleming Family”: query quoting the Dinwiddie manuscript	Alexander Brown, Norwood P.O., Nelson County, Virginia
6th S. xii. 317-318	17 Oct 1885	“Fleming Family”: first reply	Sigma
7th S. i. 116	6 Feb 1886	“Fleming Family”: second reply, with the pedigree. This is the note Cokayne cites.	Sigma
7th S. ii. 63-64	24 Jul 1886	“Solly's ‘Titles of Honour’”: corrections, one about Ferme	Sigma
7th S. ii. 157-158	21 Aug 1886	“Heron Family”: reply mentioning Ferme	Sigma

All five are available as page scans on the Internet Archive; the links above open them.

What the notes say

In September 1885 Alexander Brown, writing from Virginia, sent an extract from a family document by Alexander Dinwiddie, “last surviving grandson of Sir Archibald Fleming”, written about 1770-90. It names Sir William Fleming of Fern and Dame Margaret Stuart, their three children, and Sir Archibald's marriage to a daughter of Sir George Hamilton. Brown asked for the ancestry of Sir William, his wife and Sir George, and for the descendants of Mr Muschett, merchant in Edinburgh.

Sigma replied in October 1885 that he knew of no published pedigree of Fleming of Ferme. He thought the manuscript inaccurate, and on the strength of Burke's History of the Commoners suggested that Margaret Stewart's husband was Sir Archibald, not Sir William.

In February 1886 Sigma changed his mind. Brown had sent a fuller extract, and Sigma had received a pedigree “from a most trustworthy source”. He printed it, identified the baronetcy with the “Fleming, Bart., of Glasgow” entered in Burke's Extinct Baronetage, and rejected the manuscript's claim that the first baronet was a grandson of the first Earl of Wigtown. He also corrected himself on the Hamiltons, now identified as Hamilton of Binny, Barnton and Tulliallan.

Later in 1886 Sigma sent Solly a correction that the “Fleming, Bart., of Glasgow” entry should read “Properly of Ferme”. In another note he listed Fleming of Ferme among Scottish baronetcies with no recorded pedigree.

Sigma's pedigree, 1886

	Person	As given by Sigma, 1886
1	Archibald Fleming	Merchant, of Glasgow. Married Elizabeth Lennox.
2	William	Burgess of Glasgow and Clerk of the Commissariot there. Died September 1636.
3	Archibald of Ferme, 1st baronet	Advocate, commissary of Glasgow and Rector of Glasgow University. Married 1637 Agnes, daughter and heir of David Gibson, notary and burgess of Glasgow. Created a baronet 1661, the third Nova Scotia baronetcy after the Restoration. Died January 1662.
4	Sir William, 2nd baronet	Also commissary at Glasgow. Married Margaret, daughter of Archibald Stewart of Scotstoun. Died 6 February 1707. His daughter was second wife of William Somerville of Kennox.
5	Sir Archibald, 3rd baronet	Married, by contract of 3 August 1692, Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Sir George Hamilton, Bart., of Binny. Died 14 April 1714, leaving a son who went to France, ten daughters (one the mother of the manuscript's writer), and a son, Sir William.
6	Sir William, 4th baronet	Lieutenant in Handasyde's Horse. Married a daughter of Lennox of Woodhead. Died at Elgin, 25 October 1745, leaving a son.

	Person	As given by Sigma, 1886
7	Sir Collingwood, 5th baronet	Died without issue in Virginia, 17 April 1763. Succeeded by his brother.
7	Sir James, 6th baronet	Died 1 October 1763. The title was then treated as extinct.

The Dinwiddie manuscript adds that the estate was lost under the 3rd baronet, who stood surety for the debts of his father-in-law, Sir George Hamilton. It also gives the birth of Alexander Dinwiddie, who married Elizabeth Fleming, as 15 March 1694 (Old Style), and that of their son Alexander, the writer, as 17 April 1738.

Where the accounts disagree

Point	What the sources say	Comment
Husband of Margaret Stewart	Dinwiddie MS: Sir William. Sigma, 1885: “seems to have been” Sir Archibald, following Burke's Commoners. Sigma, 1886: Sir William.	RH8/601 (1706) names Dame Margaret Steuart as spouse of Sir William Fleming of Ferm, which settles it for William.
Father of Mrs Somerville of Kennox	Burke's Commoners: Sir Archibald. Dinwiddie MS and Sigma, 1886: Sir William.	Follows from the point above. Brown's extract prints “Lennox”; Sigma corrects it to Kennox.
Lady Hamilton's family	Dinwiddie MS: Barnton. Brown: Burnton. Sigma, 1885: no Hamiltons of Barnton known. Sigma, 1886: Hamilton, Bart., of Binny, Barnton and Tulliallan, created 1692.	Sigma withdrew his doubt.
The Elphinstone marriage	Dinwiddie MS: a daughter of Sir Archibald married Lord Elphinstone's eldest son. Douglas: Marjory, daughter of “Sir Gilbert” Fleming of Farm. Burke: daughter of “Sir Gilbert Fleeming, Bart., of Burnton”.	No Gilbert appears in Sigma's pedigree. Marjory would be a daughter of Sir Archibald, 3rd baronet.
The 4th baronet's death	Dinwiddie MS: died “prior to 1745”. Sigma, 1886: died at Elgin, 25 October 1745.	No baronet dies in 1738 in either account.
The son who went to France	Dinwiddie MS: the youngest son. Sigma, 1886: a son, said by the manuscript to have settled in America.	Not named in either.

Point	What the sources say	Comment
Descent from the Earls of Wigtown	Dinwiddie MS: the first baronet was grandson of “Malcolm (? John)”, first Earl. Sigma: no authority for so close a link.	You have the first baronet as a great-great-great-great-grandson of the first Lord Fleming, and the first Earl as a great-great-great-grandson of the same Lord through another line.

How this fits your other records

- **William, Clerk of the Commissariot:** Sigma's death date of September 1636 fits your 1637 testament of William Fleming, Commissary Clerk.
- **Archibald, 1st baronet:** his death in January 1662 fits your Archibald Fleming of Ferme (died 1662) and the 1664 testaments.
- **Sir William, 2nd baronet:** Sigma's 6 February 1707 is the same date as your burial record filed under 1707 0206. Either Sigma's source gave the burial date as the death date, or the two fell on the same day.
- **Dame Margaret:** Sigma's “Margaret, dau. of Archibald Stewart of Scotstoun” is the Dame Margaret Steuart of the 1706 sasine (RH8/601).
- **Somerville of Kennox:** Sir William's daughter was Somerville's second wife. That gives the background to William Somerville of Kennocks v Fleming of Ferm, 1710 (CS181/5466), and confirms that Kennocks is Kennox.
- **Sir Archibald, 3rd baronet:** his death on 14 April 1714 fits your burial records of 19 and 21 April 1714.
- **No baronet dying in 1738:** neither the Dinwiddie manuscript nor Sigma has one. That supports your view that Cokayne's 4th baronet who died in 1738 is a phantom.

Points to note

- **Sigma's source:** he does not say who supplied the pedigree. It is secondary evidence, though much of it is now confirmed by the records above.
- **The earlier correspondence:** Sigma's 1885 reply mentions an exchange about the Flemings of Ferne and the Dinwiddies in Notes and Queries “a few years ago”. I have not traced it.
- **Who Sigma was:** a pseudonym. The notes show a correspondent interested in Scottish baronetcies, but give no name.
- **Name forms:** the family appears as Fern, Ferne, Farm and Ferme, and Dinwiddie as Dunwiddie.

Details that may help identify the people

- Sir William Fleming of Fern / Ferne, married to Dame Margaret Stuart: the 2nd baronet and his wife, the parents of Sir Archibald, Mrs Lennox of Woodhead and Mrs Somerville of Kennox.

- Margaret, dau. of Archibald Stewart of Scotstoun: her father, son of Sir Archibald Stewart of Blackhall by Margaret Blair, on Burke's account quoted by Sigma.
- Elizabeth, eldest dau. of Sir George Hamilton, Bart., of Binny: wife of Sir Archibald, 3rd baronet, under a contract of 3 August 1692.
- Alexander Dinwiddie, merchant in Glasgow, born 15 March 1694 (Old Style), married Elizabeth Fleming, daughter of Sir Archibald. Their son Alexander Dinwiddie, born 17 April 1738, wrote the manuscript.
- Marjory, wife of John, Master of Elphinstone, who died in his father's lifetime and without issue in May 1753.
- Sir William, 4th baronet, lieutenant in Handasyde's Horse, died at Elgin 25 October 1745; Sir Collingwood, died in Virginia 17 April 1763; Sir James, died 1 October 1763.

Transcripts

Copied from the printed pages, checked against the page images. Spelling, punctuation, capitals and abbreviations are as printed; small capitals and superscripts are kept. Line breaks are not kept, because the notes are set in narrow newspaper columns. Page numbers in brackets mark where each page begins, and [...] marks a passage left out.

1. Notes and Queries, 6th S. xii. 207-208, 12 September 1885

[p. 207]

FLEMING FAMILY.—Extract from a family document written by "Alexander Dunwiddie (or Dinwiddie), last surviving grandson of Sir Archibald Fleming," about 1770–90:—

> "(1) Sir William Fleming of Fern, county Lanark, Scotland, married (2) Dame Margaret Stuart. Of this marriage there were only three children, Sir Archibald (my grandfather), Mrs. Lennox of Woodhead, and Mrs. Somerville of Lennox. Sir Archibald married the eldest daughter of (3) Sir George Hamilton of Barnton, and had two sons and ten daughters. The youngest son went to France; the eldest son, Sir William, went into the army and died prior to 1745. Of the daughters one married Lord Elphinstone's eldest son,* who died before his father and had no children; one married Mr. Alexander Dunwiddie, merchant in Glasgow (my parents); one married (4) Mr. Muschett, merchant in Edinburgh," &c.

I should like to know the ancestry for, say, four

* Burke says that he "married a daughter of Sir Gilbert Fleeming, Bart., of Burnton."

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or five generations, of Sir William Fleming of Ferne; Dame Margaret Stuart, his wife; and of Sir George Hamilton of Burnton: also the descendants for two or three generations of Mr. Muschett, merchant in Edinburgh, Scotland. Replies sent to 5, Camberwell New Road, S.E., will be forwarded.

ALEXANDER BROWN.

Norwood P.O., Nelson County, Virginia, U.S.

2. Notes and Queries, 6th S. xii. 317-318, 17 October 1885

[p. 317]

FLEMING FAMILY (6th S. xii. 207).—Mr. Dinwiddie's MS., from which MR. ALEXANDER BROWN gives an extract, is likely to be interesting if it throws light on the families of Fleming of Ferne, and of Dinwiddie, regarding which a correspondence took place in "N. & Q." a few years ago. It does not, however, appear to be very accurate. I will take MR. BROWN's queries in order.

1. I have never seen a pedigree of Fleming of Farm, Ferme, or Ferne. The baronetcy is not mentioned in Burke's *Extinct Baronetage* nor in Solly's *Titles of Honour*. The pedigree of Fleming, Earl of Wigton, gives no trace of any Ferne, offshoot, nor does that of Fleming of Barochan, given in Crawford's *Renfrewshire*. It is evident, however, that the title existed, for there are two authentic references to it, and one of them seems to show that a pedigree must be in existence somewhere. Douglas (*Peerage*, vol. i. p. 540) says that John, Master of Elphinstone, eldest son of Charles, ninth Lord Elphinstone, married Marjory, dau. of Sir Gilbert (not Archibald) Fleming of Farm, Bart. This marriage took place about 1730–40, the Master dying, *v.p.* and *s.p.*, in May, 1753. The second reference is in Burke's *History of the Commoners*, vol. iii. p. 688, as follows:—

> "William Somerville, of Kennox, who m^d^ first a dau. of Sir.....Vere of Blackwood, which lady d. *s.p.*, and secondly a daughter of Sir Archibald Fleming, B^t^, of Ferme, by a daughter of Archibald Stewart of Scotstoun, who was son to Sir Archibald Stewart, B^t^, of Blackhall, by Margaret, dau. of Bryce Blair of that ilk. Mrs. Somerville's grandmother, Lady Fleming, was daughter to Colquhon of Luss, and her great-grandmother daughter of Stirling of Keir, in Stirlingshire."

Some pedigree of Fleming of Ferme must have been before the writer of this sentence; but it may be stated that the alliances mentioned in it are not confirmed by reference to the pedigrees of Vere (or Weir) of Blackwood, Stewart of Scotstoun,

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Colquhon of Luss, and Stirling of Keir. The want of confirmation does not, however, prove its inaccuracy.

2. "Dame Margaret Stewart," mother of Mrs. Somerville of Kennox (not Lennox, as printed), was, as explained above, a daughter of the Scotstoun branch of the Blackhall family. Her husband seems to have been Sir *Archibald* Fleming, not *William*, and her grandfather, Sir Archibald Stewart, was a knight, and not a baronet. Her descent will be found in Burke's *Peerage*, article "Shaw-Stewart, Bt."

3. I have never met with any Hamiltons of Barnton, and think there must be some error in this designation. Peerages, &c., record only two marriages between a Fleming and a Hamilton.

4. I have notes of the following marriages under the name Mushet or Muschet:—

a. James Mushet, younger, of Torrie, m. about 1540 Isobel, dau. of Alexander of Menstrie.

b. Christian, dau. of John Muschet of Crayhead, m. about 1650, as second wife, Sir John Campbell of Glenurchy.

c. Jean, dau. of Sir George Mushet of Burnbank, m. 1618 Archibald Stirling of Kippendavie.

d. Miss Mushet, niece to the Bishop of Derry, m. about 1730 Francis Burroughs, ancestor of Burroughs, Bart., of Castle Bagshaw.

e. Magdalen, fourth dau. of Robert Mushet (of the Royal Mint), m. 1847 Admiral Sir George Giffard, K.C.B.

SIGMA.

3. Notes and Queries, 7th S. i. 116, 6 February 1886

[p. 116]

FLEMING FAMILY (6th S. xii. 207, 317).—Since the appearance of my reply to MR. BROWN's queries on the subject of the Dinwiddie MSS. I have received from that gentleman a more extended extract from the MSS., which confirms my previous impression as to its accuracy.

I mentioned that no pedigree of Fleming of Ferme was procurable; and I should like to state that I have now received the following information from a most trustworthy source. It shows that the Ferme baronetcy is the same as that imperfectly and erroneously entered in Burke's 'Extinct Baronetage' as "Fleming, Bart., of Glasgow" (see p. 621), under which title it is also entered in Solly's 'Titles of Honour.'

The Dinwiddie MS. aspires to connect the Ferme family with the old Earls of Wigton by stating that the first baronet was grandson of Malcolm (? John), first Earl of Wigton. It is not unlikely that there was some connexion, but there is no authority for any connexion so close and direct as the MS. pretends. The pedigree, as communicated to me, is as follows:—

Archibald Fleming, merchant, of Glasgow, mar. Elizabeth Lennox.

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William, burgess of Glasgow, and Clerk of the Commissariot there, d. Sept., 1636.

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Archibald, of Ferme, &c., advocate and commissary of Glasgow, and Rector of the Glasgow University, mar., 1637, Agnes, dau. and heir of David Gibson, notary and burgess of Glasgow; created a baronet in 1661 (this being the third Nova Scotia baronetcy created after the Restoration); d. January, 1662.

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Sir William, second baronet, also commissary at Glasgow, mar. Margaret, dau. of Archibald Stewart of Scotstoun, and d. Feb. 6, 1707 (his dau. was second wife of William Somerville of Kennox).

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Sir Archibald, third baronet, mar. (contract dated Aug. 3, 1692) Elizabeth, eldest dau. of Sir George Hamilton, Bart., of Binny, &c., and d. April 14, 1714, leaving, with a son, who went to France (and is stated in the Dinwiddie MS. to have settled in America and left descendants there), and ten daughters (one of whom mar. Alexander Dinwiddie, and was mother of the writer of the MS.), a son

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Sir William, fourth baronet, lieutenant in Handasyde's Horse, mar. a dau. of Lennox of Woodhead, and d. at Elgin, Oct. 25, 1745, leaving a son

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Sir Collingwood, fifth baronet, *d.s.p.* in Virginia, April 17, 1763, and was succeeded by his brother

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Sir James, sixth baronet, who d. Oct. 1, 1763, since which date the title seems to have been considered as extinct.

The Dinwiddie MS. adds that the family estate was lost in the time of the third baronet, who became surety for the debts of his father-in-law, Sir George Hamilton, Bart., "one of the proudest and most extravagant men that ever existed."

I may add that the MS. mentions that Alexander Dinwiddie, who mar. Elizabeth Fleming, was born March 15, 1694 (O.S.), and that his son Alexander, the writer of it, was born April 17, 1738.

I doubted the existence of any “Hamiltons of Barntoun,” but wish to correct myself. I find the full title of the family referred to was “Hamilton, Bart., of Binny, Barnton, and Tulliallan,” created in 1692. Their pedigree is, however, like that of the Flemings of Ferme, apparently unpublished.

SIGMA.

4. Notes and Queries, 7th S. ii. 63-64, 24 July 1886 (extract)

[p. 63]

SOLLY'S ‘TITLES OF HONOUR.’

The following annotations on the above-named work have been communicated to Mr. Solly, and are here briefly enumerated.

[...]

P. 75. Fleming, Bart., of Glasgow. Properly of Ferme.

[...]

SIGMA. [p. 64]

5. Notes and Queries, 7th S. ii. 157-158, 21 August 1886 (extract)

[p. 157]

HERON FAMILY (7th S. i. 149, 239).—[...] MR. FRASER's reply identifies Anne Heron's husband as Sir Peter Fraser, Bart., of Durris. This is another instance of a Scottish family of rank regarding the pedigree of which no accurate information is recorded in ordinary works of reference. I have recently in these columns noticed the want of any pedigree of Fleming, Bart., of Ferme; Hamilton, Bart., of Binny; Gordon, Bart., of Invergordon; and Gordon, Bart., of Lesmoir. [...]

SIGMA. [p. 158]

Sources

Notes and Queries (London: John C. Francis), page scans on the Internet Archive:

- 6th S. xii. 207-208: https://archive.org/details/sim_notes-and-queries_1885-09-12_12_298/page/n6
- 6th S. xii. 317-318: https://archive.org/details/sim_notes-and-queries_1885-10-17_12_303/page/n16
- 7th S. i. 116: https://archive.org/details/s7notesqueries01londuoft/page/n123
- 7th S. ii. 63-64: https://archive.org/details/s7notesqueries02londuoft/page/n70
- 7th S. ii. 157-158: https://archive.org/details/s7notesqueries02londuoft/page/n164

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