

**SOME EARLY GRAMMARS AND
OTHER SCHOOL BOOKS IN USE
IN SCOTLAND, MORE
PARTICULARLY THOSE PRINTED
AT OR RELATING TO GLASGOW**

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DAVID MURRAY

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BY

DAVID MURRAY

M.A., LL.D.

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*Some early Grammars and other School Books in use in Scotland
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By DAVID MURRAY, M.A., LL.D.

PART FIRST.

[Read before the Historical and Philological Section, 16th December, 1904.]

FOR many centuries the *Ars Grammatica* of Aelius Donatus was the standard school book in Scotland, as it was in other countries. Wyntoun writing in the fifteenth century says :

Donate than wes in his state,
And in that tyme his libel wrate,
That now baryns cyssis to lere
At thar begynnynge of gramere.¹

In 1507 James IV. granted to Walter Chapman and Andrew Myllar the exclusive privilege of printing certain books, so as to prevent their importation from abroad.² In 1509 they complained of a violation of this privilege and the Privy Council granted an interdict against the persons complained of, and forbad the printing or importing of "Donatis and Ulric *in personas* or uther books that the said Walter hes prentit ellis."³ The inference therefore is that Chapman had, prior to this time, printed in Scotland an edition of Donatus. "The grace buke, prymar and plane donat" were in use in the Edinburgh Grammar School in 1519;⁴ and in 1567 Robert Lekpreuik had exclusive licence to print "the buikis callit Donatus pro pueris, Rudimentis of Pelisso . . . the Psalms of David with the inglis and latine catechismes les and mair."⁵

¹ *Wyntoun, The Cronykil of Scotland*, V., 3443 (Amours); 3377 (Laing).

² *Fourth Annual Report of the Deputy Clerk Register*, p. 16, Edinburgh, 1810, fol. ; *Miscellany of the Maitland Club*, ii. p. 5 ; Lee, *Memorial for the Bible Societies*. Appendix, p. 1.

³ Lee, *supra* Appendix, p. 3 ; *Additional Memorial*, p. 32.

I cannot identify Ulric *in personas* ; it may have been part of the *Codex Udalrici* of Ulrich of Bamberg, author of *Ars dictandi*.

⁴ Town Council Minute, 10th January, 1518 ; *Burgh Records of Edinburgh*, p. 193 (Burgh Records Society).

⁵ Lee, *Memorial, supra* Appendix, p. 6.

4 *Some Early Grammars and School Books in use in Scotland.*

A later grammar, but one which long held the field, was that of Jean Despautère (Flemish, Van Pauteren) of Ninove in Flanders—the Priscian of Belgium—who died in 1520.¹ His *Orthographiae Isagoge* was first published at Paris in 1510;² the *Rudimenta* in 1512; and the *Syntaxis* in 1515. The whole were collected in one volume, under the title *Commentarii Grammatici*, and published at Lyons in 1536 in 4to, and at Paris in 1537 in folio. An abridgment by Sebastian Novimola, a Canon of Cologne, appeared at Antwerp in 1566, under the title *Grammaticae Institutionis Libri vii*, which was reprinted at Edinburgh by John Ross in 1579, by Andrew Hart in 1621, by Thomas Brown in 1677,³ by John Reid in 1684,⁴ and by James Watson in 1709. Despauter's *Syntaxis* was also published by Ross in 1579. Jean Pelisson, Principal of the College of Tournon, prepared another abridgment which was first published in Lyons in 1530, and was used to a considerable extent in our schools, but apparently was not reprinted in Scotland,⁵ unless it be the "*Meditationes in grammaticam Despauterianam*" for which Master William Nudrye had a licence in 1559.⁶

The list of school books included in Nudrye's patent is interesting and instructive. They are:—

1. Ane schort Introductioun elementar degestit into sevin breve taiblis for the commodius expeditioun of thame that ar desirous to reid and write the Scottis toung.
2. Orthoepia trilinguis.
3. Compendiariae Latinae linguae Notae.
4. Calographiae Index.
5. Tables manuelli brevelie introducing the unioun of the partis of Orisoun in Greik and Latene speiches with thair accidentis.
6. Meditationes in grammaticam Despauterianam.
7. Meditationes in Publium memographum et Sapientum Dicta.
8. Trilinguis literaturae Syntaxis.

¹ He had only one eye as we learn from his epitaph;—
Hic jacet unoculus, visu praestantior Argo,
Nomen Joannes cui Ninivita fuit.

² *Bibliotheca Heberiana*, Part III., No. 1160.

³ Lee, *Catalogue*, Part I., No. 3011.

⁴ There are copies of the editions of 1677 and 1684 in the British Museum.

⁵ A copy of Pelisson's *Rudimenta primae Latinae grammaticae*, Paris, 1560, 12mo., appeared in William Blackwood's *Catalogue*, No. 15,154, Edin., 1812, 8vo.

Pelisson also wrote, *Modus examinandae constructionis in oratione*. Paris (Stephanus) 1529, 12mo; 1535, 4to. It is appended to the *Rudimenta* of 1560.

⁶ *Registrum Secreti Sigilli*, xxx. fol. 5a.

9. Trilinguis grammaticae questiones.
10. Ane instructioun for bairnis to be lernit in Scottis and Latin.
11. Ane regement for educatioun of young gentillmen in literature and virtuous exercitioun.
12. Ane A B C for Scottismen to rede the Frenche toung with ane exhortatioun to the nobles of Scotland to favour their ald freindis.
13. The geneologie of Inglishe Britonis.
14. Quotidiani sermonis formulae, e Pub. Terentii Aphri comediis decerptae.

This list is a remarkable one and shows that, on the eve of the Reformation, school children were taught not only Latin and Greek, but also Scotch and French, from specially prepared School books. The phrase "young gentlemen" is also worthy of note. We are apt to look upon it as a piece of snobbery of recent times, but it is of quite respectable antiquity.¹

The first book produced for a Scotch printer was in 1505 and was a school book.²

The earliest Latin grammar written by a Scotsman seems to be the *Rudimenta puerorum in artem grammaticalem* of John Vaus, humanist or professor of Latin in the College of St Mary (afterwards King's College) Aberdeen. It was published at Paris³ in 1522, a second edition in 1531, and a third edited by Theophilus Stuart, his successor in the Humanity Chair at Aberdeen, in 1553. All are of the greatest rarity. There is a copy of the edition of 1522 in the library of King's College, Aberdeen. Thomas Ruddiman had a copy⁴ and there was one in David

¹ See Complaint, 16th December, 1580, by the Privy Council of the inconvenience to the realm "by the education of great number of *yonge gentlemen* and other her [Queen Elizabeth's] subjects in the partes beyond the seas." Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, I., p. 99, London, 1779, 4to. A century later we have Walker's *Education of young Gentlemen*, Oxford, 1677, 8vo. In 1747 James Scruton, Writing Master and Accountant, was invited by the Provost and other gentlemen to come from London to Glasgow "to qualify *young gentlemen* in writing, arithmetic," etc. *Glasgow Courant*, 16th June, 1749. Todd's *Schoolboy and Young Gentleman's Assistant*, was published at Edinburgh in 1748. Well's *Young Gentleman's Astronomy, Chronology and dialling*, London, 1718, 8vo.

² *Mulorum Vocabulorum Equiuocorum Interpretatio* by Joannes de Garlandia, Rouen (for Andrew Myllar), 4to, Dickson and Edmond, *Annals of Scottish Printing*, pp. 29, 32. Probably a reprint of Wynken de Worde's edition of 1499.

³ Of books by Scotsmen sent abroad to be printed for want of facilities at home. See Lec, *Memorial for the Bible Societies*, p. 10.

⁴ *Bibliotheca Romana*, p. 10.

Laing's library.¹ There was an Edinburgh edition by Robert Lekpreuk, 1566, 4to, which is also exceedingly rare.²

The next grammatical work by a Scotsman was a Latin translation of Linacre's *Rudiments* by George Buchanan, Paris, 1533, 8vo, with a dedication to his pupil Gilbert Kennedy, Earl of Cassillis. It passed through upwards of ten editions in France in thirty years, but does not seem to have been reprinted in Scotland, although his tract *De emendata structura Latini sermonis*, was used in the High School of Edinburgh in 1579. Buchanan added to the translation of the *Rudiments* the tract of Ludovicus Vives *De ratione studii puerilis*. Linacre's *Rudiments* is a concise compendium of Latin grammar, intended for beginners and to be supplemented by oral explanations by the teacher. After the accident come the Rules of Construction with a Supplement upon the same subject. The latter may have been composed by William Lily or some one associated with him, as his name frequently appears—e.g., *Lilius praeceptor*, *Lilius magister*.

After the Reformation we have George Buchanan's *De Prosodia Libellus* published by Waldegrave in 1595 or 1596,³ then by Andrew Hart in 1621, and often afterwards. It was prepared as part of an intended grammar to be used in the Grammar Schools of the country, to the exclusion of all others,⁴ but the scheme, like many of a similar kind, came to nothing. Instead of uniformity, each teacher used the grammar that he thought most convenient, and many books of the kind were issued in Scotland. A long list of these will be found in the Catalogue of the library, prepared by himself, of the great grammarian Thomas Ruddiman.⁵

Taking this list as a foundation, the books in use included:—

1. and 2. Vaus and Buchanan, just mentioned.

¹ *Catalogue*, Part I., No. 3699. This copy lacked a few leaves.

² There was a copy in George Chalmers' library (*Catalogue*, Part III., No. 1127), which he purchased at Constable's Sale in 1801.

³ There is a copy in the library of the University of Edinburgh. This is probably the copy which appeared in William Blackwood's *Catalogue*, No. 11,409, Edinburgh, 1809, 8vo.

⁴ Act of the Privy Council, 15 December, 1575. Lee, *Additional Memorial*, p. 156. Appendix No LIX. Parliament in 1607 appointed another Commission to fix upon one common grammar to be used in all Grammar Schools. *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, IV., p. 374.

⁵ *Bibliotheca Romana*, pp. 61-63. Edin., 1757, 8vo.

An early list of books in use in Grammar Schools in England will be found in John Brinsley, *Consolation for our Grammar Schooles*, p. 59. London, 1622, 4to.

3. Rudimenta Grammatices in gratiam iuventutis Scoticae conscripta.

Edinb., 1580 and again 1587, 8vo.

popularly known as "the Dunbar Rudiments," by Andrew Simson, master first of the Grammar School of Perth and afterwards of that of Dunbar.¹

It was issued again in 1599, 1607, 1612 and 1639.

Simson was one of the Commission, appointed in 1575, for the purpose of suggesting a remedy for the multiplicity of Latin Grammars then in use; and he drew up the *Rudimenta* with the object of providing a standard grammar. While it did not effect this purpose it was very popular, and passed through many editions down to at least 1709. One of these, and a very neat one, was issued at Glasgow in 1693, and will be mentioned more at length hereafter.

4. Grammaticae latinae, de Etymologia, Liber secundus.

Cantebrigiae, 1587, 4to.²

Dedicated to King James VI.

This was intended as part of the general Grammar, to which reference has been made. It was by Mr James Carmichael "a person of rare piety, genius and profound scholarship." He held the united offices of minister of the parish and rector of the classical school, Haddington.³ The latter appointment, to which he was chosen in 1572, did not yield him more than forty pounds Scots a year of salary, and a shilling quarterly from "ilk toun's bairn." In 1576 at the request of the Town Council he resigned the position of school master and confined himself to his ministerial duties.⁴ He took refuge in England in 1584 to avoid prosecution for a political offence; but returned to Scotland in 1588, and was reinstated in his pastoral charge.

¹ The authority for the edition of 1580 is Ames' *Typographical Antiquities*, ed. Herbert, p. 1501. David Hume of Godscroft inscribes his Elegies "Ad Andream Symonidem, ludimagistrum Dumbarensem praeceptorem meum." Simson married Violet, daughter of Archbishop Adamson. M'Cric, *Life of Andrew Melville*, p. 461. Edin., 1856, 8vo. See further as to Simson, *ib.*, pp. 369, 382, 388; *Select Biographies* (Wodrow Society), pp. 65, 71, 72.

² There is a copy in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. There was one in the Harleian library. *Catalogus Bibliothecae Harleianae*, Vol. II., No. 15,510. See Ames' *Typographical Antiquities*, III., pp. 1414, 1418. London, 1790, 4to.

³ For payments in 1576 to Carmichael at Haddington, see *Mainland Club Miscellany*, II., p. 45.

⁴ Steven, *History of the High School of Edinburgh*, p. 59.

On the verso of the title-page there is a Morning Prayer on entering school.

The author gives a list of authorities, amongst whom are George Buchanan and Vasius, Scotus, that is, John Vaus.

Some of his renderings are interesting :—

Alnus,	an Aller.
Acer,	a Sauch.
Talpa,	a Modiwart.
Bubo,	an Howlet.
Perdix,	a Petrick.
Culex,	a Mige.
Anser foeta,	a bruid Guis.
Monile,	a Brotch or Bend.
Cancelli,	a Tirlets.
Pugio,	a Quhinger.
Auctio,	open sale of goods.
Harpago,	a Creiper.
Cardo,	a Dure cruik.
Splen,	the Melt.
Pulvinar,	a Boustar.
Papaver,	a Chesbow.

5. *Latinae Grammaticae, Pars Prior, sive Etymologia Latina in usum rudiorum.*

Edin., 1599, 8vo,²

by Andrew Duncan, master of the Grammar School of Dundee.² It was intended as an improvement upon Despauter and to make everything plain to the meanest capacity.

Duncan also edited the *Rudimenta Pietatis*, one of the standard Scottish school books, which will be referred to presently,³ and wrote *Studiosorum puerilium Clavis*.⁴

6. *Appendix Etymologiae ad copiam Exemplorum,*

Una cum Indice interprete.

Edinb., 1495 (mistake for 1595), 8vo.

¹ Not 1597, as in the *Bibliotheca Romana*. There was a copy of the Grammar along with the *Rudimenta Pietatis* and Buchanan's *De Prosodia Libellus*, Edin. 1595, in William Blackwood's *Catalogue*, No. 11,409, Edin., 1809, 8vo. There is a copy of this Grammar—presumably this copy—in the library of the University of Edinburgh.

² As to Duncan, see M'Crie, *Life of Andrew Melville*, p. 382. Edin., 1856, 8vo.

³ Edinb., 1595, 8vo. There is a copy in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. See *Catalogues of Scottish Writers*, p. 85, Edinburgh 1833, 8vo. Allibone, *Dictionary of English Literature*, s.v. Duncan.

There is a copy in the library of the University of Edinburgh.