

126

A collection of letters and papers relating to George Dempster of Dunnichen (1732-1818), his purchase of the estate of Skibo, the economic condition of the Highlands, Lord Selkirk's Red River settlement scheme etc.; correspondents include Thomas Telford, Sir Adam Ferguson, 1st Viscount Melville. 1777-1883. 26 v. Partial index at front of v. 1-19. Shortlist.

Microfilm Duplicates vols. 1-19 61
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*N.B. On microfilm, volume numbers do not always correspond to those in guide, so look at 5-digit accession numbers.*

Vol. 1  
35451

Deals chiefly with Dempster's finances, purchase of the Skibo estate, improvements, income from rental. Correspondents include: Lauchlan Maclean, Wm. Ramsay, Sir Adam Ferguson, James Guthrie, John Fraser and of course Dempster himself.

2  
35452

Dempster on the economic prospects of Skibo, and of Dundee and Perth. Sir John Sinclair's offer to buy Skibo for 18,000.  
Dempster to Captain Dempster on the possibility of prosperity in the Highlands, and on his building up of the estate.  
George Mackintosh on the spinning "Jeany".  
David Dale on the introduction of manufactures into Galloway and on Sinclair's plan for a road to aid manufacturing plans for Sutherland.  
Dr. Black, chemist, on analysis of limestone from Sutherland and ways of refining it.  
Family letters.

3  
35453

Letter from Lord Gower (later Lord Sutherland) re-raising an army in Switzerland, and Dempster's reply.  
George Mackintosh re the company they have set up at Spinningdale, the putting up of a 20 loom shop and mills, the need to raise capital. G. Dempster discusses the Spinningdale project, bad trade projects, farming.  
G.D. to Captain Dempster, giving detailed account of the dividends from the estate and G.D.'s personal expenses.  
Letter from Mackintosh hoping that Spinningdale will not fold. He has sent spinners and weavers from Glasgow to Spinningdale to enlighten "the poor ignorant natives in the County".  
Many other letters about trade and shipping as well as personal letters. Most interesting is Observations on want of silver, 1795, by G.D. which deals with the rate of wages for agricultural workers and the need for banks.

4  
35454

Letters re prices of cattle & horses; crops & fertilizers; farm cottages being built for the men; planting of 206,000 fir trees, etc.  
A letter re the Spinningdale venture.  
Draft of a proposal for raising a fund by voluntary subscription for ascertaining the extent and the value of the coal lately discovered in the Co. of Sutherland.

Microfilm Duplicates vols. 1-19 61
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- Vol. 4 (cont'd) Draft of a plan for employing 20 acres of land, 1796.\* Detailed letter from William Forbes of Pitsligo re the death of James Boswell, and telling Dempster of the improvements he, Forbes, has brought about in New Pitsligo.  
Group of family letters re death of Captain Dempster, and of George Dempster, the nephew, and the inheriting of the estate by a niece (Mrs. Soper, later Soper Dempster).
- 5 General  
35455
- 6 Legal complications over the estate, and the changing of Mr. Soper's name to Soper Dempster. Interesting and important correspondence with Thomas Telford re the improvements of the Highlands by means of roads, canals, and bridges.  
35456 Letter from George MacKintosh about the loss of the Spinningdale venture.  
A memorial respecting the Co. of Sutherland.  
G.D. writes about getting Sir John Sinclair to help with roads in Sutherland.
- 7 Correspondence from the factor and Lord Reay about the Act to encourage the improvements of lands, tenants and hereditaments in Scotland. Letter re loss of a shipload of Sc. immigrants.  
35457
- 8 Letter from Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville, re his estate, planting and building.  
35458 A familiar epistle to Sir John Sinclair Bart. A poem by Dempster.  
1. Some observations on Lord Selkirk's late publication, 1808. - important as a reply to Observations of the present state of the Highlands, 1805, by Selkirk. Dempster takes the opposite stance to Selkirk's, his idea being to find employment for the crofters at home.  
2. Another reply to Selkirk signed A.B., once a small Highland proprietor.  
Letter from Melville on farming matters.  
Copies of poems by Dempster.  
Two letters from Lord Seaforth on Improvements in the north, one referring to an estate going over to sheep ranching.  
One letter from Sir Tlay Campbell on G.D.'s work having lighthouses and beacons installed.
- 9 Robert Anstruther - on fear of <sup>3</sup>femine.  
35463 W. Smith Ashburton, arguing to build a bridge over the river Shin.  
Letters on illness and death of Mrs. Soper Dempster.
- 10 G.D.'s lawsuit against Lord Balmuto.  
35464 Various letters re roads in Highlands (from Melville, Duke of Sutherland, Lord Brougham, etc.)
- 11 Various papers, mostly in verse by G.D. about his career. Twelve page article comparing English and Scottish husbandry.  
35465
- 12 Letters from Lord Sidmouth to George Dempster.  
35466

Microfilm  
Duplicates vols. 1-19  
61

13 (No. 14 in Dempster's numbering)  
35467 Statement of J.H. Dempster's affairs - 1800.  
Letters from various people - the Marchioness of Stafford, Mr. Storie etc.

14 (No. 15 in Dempster's numbering)  
35468 Lord Ashburton to Dempster, 1816.  
Last letter of George Dempster.  
Lady Anstruther.

15 (No. 16 in Dempster's numbering)  
35469 Lord Ashburton to Dempster - re fire in library of Ashburton's house and authorship of Waverley.  
Letter from Humphry Davy.  
Letters re the death of George Dempster.

vs vol. 2 16  
or mfm 61  
35461 Letters from George Dempster to Francis Humberston of Seaforth, 1787-1790. (Given to George Soper Dempster by a descendant of Seaforth's) Chiefly on the British Fishermen's Society as well as other schemes for encouraging the Highlanders to stay at home. Very important letters.

17 (Labelled Letters No. 1, 1786-1799)  
35462 Letters re purchase of Skibo; letters from the factor describing the estate, discussing the welfare of the Highlanders and giving the potentialities of several industries such as coalmining, spinning, salmon fishing.  
N.B. 2 letters from James Anderson, economist and writer on agricultural matters.

18 Letters addressed to George Soper Dempster by various distinguished people such as Sir Walter Scott, Viscount Melville, the Countess of Sutherland.  
35459 N.B. A letter from J.G. Lockhart giving political news and foreseeing how some events may affect the Duke of Sutherland.

19 Legal case vs. Soper Dempster in 1853.  
35460

20-26 Letters collected by George Soper Dempster "merely as autographs or as remembrances of old friends".

Microfilm  
Duplicates vols. 1-19  
61