

FISH AND FOLK IN ALBA

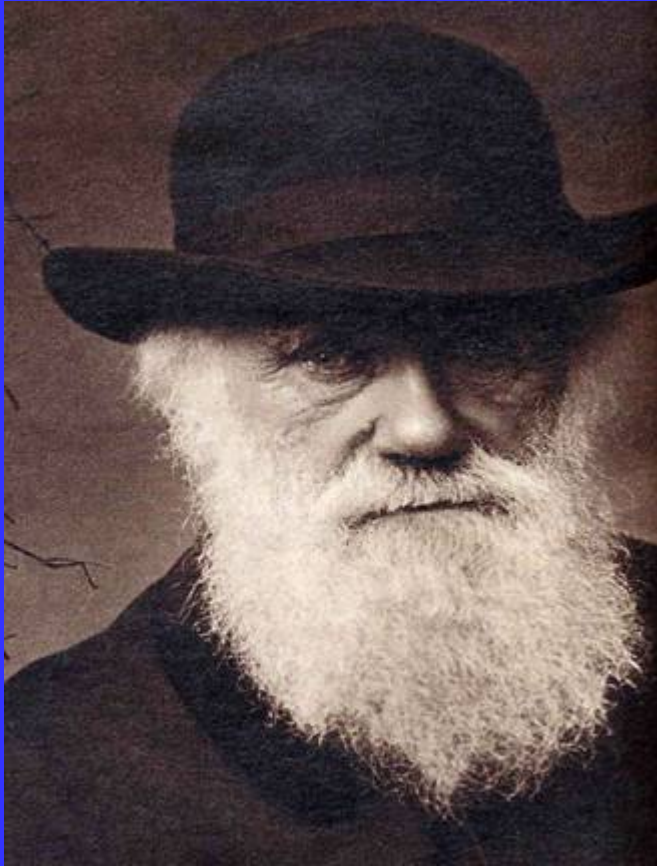


- Peter S. Maitland
Fish Conservation
Centre
Haddington
EH41 4NR
- SavingFish@sky.com

CELEBRATING SOME FOLK

Scottish Fresh Waters in Prose and
Poetry

CHARLES DARWIN (1809-1882)

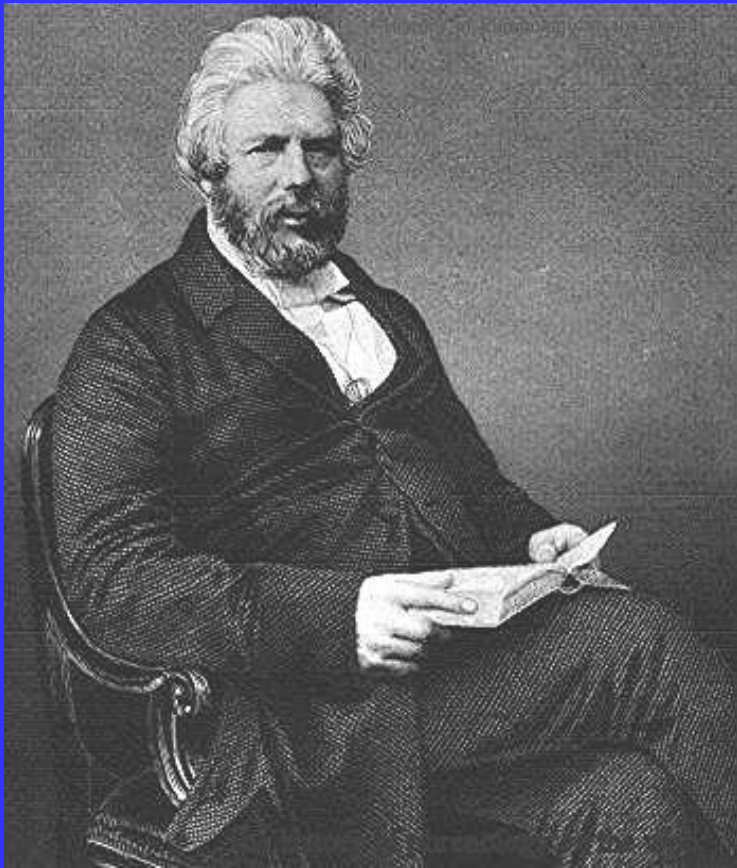


- Born in Shrewsbury, 12 February, 1809
- Spent some time in Edinburgh. Studied medicine at Edinburgh University
- Died at Down, 19 April, 1882

'On the Origin of Species'
Charles Darwin (1859)



ROBERT CHAMBERS (1802-1871)



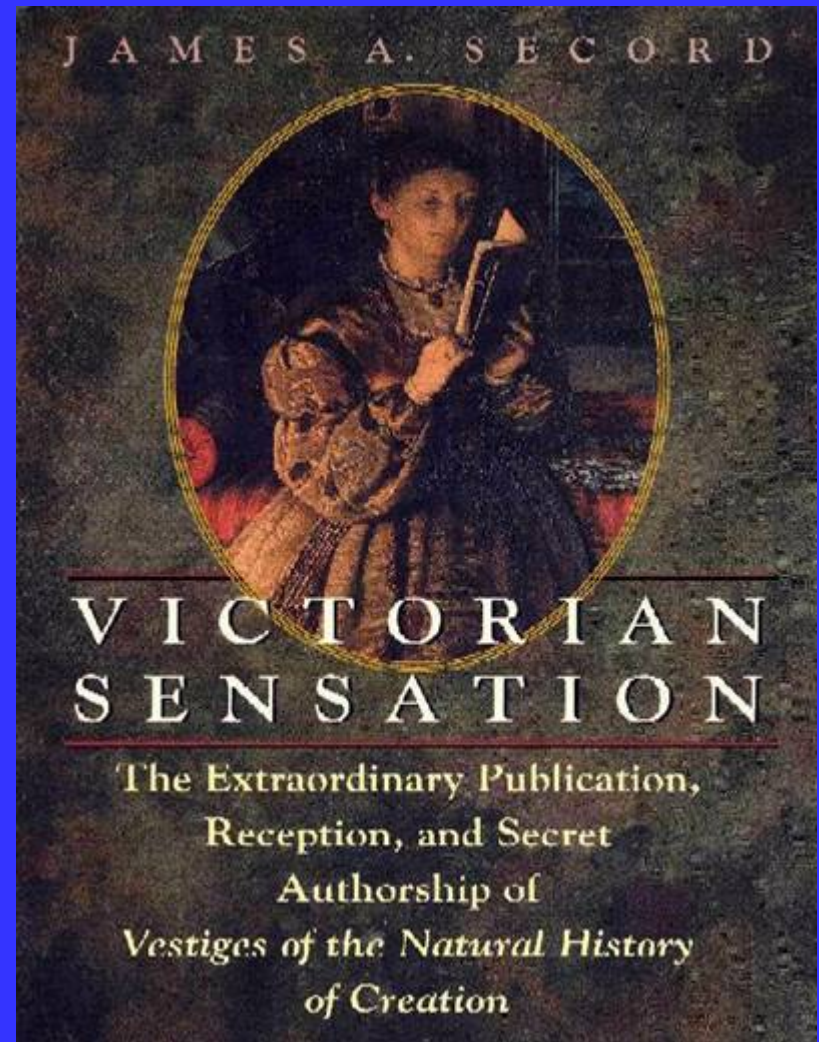
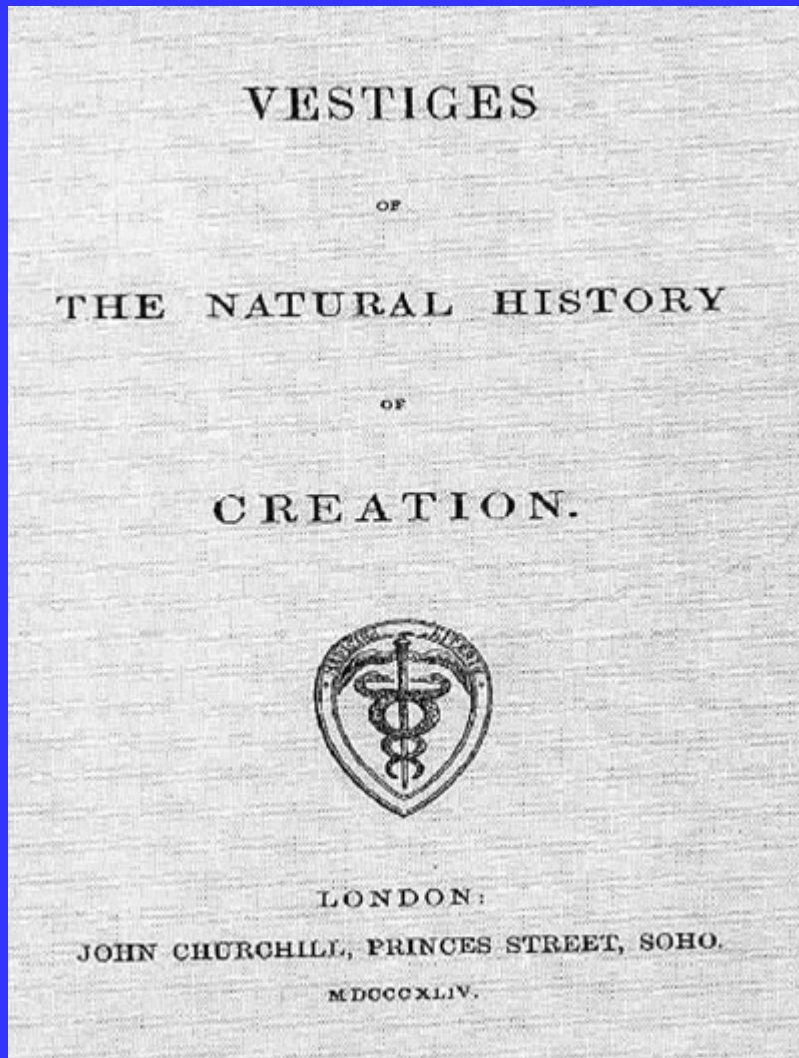
- 1859: Publication of Chambers' Encyclopaedia.
- 1844: Robert Chambers published 'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation'.

‘Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation’

Robert Chambers (1844)

- ‘The book, as far as I am aware, is the first attempt to connect the natural sciences in a history of creation.’
- Charles Darwin later remarked that *Vestiges* was important in preparing many people to accept his own theory of evolution.
- During the 1840s and 1850s this was the only ‘evolution’ book readers in the English speaking world were familiar with.

Vestiges (Anon.)



ROBERT BURNS (1759-1796)



- Born in Alloway, 25 January, 1759
- Went on to become Scotland's greatest poet
- An excellent naturalist
- Died in Dumfries, 1796

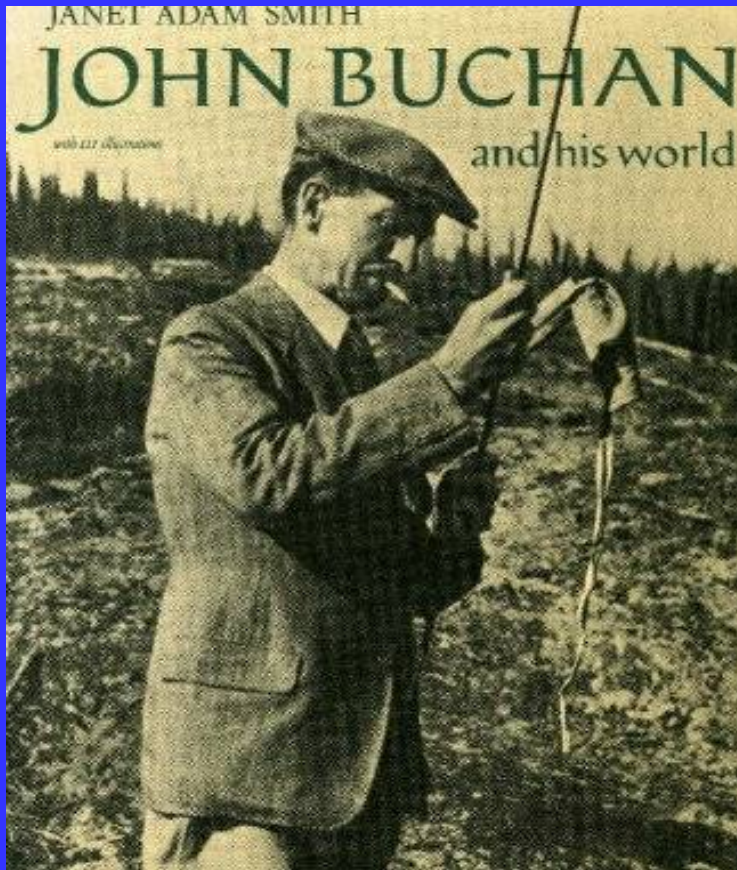
Rivers mentioned by Burns

- Afton
- Cart
- Craigie
- Doon
- Eden
- Logan
- Nith
- Tweed
- Allan
- Cessnock
- Devon
- Dye
- Forth
- Lugar
- Thames
- Yarrow

‘Tam Samson’s Elegy’
Robert Burns (1786)

- ‘Now safe the stately Sawmont sail,
And Trouts bedropp’d wi’ crimson hail,
And Eels, weel-ken’d for souple tail,
And Geds for greed,
Since, dark in Death’s fish-creel we wail,
Tam Samson’s dead!’

JOHN BUCHAN (1875-1940)

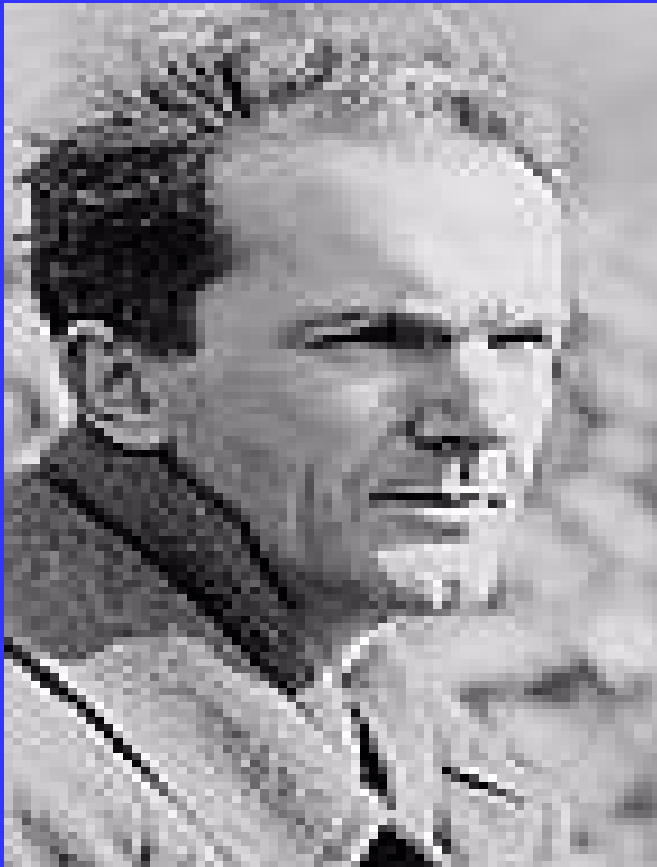


- Thirty Nine Steps
- Greenmantle
- Prester John
- Mr Standfast
- Adventures of Richard Hannay
- The Compleat Angler (Editor)

‘Fisher Jamie’

Puir Jamie’s killed. A better lad
Ye wadna find to busk a flee
Or burn a pule or wield a gad,
Frae Berwick to the Clints o’ Dee.
I picture him at gloamin’ tide
Steekin the back door o’ his hame
An hastin’ to the waterside
To play again the auld auld game.

NEIL GUNN (1891-1973)



- 1926 The Grey Coast
- 1931 Morning Tide
- 1937 Highland River
- 1941 The Silver Darlings
- 1956 The Atom of Delight

- ‘The most influential fiction writer of the first half of the 20th Century.’

‘Morning Tide’

The fish lay on the bottom ..

Crouching over the water,

Hugh saw its lithe form ..

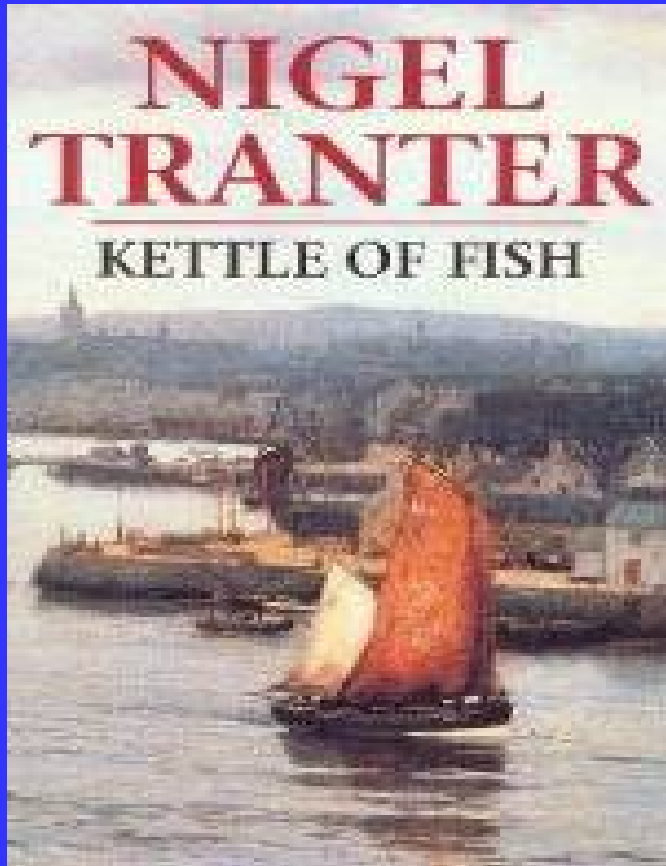
Its desirable beauty.

He saw them too clearly,

obviously the fish saw him...

it was watching him.

NIGEL TRANTER (1909-2000)



- Wrote many books including 'Kettle of Fish' about the River Tweed and salmon fishing at Berwick-on-Tweed.

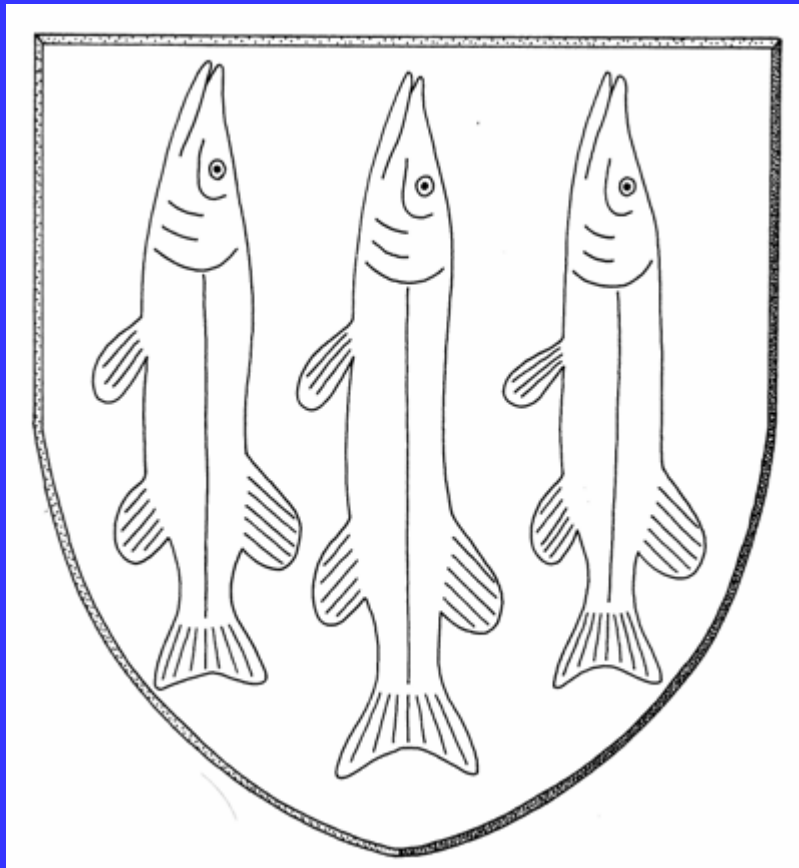
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Identifying Folk, Fresh Waters and
their Fish

GLASGOW & EDINBURGH PHONE BOOKS

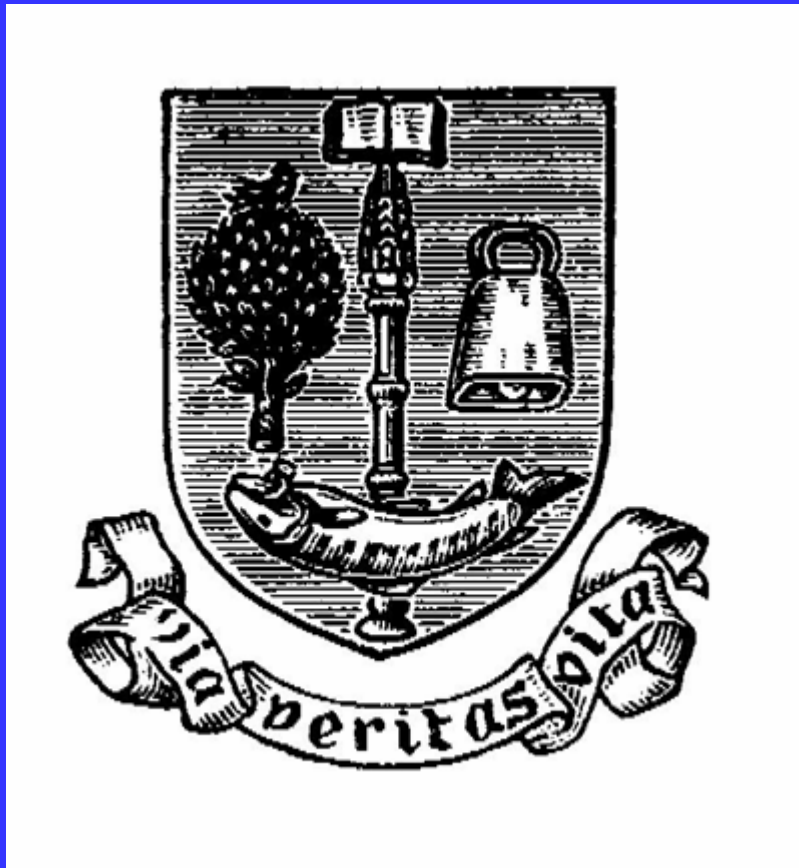
- Sturgeon - 30
- Salmon - 17
 - Pike - 10
 - Shad - 2
 - Trout - 1
 - Smelt - 1
- Lamprecht - 1
 - Eeles - 2
- Roach - 25
- Rudd - 10
 - Bass - 7
 - Bream - 2
 - Ruff - 1
- Gudgeon - 1
- Mullet - 1
- Gobey - 1

GEDDES FAMILY CREST



- GED OF THAT ILK
- ‘The family Geddes has a long-standing relationship with the Pike - or Ged in Scots.’

University of Glasgow



- ‘This is the bird that never flew, This is the tree that never grew, This is the bell that never rang, This is the fish that never swam.’

Names of Lochs and Rivers

- Loch an Iasgair = Loch of the Fisherman
- Geodha nam Bradan = Voe of the Salmon
 - Loch Laxdale = Loch of the Salmon
 - Loch nam Breac = Loch of the Trout
- Loch na Gealag = Loch of the Sea Trout
 - Poll na Geadas = Pool of the Pike

The Basking Shark



- Is tu mo chugar,
Is ti mo
chearban
- Thou art my
hero,
Thou art my
basking sunfish
- St Kilda poem, 1780

THE VALUE OF FISH

Rich Folk or Poor, Freshwater Fish
Provide Needed Protein

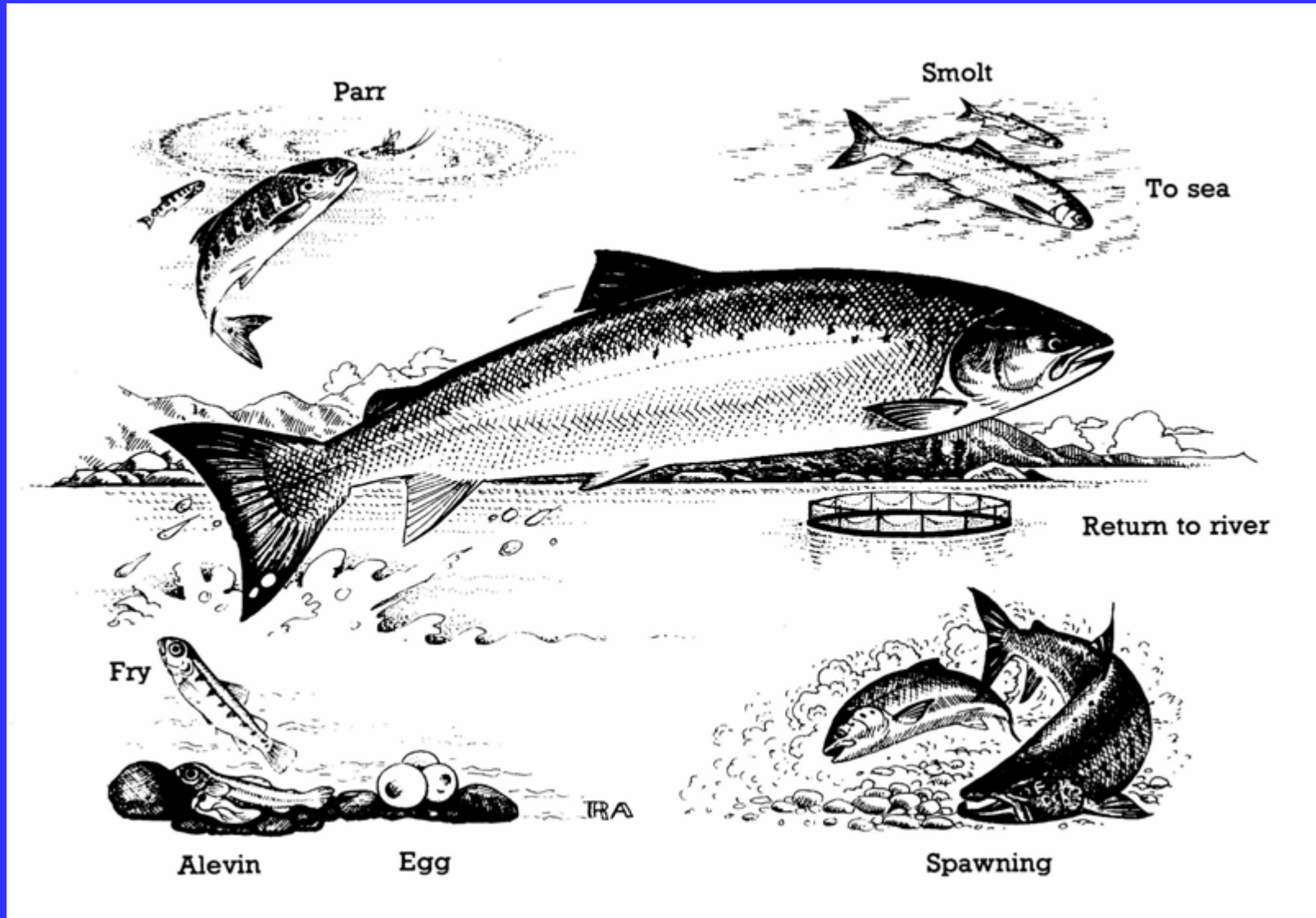
‘Memoirs of a Highland Lady’
Elizabeth Grant (1812)

- ‘At this time in the Highlands we were so remote from markets that we had to depend very much on our own produce ... Yet we lived in luxury: game was plentiful ... the rivers provided trout and salmom, the different lochs pike and char.’

Poaching: a Scottish Tradition?

- ‘Breac a linne, slat a coille,
is fiadh a fireach,
meirle anns nach
do ghab Gaidheal riamh naire.’
 - ‘A fish from the river,
a wand from the wood,
and a deer from the forest,
three thefts no Gael was at any time
ashamed of.’

Angling and Aquaculture



Perch



Perch appreciation at Lac Lemman



FISHY LITERATURE

500 Years of Scottish Writing about
Freshwater Fish

‘Description of the Western Isles’

Donald Munro (1549)

- ‘Duray ... the watter of Lasay ther,
the watter of Udergan,
the watter of Glongargister,
the waters of Knockbraik, Lindill, Caray,
Ananbilley;
all thir waters salmond slaine upon them.’

'The Old Red Sandstone'

Hugh Miller (1841)



- ‘The *Diplacanthus striatus* , for instance, is one of the commonest of the Cromarty Old Red fishes, and the *Dipterus* and *Asterolepis* very rare.’

‘Goldfish survives chimney fall’

- ‘A Goldfish was yesterday recovering with bruised scales after it was dropped down a chimney, bounced off the coals in the fireplace and landed on the hearth in front of an astonished family in Northampton. The fish was apparently dropped by a Heron flying over the house.’

FISHING TRADITIONS

Old Habits Die - some of Them Very
Hard

'The Three Fishes'
Hugh MacDiarmid

I am a fisher lad and nane
Can better wield a gad than me
And a'e day to the burn I've gone
And got me fishes three

‘Leistering for Salmon’

Sir Walter Scott



- ‘This chase, in which the fish is pursued and struck with barbed spears is much practised at the mouth of the Esk. ... the fish are discovered by means of torches filled with fragments of tar.’

Vendace



The Lochmaben Vendace Clubs

- Two Vendace clubs in Lochmaben
- Annual fishing in Castle & Mill Lochs
- Outdoor games festival the same day
- Afterwards adjourn to a local pub for a dinner featuring the Vendace

The last sign of Vendace in Lochmaben



Loch Skeen a home for Vendace



Sparling



Netting Sparling in the Cree



Herbert Maxwell (1897)

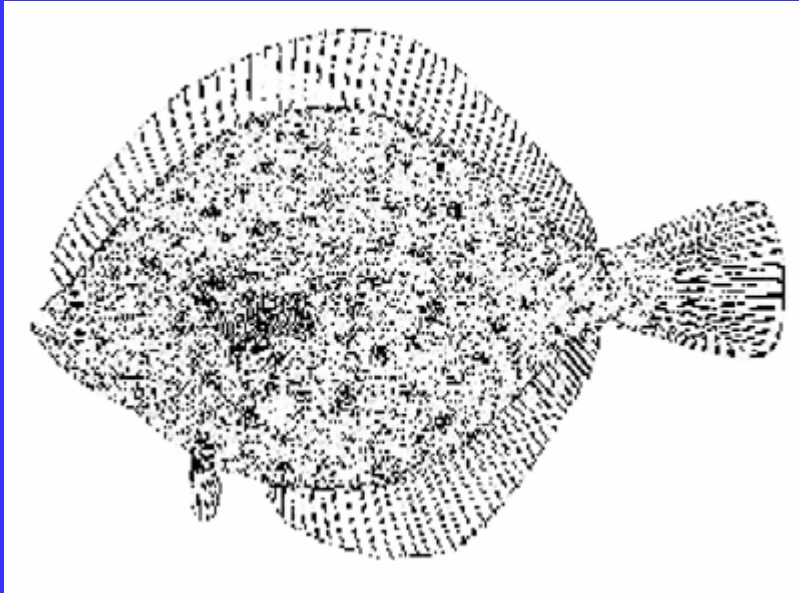
‘One mild November morning I enjoyed the best dish that I can recollect ever to have eaten at breakfast. We had been down to the estuary before sunrise to watch the nets drawn in for Sparlings. ... We had them piping hot before they had been out of the water half an hour. ... No one can have a notion of their subtle toothsome-ness who has not treated it as we did ours on that far-off morning in Creetown.’

Salting & Potting Arctic Charr



Flounder Tramping

The Herald (2006)



- ‘Scotland boasts a new world champion after Drew McDougall, from Dalbeattie, won the Annual World Flounder Tramping Championship at Glenisle on the Solway Firth.’

DEPICTING SCOTTISH FISH

Freshwater Fish in Stone, Paint,
Plaster & Bronze

Pictish Stone at Rhynie



- Carvings of fish also found on stones at Keith Hall, Dunnicaer, Glamis, Kintore, Akergill, Drumbuie, Dunrobin, Edderton, Gairloch, Garbeg, Golspie, Latheron, Ulbster

Robin Ade



Keith Brockie



Allan Allison



Peebles Salmon



Gunn Memorial at Dunbeath



Thanks for listening!

