This entry on ‘Farriery’ in the Encyclopaedia Britannica is a 155 page review of veterinary medicine, written in 1806. It includes: Introduction; Part I History; Part II Structure of the Horse; Part III Operations performed on Domestic Animals; Part IV Means of preserving the health of Domestic Animals; Part V Veterinary Materia Medica; Part VI Diseases incident to Domestic Animals; an Index and 6 Plates with 20 Figures.

It was first published in Volume 8 part 2 of the 4th Edition (1806) and was also included in the 5th and 6th Editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. This review was a source reference for Sir Frederick Smith in his History of Veterinary Literature¹ and he attributed it to John Lawrence, but he had reservations and did not include it in his list of John Lawrence’s works. The quality of the review, the clear, concise presentation, breadth and scholarly acknowledgement of the works of more than 34 authors, including Delabere Blaine (named in the text 80 times), John Lawrence (53 times), Edward Coleman (43 times), John Feron (36 times) and James Clark (30 times), indicated that it was written by someone who was familiar with the work of contemporary veterinary writers. It also appeared from the text that the author was familiar with Scotland because of references to places in the Lothians and Borders.

The review is likely to have been used, by many members of the veterinary profession including William Dick (1793-1866), but does not appear to have been acknowledged by veterinary writers of the time. This may have been due to reluctance or the inability of its author to publicise his work, in contrast to many other veterinary writers at that time.

After a long search for the author, he was found, by chance, in the preface of the 5th Edition, an obvious place with the benefit of hindsight. Some lines from this preface are reproduced from page xi Vol. 1 of the 6th Edition²:

‘The following articles and treatises were contributed, for the first time, to the fourth edition: ... Electricity, Farriery, Geography,'
Geology (part of), Magnetism, Mammalia, Man, Materia Medica, Physiology, Prescriptions (extemporaneous), Russia, Science (amusements of), Scotland, (geographical and statistical parts), Spain, War (introduction), and Zoophytes, by Dr. Jeremiah Kirby MD of Edinburgh …’

PERSONAL DETAILS

Dr Jeremiah Kirby MD (1774-1827) was christened on 29 June at Covent Garden in London; he was a child of William Kirby (surgeon) and Mary Owen, both from the Isle of Thanet in Kent. Jeremiah had several siblings of whom two, Elizabeth and Mary, survived to feature with him in his father’s will. His father and mother moved out of London to Maldon in Essex where his mother appears to have died between 1780 and 1783. His father was married for a second time to Sarah before 1795, when he made a new will, and he died in 1808.

One of his sisters called Jeremiah ‘Florio’ because of his love of botany and gardening. This sister must have died before 1822 because Jeremiah inherited her poetry and included four of her poems in his book of essays and poems (Kirby, 1822 see list of Kirby’s works below).

Kirby lived at various addresses in Edinburgh and in nearby Portobello and was married twice; first on 3 September 1802 to Jane Kenneday with whom he appears to have had four daughters, two of whom survived childhood, Elizabeth born 16 Nov 1803, died in Melbourne Australia 18 Nov 1878, Helen Stewart christened 6 Jun 1805, died in Edinburgh 28 Jan 1884. Between 1810 and 1814 he moved to a house in Maryfield, Portobello, where in 1814 his wife Jane died. In the same year, he delivered a eulogy on William Jameson the ‘Father of Portobello’ to the local Bible Society, and was a member of the management committee to set up a school for the poor of Portobello. In 1817 he was married a second time to Elizabeth Thomson with whom he had two daughters one of whom Caroline Margaret, born in 1824, survived childhood and died in Edinburgh 11 May 1892. Jeremiah died on 30 December 1827, aged 53 years, soon after his wife Elizabeth, who died 14 November 1827. The record of his death includes no cause and no headstone for him has been found.

PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Jeremiah Kirby started studies at the Edinburgh Medical School in 1797 (aged 23 years) and qualified MD in 1802 with a thesis (Kirby 1802) entitled De lentis
caligine this was dedicated to William Kirby (his father) and to Dr Alexander Murray. He became a member of the Royal Medical Society in 1800 and in 1803-4 was one of its four presidents\textsuperscript{15}. He wrote a review of Materia Medica (Kirby 1805) and revised (1810, 1817 and 1828) Monro’s classical work (1741)\textsuperscript{16} The anatomy of the human bones and nerves: etc. In these he included a letter to Dr. John Barclay, his teacher and friend. He also wrote a book of essays, dedicated to Barclay, based on articles he had written for two encyclopaedias (Kirby, 1822). It is of interest to veterinary historians that Barclay was a teacher of William Dick at this time\textsuperscript{17} but no evidence has been found that Kirby had direct contact with William Dick. As a member of the Royal Medical Society, Kirby had opportunities to meet with James Clark a fellow member but it is not clear if this was James Clark, Farrier to the King in Scotland and veterinary writer or Clark’s son who had studied medicine in Edinburgh. James Clark senior’s last veterinary work was published in 1806\textsuperscript{18} and he died in 1808 aged 76.

Kirby could also have had direct contact with another contemporary veterinary writer and pioneer of veterinary education, in Edinburgh, John Feron.\textsuperscript{19} Feron’s wife appears to have been living in Edinburgh in 1805-6 and Feron may have visited on leave from the army when Kirby was writing the review of Farriery\textsuperscript{20}. No evidence has been found that Kirby was in direct contact with any of the other veterinary writers that he used as sources.

To appreciate something more of Kirby’s character and his immersion in the Edinburgh of his time, we may turn to his justification of an essay on Domestic Brewing (Kirby 1822) in which he quotes a passage from the New Testament: ‘... the wisest of the Jewish Kings expressly recommends strong drink to the despondent’. He then comments on Robert Burns’s ode to drink (‘John Barleycorn’):

‘though the Social Scottish Bard has carried his parody on that passage to an unwarrantable length in praise of his favourite liquor, the maxim is not to be entirely slighted.’ and after warning of excess drinking Kirby says: ‘On the other hand, the moderate use of good malt liquors, and genuine unadulterated wines, is not only safe, but salutary to most constitutions, especially in moist or variable climates, and many cases have occurred in which the prudent and timely administration of a dram has preserved life. It is therefore of consequence, that the nature, qualities, and preparation of fermented liquors should be generally known.’
FARRIERY IN THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA

The encyclopaedia included an entry on ‘Farriery’ in its 1st Edition and it was ‘treated so fully’ (39 pages), explained its renowned editor William Smellie, ‘... because most of the men engaged in this profession were universally illiterate’ and ‘... the practice of this useful art has been hitherto almost entirely confined to a set of men who are totally ignorant of anatomy’. The entry on ‘Farriery’ was revised (61 pages and 1 plate) for the 3rd edition either by Colin Macfarquhar (co-editor and one of the two owners with Andrew Bell) or by George Gleig (co-editor). The 3rd edition was printed and sold in parts and was completed in 1797. The entry on ‘Farriery’ was replaced in the 4th Edition, by the more substantial and up to date review by Jeremiah Kirby.

The early 1800s were interesting times in the history of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, due to complex finances and changing ownership. Europe was in turmoil after the French revolution and the rise of Napoleon. Despite, or possibly because of, these events there were significant developments in the veterinary profession accompanied by an outburst of veterinary publications in Britain and in France. It was a very productive and competitive period, which must have had a significant influence on the development of the next generation of veterinary writers in Britain including Bracy Clark, William Youatt and William Percivall.

It appears that Jeremiah Kirby was commissioned by Dr James Millar (Editor of the 4th Edition) and wrote this useful and scholarly review mainly from contemporary veterinary literature. He was the author of fifteen other entries in the 4th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica and of many entries in the Encyclopaedia Edinensis (Kirby 1827). He relied heavily on his choice of direct quotations from the work of others and used scholarly objectivity, biomedical knowledge, attention to detail and literary experience to produce a work which may be considered superior to any of those from which he sourced his material. He was able to give the impression of direct experience of at least some of the conditions of which he was writing and his account of cattle plague (murrain), using the contributions of Brocklesby, Layard and Camper, is more substantial than that given by Blaine in his ‘Outlines’. He created a coherent account from his sources and only rarely commented upon disputes that raged between veterinary writers e.g. that between John Lawrence and William Taplin.

Sir Frederick Smith acknowledged Kirby’s review, but Smith’s highly critical style appears to owe more to that of John Lawrence and some other veterinary writers than to the detached style of Jeremiah Kirby.
CONCLUSIONS

Jeremiah Kirby M.D. deserves recognition for the significant contribution he made to veterinary education with this review of Farriery in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and that on Veterinary Medicine in the *Encyclopaedia Edinensis*. He was a distinguished scholar, a graduate of the Edinburgh Medical School and a major contributor to Edinburgh publishing, with an outstanding ability to assimilate, analyse and understand the arts and sciences of his time. The breadth of his knowledge and depth of understanding provided the substance with which to inform his readers and his published works reveal remarkable skills as a writer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We greatly appreciate the help of the librarians of the University of Edinburgh at the RDSVS and the CRC as well as those of the National Library of Scotland. Some details of Jeremiah Kirby's family were kindly provided by his great, great grandson and granddaughter Alan Telford of Weldborough, and Beverley Burgess of Geeveston, Tasmania, Australia.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF KIRBY'S PUBLISHED WORK


KIRBY, J. (1805) *Tables of the materia medica, or a systematic arrangement of all the articles admitted by the colleges of London, Edinburgh, and Dublin; exhibiting a concise view of the most material circumstances respecting them; together with a number of original and selected formulæ; to which is subjoined a table of all the secondary salts employed in medicine*. Printed at the university press for Guthrie and Tait, Edinburgh.


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KIRBY, J. (1827), numerous entries including ‘Medicine, Veterinary’ pp. 84-103 in Vol. 5 of the Encyclopaedia Edinensis, Editors: James Millar; Jeremiah Kirby and Richard Poole. Publ. by J. Anderson (jun.) Edinburgh.

MONRO, A. (1828), Anatomy of the human bones and nerves: with a description of the human lctal sac and duct: carefully revised, with additional notes and illustrations, and a supplement containing a description of the internal ear, by Jeremiah Kirby. Publ. by Bell and Bradfute, Edinburgh.

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1. SMITH, F. (1923-30), The Early History of Veterinary Literature and its British Development. Published as a supplement to the Veterinary Journal; reprinted in 4 Volumes by Baillère, Tindall and Cox and reprinted again by J.A. Allen 1976.


5. According to the International Genealogical Index data (www.familysearch.org) [Source Information: Batch No.: C119875, Dates: 1803 – 1812, Source Call No.: 1066755, 0103058 Type: Film, Printout Call No.: 6901046] ELIZABETH KIRBY Christening: 28 NOV 1803, Saint Cuthberts, Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scotland Father: Jeremiah Kirby, Mother: J. Kenneday.

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6. According to the International Genealogical Index data (www.familysearch.org) [Source Information: Batch No.: C119875, Dates: 1803 – 1812, Source Call No.: 1066755, 0103058, Type: Film, Printout Call No.: 6901046] HELEN STEWART KIRBY Christening: 06 JUN 1805, Saint Cuthberts, Edinburgh, Midlothian, Scotland Father: Jeremiah Kirby, Mother: Jane Kenneday.

   Printed by Archibald Constable, Jan 1815 Deaths: Dec 29th 1814, At Maryfield, Portobello, Mrs Jane Kennedy wife of Dr. Kirby.

8. Caledonian Mercury, Thurs 6th Jan., 1814, Issue 14364 'The late Mr Jameson'.

9. Caledonian Mercury, Thurs 3rd Feb., 1814, Issue 14376 'Private Correspondence'.

10. According to the International Genealogical Index data (www.familysearch.org) [Source Information: Batch No.: M116844, Dates: 1653 – 1817, Source Call No.: 1066683, 1066684, Type: Film, Printout Call No.: 6900993] JEREMIAH KIRBY Marriages: Spouse: Elizabeth Thomson Marriage: 11 MAY 1817, Duddingston, Midlothian, Scotland.

11. www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk, OPR Deaths 685/010520 Edinburgh; 11/05/1892, Caroline Margaret Kirby, 68 years.

12. The Scotsman, 5th Jan 1828 (number 834) p 16; Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine 1828 (number 135 Vol. 23 page 272).
   www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk, OPR Deaths 685/01 1000 0099 Edinburgh; 02/01/1828, Jeremiah Harby [sic], 53 years, Doctor of Medicine, [interred] “Closs to Capt. Burnet’s Through Stone”.


15. General list of the members of the Medical Society of Edinburgh 1823.
   Printed for the Society by Hay, Gall and Co.

16. MONRO, A. (1741), The anatomy of the human bones and nerves: with an account of the reciprocal motions of the heart, and a description of the human lacticel sac and duct. 3rd edition; Edinburgh: Printed for Mr. W. Monro and W. Drummond.

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25. BLAINE, D.P. (1802), The Outlines of the Veterinary Art: or, the principles of medicine: as applied to a knowledge of the structure, functions, and oeconomy of the horse, the ox, the sheep, and the dog. 1st Edition, Publ. T. N. Longman; O Rees and T Boosey, London.

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WILLIAM YOUUATT OPERATED ON THE QUEEN’S DOG

In William Youatt’s book The Dog published in London in 1845 by Charles Knight and Co., under the section entitled ‘The Scotch Terrier’, he describes three varieties. One of these, he says:

‘...prevails in the greater part of the Western Islands of Scotland, and some of them, where the hair has obtained its full development, are much admired. Her Majesty had one from Islay, a faithful and affectionate creature, yet with all the spirit and determination that belongs to his breed. The writer of this account had occasion to operate on this poor fellow, who had been bitten under somewhat suspicious circumstances. He submitted without a cry or a struggle, and seemed to be perfectly aware that we should not put him to pain without having some good purpose in view.’

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DID YOU KNOW? Hydromel – a composition of water and honey.