

**Journal of
Bishop Robert Forbes'
Episcopal Journey and Visitation
of the Diocese of Ross,
1770**

The Journal begins on Monday 3 June 1770 when Bishop Forbes left Kinghorn, Fife, and continued through Perthshire and Inverness-shire until he crossed the ferry to the Black Isle, arriving in Fortrose on Monday 19 July 1770, where the extracts begin.

[N.B. The punctuation and spelling are as in the Journal.]

Saturday June 9, 1770

The Ferry is two miles in Breadth, over which we had a hard Passage, the Ebb and Westerly Wind being against us, which occasioned severe tugging and rowing to the Sailors. The Rev Mr Allan Cameron received us on the Beach, and conducted us to Fortrose, where we arrived by 6 o'clock, and put up in the House of one Williamson, a Joiner, who keeps a Tavern of very good Accommodation.

Sunday June 10 Trinity Sunday

Preached in the Forenoon from St Matt. 26. 26, 27, 28, upon the Holy Eucharist, and confirmed 31 persons [two of whom black Boys] and communicated above 60. Preached in the afternoon from 1 Cor. 2. 11, compared with Job 11. 7, 8, 9, upon the Holy Trinity, and ended my Discourse with a Benediction. Here is an handsome Chapel and a crowded Audience.

We were this Day Visited by several persons, particularly Lady Allangrange, Lady Chisholm, Lady Bennagefield, Capt. John MacKenzie and his Lady at Castle-Leod, Mr Kenneth MacKenzie and his Lady at Killean, etc. etc etc.

Monday June 11

Set off from Fortrose quarter after 8, and at Raddery by 9, where we breakfasted with Leslie of Findrassie and Mrs Alice MacKenzie, Mr Colin Reid, postmaster of Fortrose, having gone thither before us. Mr Reid died this same week, and was buried on Saturday or Sunday.

Went from Raddery half after 10, and at Killean, or Killane - i.e. Cella Annae, or the Chapel of Anne - the House of Lady Balmaduthy, by 11 o'clock.

From Killane at 12, to Little Suddie by 1, the House of Lady Bennagefield, who, the Chaise having left at her House, walked with us to MacKenzie's of Suddie, where at 2 o'clock, and dined. Between 4 and 5, walked back to Little Suddie, Mr MacKenzie of Suddie in Company, and drank Tea with Lady Bennagefield, of whom we took leave quarter before 6, and at Allangrange by 7 o'clock, where were Laird of Chisholm and his Lady.

Tuesday June 12

Got up between 5 and 6, and went to the old ruinous chapel, in which I said my Prayers. Upon Inquiry, I found that this had been a Chapel of Ease to the Bishop of Ross, Allangrange having been one of his country Seats. Allangrange himself not being at home, I importuned Lady Allangrange to have a Fence put round the Chapel, especially as it is the Burial-Place of the Family, which she promised should be done.

At Arpaphily by 10 o'clock, and began Worship at 11 to a crowded audience of above 500. Preached from Acts 8. 14, 15, 16, 17, and confirmed 280 [some of whom aged persons, about 70 and 80, if not more, years]. The Rev Mr Allan Cameron resumed my discourse in Galic, which took much time, so that we finished worship at 5 o'clock Evening. We dined at Mr Allan Cameron's House in great Plenty, Lady Allangrange, Chisholm, and his Lady making a part of the Company.

Wednesday June 13

This morning I conversed with a young man, Morison, from Lord Lovat's country, who had been one Session at the University, and appeared desirous to be a Churchman amongst us. At 10 o'clock I confirmed two Daughters of the Laird of Chisholm, of 9 and 7 years of age. Set out from Allangrange, a most hospitable Family truly, at quarter after 10, and came to Tore, the House of Lady Kelcoy, 10 minutes before 11. Called at the Castle of Kelcoy half before 1 o'clock, but miss'd seeing the Tutor and his Lady, and at the House of Ord, MacKenzie, quarter before 2.

Thursday June 14

Began Worship at Ord half before 11, and continued till 5. Preached as above [about 500 present], Mr Cameron resuming, and confirmed 240, some of whom had travell'd 16 long miles, and several of them very old persons. Both at Arpaphily and Ord [at each of these places gave Half-a-Guinea to the Catechist for a Refreshment to the poor people], large Country Chapels, each in Form of a Cross, containing above 500 persons, with decent pulpits, and well fitted up with Good Seats. Here Miss MacKenzie of Inchcoulter met us according to a Card we received at Fortrose from her Mother. We dined at the House of Ord, Mr MacKenzie of Pitlundy and his Daughter, and Miss MacKenzie of Inchcoulter being still with us.

Set out from Ord with these three Friends and Mr Cameron quarter before 7, and at Dingwall half after 9, putting up at Baillie, or rather Provost, Mackenzie's, a Tavern, where 8 in company at Supper. At the Boat of Scuddell some little dispute in Galic happened between Pitlundy and the Boatman, the latter insisting it was best for the Chaise to cross by the Ford, the water being rather low, and offering to ride Pitlundy's Horse to direct the passage. Mr Cameron joined Pitlundy, alledging Danger, but I begged leave to observe that the Boatman would never run the Risk of drowning for a Frolic. Upon this the Point was yielded, and our Driver declared he had never forded a Water more easily, the Ford being pretty far up the Water, and out of our Sight.

Friday June 15

[This day, in passing by Foulis-Castle, the Seat of Sir Harry Monroe, we saw patches of Hay ready for mowing down.] Left Dingwall half after 7, taking a Dram and a Bit of Bread, the Landlord and Landlady never deigning to Show their Faces, though Ladies in our Company. Perhaps they were frighten'd at their own Shadow, as the Proverb is. Here Mr Cameron returned from us to Arpaphily, promising to be with us at Cadboll on Monday's morning, but Mr Reid's death prevented this, as he should have been at Balcony Castle on the Sunday Evening, where we arrived on the Friday morning 10 minutes after 9, Pitlundy and his Daughter giving us the Convoy. Here we took Breakfast with good Lady Inchcoulter, who kindly insisted upon our staying some days with her, but this we could not do.

Set out from Balcony 25 minutes after 11, George MacKenzie of Inchcoulter politely giving us the Convoy, and conducting us the best road to Cadboll, in our way to which call'd at New Tarbat; but Dr MacKenzie being from home, and his Lady confined to Bed, we left Compliments, and turned Bridle. He halted half before 2 at Montgomery's, Postmaster at Milntown of New-Tarbat, or rather Park-hill, where we were kindly refresh'd with a Glass of good white Wine and some draughts of excellent Porter, and nothing to pay. To my great Surprise, Mr Montgomery told me that the Rev Mr [whose wife is Mr Montgomery's sister] William MacKenzie, at Drumlithie, was to meet me on my

Return at Inverness. "How can that be?" said I; "what is the meaning of it?" "Indeed," said he, "I had got notice of your Resolution to be in Ross-shire, and I wrote to Mr MacKenzie that you was looked for in these Bounds about Trinity Sunday, to which he made a Return that he would do his Endeavours to be with you at Inverness, where he wishes to be Settled, being the place of his Nativity; and it is the wish of all his Friends that this may take Effect, hoping that you will bring it about as speedily as possible." I told Mr Montgomery it was not in my power to do any such thing, as it was not in my Province, but that of another; and that the great Difficulty lay in prevailing with B. Raitt (1) to part with him from Drumlithie. I then explained to him the ticklish Situation of Inverness at Present in very plain Terms; and wished that Mr MacKenzie might not be found to flit from home if he removed from Drumlithie to Inverness. However, Mr Montgomery still insisted, and hoped I would give a helping Hand to the good Design. I said I would gladly contribute my poor Endeavours in a friendly and regular Way. Mr Montgomery said some very strong things with Respect to the present prevailing Spirit at Inverness, particularly that Lady MacIntosh was not blate in what she was now attempting; "and," said he, "were I in Mrs Stewart's case, whose Property the Chapel is, I would rather set a burning Coal to it, and burn it down to the Ground, than that these new fashion'd Folks should possess it - a thing so very contrary to the Wish and Inclination of her departed Husband." To all this I most heartily agreed. Mr Montgomery put us a good way on the best Road to Cadboll, where we arrived at 5, and dined at 7 o'clock, with some of the best Claret to crown the Feast.

Cadboll's son, Robert-Bruce Angus MacLeod, is a most amiable Boy, acute and sprightly, and of excellent Looks; but though he be in the 7th year of his age, knows not the Letter of a Book. Such is the Fate of an Indolent, Sedentary Father, though, in the present Case, a most knowing Gentleman in many Things, and possessed of an excellent and well-stor'd Library.

In Bed half after eleven o'clock.

Saturday June 16

Inchcoulter got up betimes in the Morning, to be with his Workmen, being a great Improver. He and little Bob were very great Friends in their Galic conversation. Bob makes a fine Figure in his Tartan Philibeg and blue Bonnet. All this Day at Cadboll, when the Laird had several agreeable Chats with me upon some interesting Articles, I made him a present of a small Pamphlet, gilded, viz., A true, authentic, and faithful Narrative, etc. (2), the like of which I had transmitted to two favourite Friends, with Thanks in Return, etc.

Sunday June 17

the first Sunday after Trinity - Preached from 1 Cor. 2. 11, compared with Job 11. 7, 8, 9, in the Forenoon, upon the Holy Trinity; and in the Afternoon from Prov. 12. 26. MacCulloch of Glastullich was at Worship, and spent the Day with us, giving us a kind Invitation to dine at his house next Day, and importuning Cadboll to be one of the number; but to no purpose.

Monday June 18

Dined with Glastullich, Lady Cadboll and little Robin going with us. In the Evening Cadboll showed me his Library, in four vaulted Rooms, arched both below and above, being up a Stair. Two of the Rooms are paved with Marble. If all the other Houses were on Fire, yet no Damage could happen to the Library. All the Books are in neat Presses, four of which in each Room. I asked

for the Catalogue, which he put in my hands, remarking that he believed he had not inserted any Books after 1743; but, upon Inspection, I shewed him it was 1740, no fewer than 30 years back, and entreated him to have the Catalogue completely filled up. His Medals and Charters, and other valuable papers, are carefully deposited in the Library.

Tuesday June 19

In the Morning, the dear little Son came to us, and earnestly urged our stay for that Day.

The Father, when he came to Breakfast, produced a Collection of Medals to engage my attention; but I told him it was not possible for us to take up our abode any longer with him, as I had promised to be at Inverness on Friday, and that we had several visits to make on our way thither.

In the Chaise quarter before 11 o'clock, when Cadboll, looking wistfully at me, with the Tear starting in his Eye, said, "O, Sir, it is hard you will not stay this one Day with us, when we will never meet on Earth again!" "O, Sir," said I, "I hope to see you once more." "Yes, Sir," said he, "if you'll get me a Scots Parliament, you should certainly see me once more." The good Lady join'd her earnest Solicitations, and little Bob weep'd plentifully at parting. In a word, after our going off, Cadboll became very low-spirited, and was seized with such a violent pain in his Breast, that his Life was despair'd of, Dr MacKenzie giving over all hopes of him. He was for several nights he could not be in Bed, and thought his Death approaching very quickly. However, he had an unexpected Recovery, God be thanked, and became as well in Health as he had been for several years past. He is a great Friend to the Poor, and be the Dearth ever so tempting, he never sells his Victual at an high Price. He is particularly kind and indulgent to the Widows on his Estate, which yields him a full thousand £ Sterling a year, without an high Rent for any one Tenant. May his Life be prolonged for a Blessing to the Poor; and yet it is next to a wonder that he has lived so long, as he takes no Exercise, having acknowledged to me, at this Interview, that he had not been but twice over the Threshold of his own House since Octr. last. I therefore took the Opportunity of exhorting him to take Exercise for his own Health's sake, but, I am afraid, without Effect. He is, indeed, extremely Sober, even to Excess; but then he has a good Appetite, which would require Plenty of Exercise. The best Milk here.

At Park Hill 10 minutes after 1, where we refreshed at Mr Montgomery's House, and at Balcony 10 minutes after 5 o'clock, where we abode all night.

Wednesday June 20

In the morning, before Breakfast, Mrs Mary MacKenzie, Aunt, and Miss Bettie MacKenzie, Niece to Inchcoulter, were confirm'd. After Breakfast, we walked down to the Point on Cromarty-Bay, a full long Scots mile, which Mrs Forbes was particularly delighted with.

Went from Balcony quarter before 4 o'clock, Mr Mackenzie of Inchcoulter politely giving us the Convoy to Castle-Leod. In our way thither, just as we came over against Dingwall, the Rev Mr Allan Cameron met us, intending to have gone to Balcony if he had not fallen in with us by the way.

Came to Castle-Leod by 6 o'clock; Capn. John MacKenzie at the Entry to receive us, with two of the loveliest Boys by his side - about 4 and 5 years old - we ever had seen, dress'd in Short Coat and Philibeg of Nankeen, bare-footed and bare-legged, walking hand in hand, which put us in mind of

the Babes in the Wood. Mrs Forbes was so charm'd with their Appearance, that she flew to them and embraced them.

We were not well seated at Castle-Leod till in pop'd the Rev Mr William MacKenzie, who is full cousin to Capn. MacKenzie and to his Lady. I saluting him Drumlithie, the Company gave him no other name. All along, fine weather from first to last. At Fortrose, Trinity Sunday was one of the finest, Sunny Days that could be, tho' at Leith and Edr., as we heard upon our Return, it happened to be a great Fall of Rain almost the whole Day throughout. Indeed, we saw not only many Spots between Wreaths of Snow, upon Hills and Mountains, particularly in journeying Northward to Inverness. The Rays of the Sun, darting upon the Snow, and the Inter-mixture of the black Heath and gray Rocks, with some Clifts of the verdant Grass, made an agreeable Variety of beautiful Contrast to the Eye. We were told the Snow is as hard as Ice, and bears one to walk upon it without yielding.

Thursday June 21

This morning, Capn. MacKenzie express'd great Desire to have Mr William MacKenzie settled at Inverness, and that Mr Allan Cameron should have a 4th Chapel at Dingwall for the accommodation of those on the North-Side of the Water of Conan - a most reasonable proposal, which I desired Mr Cameron to have by all means brought about. We were badly appointed here for Corn to the Horses.

Left Castle-Leod quarter after 10, Inchcoulter still giving the Convoy. At Kinellan 20 minutes before 11. Here MacKenzie of Terriden dwells, who was Lieutenant-Colonel in Barisdale's Regiment, 1745. In the way [wrong. The Echo is between Kinellan and Contin. At Kinellan, hard by the House, there is a Loch with an artificial Island in it. There is such another Echo on ye Road to Dudingston from Edr., upon the left hand towards Arthur's Seat. I tried it in Company with John Bowdler, Esqr., from Bath, and it repeated distinctly one, two, three, four, five, and many Sentences of the same length on Monday, Sept. 17, 1770] to Kinellan there is a Spot of an admirable Echo. If one pronounces a whole Sentence, the Echo does not begin till the Sentence be spoke out, and then it returns the Sentence articulately, and with the same Tone of Voice used by the Speaker. A Sister of Terriden's lives in the same house with him - Mrs Chisholm by name - who has a Daughter blind from two years old with the Small-pox. This Daughter translates Scots Songs into Galic Poetry - Lass of Pettie's Miln for one, qch she sung to us charmingly, verse by verse, first in Scots and then in Galic. She likewise sung to us, in Galic, an excellent Song, Clanranald's Lament, who fell upon the Sheriff-Muir in 1715. This was composed by an old, illiterate Country woman, spinning at her wheel, one Sentence of which I could not fail to take notice of in English, thus: "Had I been there with Wallace Band, I should have made Hanover run away."

From Kinellan quarter after 11, Terriden accompanying us to Contin, the Seat of Sir Alexander MacKenzie of Coull (3), where we arrived 10 minutes after 12 o'clock. Here are some of the finest barren Trees I ever beheld, particularly Ash. In the Garden of Contin we saw three [not the like to be seen at this time in or about Edr.] Apples, about the Bigness of ordinary small Pears, upon a wall of a South Exposure. Mrs Anne Reoch, Daughter of Donald Reoch, Postmaster, was confirmed here. We dined at Contin, and drank some of the best, Strong Ale we had ever tasted. Sir Alexr.'s Lady is Sister to the late Sir Alexander MacDonald of Slate, in the Isle of Skye. Messrs William MacKenzie and Allan Cameron being in Company, we had a Conversation upon Ossian's Poems with Sir Alexander MacKenzie, who had been at pains to compare them with Virgil's Aeneid; and he pointed out passages to us in which Ossian excell'd.

The Dining Room of Contin is adorn'd wt most admirable Paintings of Battles upon Leather. They are strikingly fine and Natural.

Lady MacKenzie, just as we were going to the Chaise, spoke to me about Donald Noble's leaving Argilshire to be Catechist on the North-Side of Conan, as one John MacDonald was to supply his place in the West. I told her Ladyship I had settled that Affair with Mr Cameron, and that I wd. be sure to mind Donald with £4. 10 shill. a-year.

Went from Contin half after 4 o'clock, Sir Alexr. giving us the Convoy, to shew us the right Fords of Oran and Conan, Inchcoulter not knowing them well. They are dangerous Waters, and swell in an Instant, when Rains fall in the Hills, where they take their Rise; and the Fords are not Shallow at the lowest, but have excellent Bottoms. After crossing these Waters, Sir Alexr. returned.

Call'd at Mr Patrick Grant's, Incumbent at Urray, and drank Tea there, 6 o'clock. Ar Ord by 8, whereupon Inchcoulter left us, and went on to Bewly, where he was to do Business with a Gentleman.

Bishop Forbes' Second Journal of his travels through Ross and Cromarty ends here, but he continues through Inverness-shire and Perthshire, arriving back in Leith on Friday, July 13, 1770, following an absence of 40 days and at a cost of £39.11. 4.

FOOTNOTES

(1) James Raitt, presbyter at Dundee, consecrated to See of Brechin, 4th October 1742. His father had been minister of Monikie. "He (the Bishop) possessed strong, good sense and a very dignified manner when celebrating his Episcopal offices. He was a celebrated preacher, preaching without notes till he became a very old man. His charges to the youth whom he confirmed he delivered without notes, and without hesitation, long after he was eighty years of age." - Russel. He died in 1777. His dignified manner is also spoken of by Bishop Gleig, who had seen him officiate.

(2) This may refer to a publication mentioned by Bishop Forbes in another place, generally known as "Travels in the Highlands", but containing "A Narrative of the Escape" etc. of Prince Charles after Culloden. It was probably drawn up by the Bishop for the use of "friends". Copies at any rate were to be had from him. In 1769 one copy was sent to "the K.;" a second set apart for Mr Wagstaff; the third, for Mrs Smith of Burn-hall; and the fourth, for Mrs Gordoun - all handsomely gilded." Jacobite Lairds of Gask, p. 369.

(3) "The first of the family of Coul, Ross-shire, was Alexander MacKenzie, borther of Kenneth, first Lord MacKenzie of Kintail, who, before his death, made him a present of his own sword, as a testimony of his particular esteem and affection. His son, Kenneth MacKenzie of Coul, was created a baronet of Nova Scotia, Oct. 16, 1673. His eldest son, Sir Alexander, 2nd baronet, for being concerned in the rebellion of 1715, was forfeited. He died without male issue, and the attainder not extending to collateral branches of the family, the title and estates devolved on his brother, Sir Colin, 4th baronet, clerk to the Pipe in the Exchequer. He died in 1740. His eldest son, Sir Alexander, 5th baronet, died in 1792." - Anderson's Scottish Nation, vol. iii, p. 21.