

Thomas Mackenzie  
14 March 1903.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ART GALLERY



J. MOFFAT, 125 PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH.  
ESTABLISHED 1853.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 1903

PRESENTATION TO SHERIFF AND  
MRS MACKENZIE.

An interesting ceremony took place at Dornoch on Saturday last, when Sheriff Mackenzie, who has been so long Sheriff of the County of Sutherland, and Mrs Mackenzie, were respectively presented with an enlarged photographic likeness of the Sheriff dressed in his legal robes and in his coronation dress, by the members of the Dornoch Bar. The members of the Bar present were—Mr Peters, Procurator Fiscal; Mr Macaulay, solicitor, Golspie; Mr Argo, solicitor, Golspie; Mr Hynd, solicitor, Golspie; Mr Hacon, barrister, Dornoch; Mr McOrone, sheriff clerk; Mr H. M. Mackay, solicitor, Dornoch; Mr J. H. Arthur, solicitor, Dornoch, and chief constable Macdonald, Dornoch. There was also a considerable number of the general public present among whom we observed—The Rev. Dr and Mrs Grant, the Manse; Mr C. H. Urquhart, Hon. Sheriff-Substitute; Mrs Argo and family Golspie; Miss Houston, Mrs Arthur, Dornoch; Provost Sutherland, Dornoch; Bailie Fraser, Dornoch; Mr Maxwell, sheriff clerk deputy, &c.

Mr Arthur, secretary, intimated apologies from Mr J. J. Hill, Helmsdale, Hon. Sheriff-Substitute; Mr McLeay, solicitor, Tain; Mr John Mackintosh, banker, Dornoch; and Mr George Mackintosh, Pitgrodie.

Upon Sheriff, Mrs, and Miss Mackenzie, entering the Court House, they were received with hearty applause.

Mr Peters, as the oldest member of the Bar present, made the presentation, and said—Sheriff Mackenzie, the members of the Dornoch Bar, some time ago, resolved to present you with some more tangible token of their high appreciation of your worth and merit than being the recipient of their hospitality in December last. On that occasion our appreciation of you was admirably expressed by our mutual friend Mr McLeay, and it is not necessary for me to recapitulate what he said so well here to-day for, after all, these things are like lovers' whispers, better told in private. We did not think that what took place on that occasion was a sufficient mark of the great esteem in which you are held by the members of the Bar and of our appreciation of your services, consequently we resolved to present you with your portrait as a small but genuine token of our respect, so that when we come to part, as part we all must sooner or later, those of us who may remain behind, and those who come after, might have before them, in your chambers here, a true likeness of him who so long and faithfully discharged the judicial duties of this County. I think we will all agree that the artist has discharged his duties well and has produced an admirable likeness of his subject, and now, Sheriff Mackenzie, it devolves upon me to present you with this portrait with the sincere hope that you may have the original with us for many years to come.

On the frame is the inscription—Presented to Sheriff Mackenzie by the Dornoch Bar, 1902.

The Sheriff, in replying, said—Mr Peters and Gentlemen—My first duty is to thank you most sincerely for the hearty reception given to my wife and myself, and also for all the kind words spoken concerning us, which words we accept in all humility, and in silent consciousness of their being, at all events, well meant. But our meeting to-day has been to shew that we are to receive assurance of your goodwill and friendly feeling in a form more substantial than mere words, and one which will prove a more lasting and visible memorial of your kindness. The relationship between Bench and Bar, in this Court, has been prolific of many pleasant and happy incidents, to which it is not necessary I should refer at present, except to say that I am not likely to forget that occasion in December last, when I was entertained by the Bar at a complimentary dinner in recognition of my having entered upon another year of my already long official service. I regarded that entertainment as one of the two events which made last year a memorable one in my life, the other event, of course, being the high distinction accorded me of being one of those privileged to be present at the Coronation of Their Majesties in Westminster Abbey. At the social entertainment, I have mentioned, you were good enough to resolve to make two presentations of my portrait, one for myself, in judicial attire, and the other in court dress for my wife, thus commemorating in a way the two distinctive events I have just referred to. In now accepting my portrait, which shall find a place in my official chambers in this building, I beg to express my sincere gratification that the members of the Bar have thought me worthy of being honoured in this way, and they may rest assured that my appreciation of their gift is such that, whenever that picture meets my eye, nothing but friendly thoughts and memories will be evoked in my mind towards those who are associated with me in the transaction of the legal and official business of the county. My best thanks are due, and I now offer them to one and all of you who have been engaged in providing me with this very handsome and enduring testimonial of your good will, and, if you will allow me, I would add that my pleasure on this occasion has been greatly enhanced through the knowledge that my dear wife is also receiving at your hands a recognition of which she may well be proud, and for which she desires to express her thanks herself. Again I ask you to accept my best acknowledgments of your gift.

In making the presentation to Mrs Mackenzie, Mr Peters said—Madam, at the same time the members of the Bar resolved to make some similar gift to you, and we thought that it would be pleasing to you that we should give you the portrait in the dress your husband wore at the Coronation of His Majesty the King. The members of the Bar quite realised that, had it not been for your wifely care of him, they should not have a subject to take a portrait of, he would long ago have been translated to a higher tribunal. In the name of the members of the Dornoch Bar, I have much pleasure in handing to you this portrait of your worthy husband, which, I am sure, will be treasured, not for its intrinsic value, but as a token of remembrance of the

distinguished services rendered by your husband in this county, and of the high estimation in which he was held by the members of the Bar. But above all do they give you this portrait as an expression of their regard for your own worth and the many instances of your courtesy and kindness extended to them, and hope you may both be long spared to each other.

The portrait to Mrs Mackenzie bore the following inscription:—"Presented to Mrs Mackenzie on the occasion of a similar presentation to her husband, Sheriff Mackenzie, by the members of the Dornoch Bar."

Mrs Mackenzie, in replying, said—Mr Peters and gentlemen of the Dornoch Bar—I cannot exactly plead the good old excuse of being quite unaccustomed to public speaking, but I must say I have never attempted to address an audience with such mixed feelings as I do to-day. First, deep gratitude to you for your kindness in making me this presentation; and, secondly, feelings of my own unworthiness at having ever done anything to merit this token of your esteem. You could have given me nothing that I could value more than this picture of my husband; it will be one of my most treasured possessions as long as I live, and, when we are both gone, I know that our children and their children will value it as a token of the goodwill and friendly feeling that has ever existed between ourselves and the people of Sutherland. Dornoch will always have a warm corner in our hearts, for I lived eighteen years in Dornoch, and I can truthfully say that there was not a man, woman, or child in Dornoch or Embo whom I did not personally know. I only wish that the Dornoch of to-day had been the Dornoch of my youth, for when I came to Dornoch many years ago, more than I care to remember, I found it dull, retired, wrapped in a perpetual cathedral gloom. Now you have quite an up-to-date city. I do not intend to give you my reminiscences of Dornoch in the olden time as that would take too long, but I should just like to give you one as a contrast to the Dornoch of to-day. I am a woman who loves work, and I could no more sit with my hands folded in my lap doing nothing for an afternoon than I could fly. So I looked about for something to do, and I made up my mind to make a collection of Sutherland grasses. Of course I meant it to be the best in Scotland. I got the best books on the subject; I studied them; I don't say I understood them, and this was the result—Two dear old ladies, sleeping now for many years in the cemetery near the sea, met one day, and one said, "What a terrible thing this is that has happened to the poor Sheriff." "What is it?" asked the other. "Have you not heard his wife has gone mad; quite off her head." "Oh," said her friend, "what a dreadful thing for the Sheriff and the poor children; but what is she doing?" "Doing," said the other, "she is scouring the country for miles around, and comes in at night with bundles of weeds in her arms." Now, gentlemen, in your Dornoch of to-day, I am sure I

might come in with a bundle of weeds on my head and no one would take any notice. I need but say my collection was never finished. I see a great future before Dornoch with its improved buildings, its crowds of tourists, and its railway which brings it into touch with the outside world. Why! Dornoch in the near future will be a Brighton of the south and the St Andrews of the north rolled in one. Again let me thank you, gentlemen, for your kindness to me to-day, and I know that my husband joins with me in wishing you and yours every happiness and prosperity this world can give.

The portraits, which were left in the Court-Room for exhibition, were inspected by numerous Friends, and were much admired.

Thomas Mackenzie