

:-:

STRIKING INCIDENTS FROM DORNOCH'S PAST

:-:

(Continued from page 1.)

to-day she does not forget that she owes them to the powerful interest of the Earls of Sutherland.

"And so as part of our programme to-day we are to unveil a tablet to the memory of Sir Robert Gordon, whose name has always been so closely associated with this district, and whose famous 'History of the Earldom of Sutherland' is one of the most interesting literary remains of the time. But we honour your Grace not only as the representative of a long line of names illustrious in the history of the North, but also in virtue of your personal qualities and achievements. To-day, on your fortieth birthday, you can look back on a record of good service rendered to your country.

"During the war you did your duty by her, and in time of peace as a Minister of the Crown your interest in her welfare has been unceasing. In 1922 you admirably filled the important office of Lord High Commissioner, and your unflagging interest in the progress of aviation has gone far to establish this country as one of the leaders in aerial development.

"The citizens of Dornoch one and all desire to show their appreciation, both of your personal merits and of the past services of your family to the capital of Sutherland, by making you a freeman of this Royal and ancient burgh upon the 300th anniversary of its founding as a burgh."

Mr John Sutherland then proceeded to read the inscriptions on the Burgess tickets.

The tickets were handed over by Mr Sutherland to the newly admitted Burgess, and they signed the Burgess roll.

The Duke's Reply.

The Duke of Sutherland then rose and said:—

"There is no honour in the world I value so highly as being granted the freedom of the burgh of Dornoch. I value that honour so highly because of the connection between the town of Dornoch and the family to which I belong. I have come to know that I have got good friends at home as well as away. I will always cherish that friendship which has existed since the 13th century. You have presented me with the freedom on my 40th birthday, at a time when a man is supposed to be commencing the process of mellowing into a ripe old age, at an age when the more callow and precocious qualities of youth are softening. That ceremony was taking place in the shadow of the ancient

cathedral in which my ancestors found their last resting-place.

"It was said of Lord Rosebery during his career as a statesman that he would rather work for Scotland in a humble way than perform a much more important service for another part of the Empire. That was true of Scotsmen the world over, for they would rather work for their own country than for any other."

The Duke went on to refer to the attractions of Dornoch from a golfing and holiday viewpoint, and mentioned that next to Nairn they could boast the smallest rainfall in the British Isles. He wished to thank them all for the great honour they had conferred on him.

A short speech was also made in reply by Lord Rothermere, who expressed the belief that with improved means of transport there was great hope for the future of the Highlands. He was very grateful for the honour they had done him that day.

The Memorial.

Provost Murray then wished the youngest burgesses long life and prosperity, and the company proceeded to the cathedral to unveil the mural tablet to the memory of Sir Robert Gordon.

The beautiful old cathedral was crowded when the Rev. Dr Bentick opened the short service with the singing of the Hundredth Psalm by the congregation, and after this Rev. Mr Ritchie of Creich read the lesson.

The Duke of Sutherland, along with Dr Bentick and Provost Murray, then proceeded to the east transept, where the small tablet has been placed on the wall.

It was a very fortunate thing for Dornoch, Provost Murray said, that in the troublous time, from 1615 to 1630, the guardian and tutor of the young Earl was Sir Robert Gordon. He was admirably fitted for his difficult task by a thorough university training, extensive foreign travel, and a long attendance at court. Such a favourite was Sir Robert that he was made a gentleman of the Privy Chamber in 1606, the first baronet in 1625, Vice-Chamberlain of Scotland in 1630, and Privy Councillor in 1634. In 1623 he succeeded in obtaining from the King a charter for the erection of the burgh of Dornoch into a Royal burgh with all its attendant privileges.

"For these reasons, on behalf of the citizens of the town, I have much pleasure," he continued, "in calling upon

your Grace, a kinsman of so eminent a man, to unveil this memorial to his illustrious memory."

The Duke of Sutherland at once uncovered the memorial tablet, and Rev. Dr Bentick engaged in a prayer of dedication.

The Guests.

The invited guests were then conveyed to the L.M.S. Hotel to attend the civic luncheon at which Provost Murray occupied the chair—presiding over a company which included Bailie Moore, Dean of Guild Mackenz, Treasurer Dingwall, Councillors M'Kay, Ross, M'Hardy, Grant; Provost Ross, Tain; Provost Macewen, Inverness; Provost Couper, Cromarty; Provost Asher, Thurso; Provost Ross, Invergordon; the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, Lord Rothermere, Sir Archibald and Lady Sinclair, Rev. Dr Bentick, Mr Rosewell Miller, the Hon. E. Harmsworth, the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry.

Sheriff Mackintosh, Sheriff Forbes, Lord Chaplin, Mr R. S. Henderson, &c.

The usual loyal toasts were drunk, and that of the youngest burgesses was given by Provost Murray, to which very brief replies were made.

An interesting speech was given by Sir Archibald Sinclair, M.P. for Caithness and Sutherland, who proposed "The Burgh of Dornoch," coupled with the name of Bailie Campbell. In doing so he referred to the position held by Dornoch as a holiday centre in the north, how it attracted many people in the Highlands, and how it was his hope that in the future it would bring more and more visitors to their midst.

Sir Archibald also spoke of the friendly relationships now existing between the people of Caithness and those of Sutherland, and raised a smile by remarking that they were even united in the blissful bonds of Parliamentary representation.

After the finish of luncheon the party made their way back to the arena where the pageant was to be held, and with this stirring and picturesque event the day's proceedings came to a close.

In the evening, however, dances were held in the town, and these for the younger people made a fitting wind up to a great day.

One factor which contributed much to the success of the celebrations was the weather. Although the sun remained hidden, the rain, which had been falling during the night, cleared away, and did not return.

Royal Message.

The following message was sent by Provost Murray on the occasion of the tercentenary celebrations to His Majesty at Balmoral:—

"The Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of the Royal Burgh of Dornoch, Sutherland, and all our citizens are to-day celebrating the tercentenary of the founda-



A group of Monks.

tion of our town by Royal charter as a Royal Burgh, and hereby offer...



A picturesque scene. Photo shows the granting of the Charter.

country and Empire. — John Murray, Provost."

The reply received was in the following terms:—

"The Provost of Dornoch,—The King sincerely thanks you, the Magistrates, Town Council, and citizens of Dornoch to-day celebrating the tercentenary of the granting of the Royal charter for the loyal sentiments and good wishes expressed in your message.—Private Secretary."



Lord Rothermere.



The Duke of Sutherland.



A section of the crowd watching the proceedings.

SCENES FROM DORNOCH'S HISTORICAL PAGEANT



Master J. A. D. Lawson and Miss D. Lawson (Vikings).



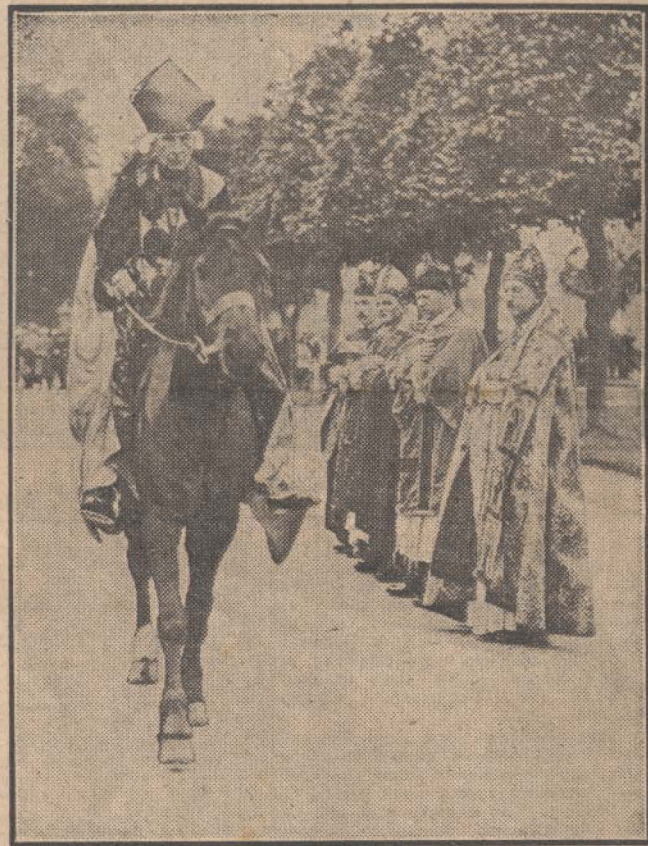
Miss Mary Fraser, as the witch, being driven from the town by the fishwives.



Two of the clergy leaving the Cathedral.



The Duchess of Sutherland, who took a prominent part in the pageant.



Bishop Gilbert (Rev. D. H. Gillan, of Golspie) arriving.



Another photo showing part of the procession of clergy from the Cathedral.



A charming group of dancers at the pageant.