

Falkland 1900-2000

Year 1923

(As researched by Jack Burgess)

1st September 1923

Article in *The Fife News*:

Visit of Her Majesty The Queen to Falkland



“The enthusiasm in the Howe of Fife was unprecedented on Thursday, when Her Majesty the Queen honoured Falkland with a special visit. Unfortunately, a heavy night of rain on Wednesday preceded a cold, drizzly morning, and it seemed that the visit of Her Majesty was to be made under the worst possible conditions. Bad weather, however, did not detract from the enthusiasm of those who were looking forward to the distinction of a visit from the Queen of Great Britain.”

At Falkland Road Station

The Queen arrived from Edinburgh at Falkland Road Station at 11.20, and was met by Sir Ralph Anstruther, Lord Lieutenant of the county. The route of the Royal car was through one of the prettiest parts of the East of Fife, on a road winding round the

foot of the Lomonds, at present empurpled with heather. All the farmhouses and cottages which dotted the fields were gay with bunting, and the thatched roofs of the houses in the hamlets of Newton of Falkland and Freuchie presented an unusually gay appearance. Motor cars and charabancs thronged the quaint old-fashioned streets of the Royal burgh of Falkland itself, but although large parties had come in these conveyances, equally large numbers of the country people had left their homes at an early hour in the morning, and walked miles to see Her Majesty actually in the flesh, in the centre of the old Howe of Fife.

Falkland School Children

All the school children in the town were drawn up in front of the Palace gates, under their headmaster, Mr A. Nisbet, and the ex-Service men of the district were there, under the leadership of Sergeant-Major Dryden, Newton of Falkland. An aged veteran, Mr William Holland, Falkland, too feeble to walk, had braved the elements in a Bath chair, with his lower limbs comfortably tucked under a red antimacassar. He occupied the central position in the line of stalwarts.

Long before the Royal car came within sight of those in the town, deep-throated cheers gave notice of its arrival. The cheers echoed and re-echoed in the narrow streets, and handkerchiefs were waved from windows, and even from roofs, where enterprising spectators were ensconced.

At The Palace

At the gates of the Palace, the Queen was welcomed by Captain and the Hon. Mrs Maule Ramsay, Lord Colum Crichton-Stuart, and Master Michael Crichton-Stuart, heir to the House of Falkland. Margaret Mary Hopkins, the small daughter of Provost and Mrs Hopkins, with a grateful curtsey, handed the Queen a lovely bouquet of pink carnations, on behalf of the school children of Falkland. Her Majesty graciously accepted the gift.



**The Hon. Mrs Maule Ramsay, House of Falkland
being presented to the Queen at Falkland Palace**

Her Majesty was received in the inner court of the Palace by the Hereditary Custodian of the Palace, Master Michael Duncan David Crichton Stuart, who is nine years of age, and is the only son of the late Lord Ninian Crichton Stuart, who was killed near La Bassee on 3rd October 1915.



Master Michael Crichton-Stuart greeting Her Majesty

The Queen's Toilette

Within the gates of the Palace, were the members of the Town Council, and representatives of official bodies. Provost and Mrs Hopkins were presented to the Queen, and Her Majesty then made a tour of the Palace, conducted by the Hon. Mrs Maule Ramsay. Her Majesty was wearing a peculiarly becoming toilette of navy. Her long coat of navy cloth was worn above a navy gown. The bodice of the coat was richly embroidered with beads of a brighter blue, and it had side panels of pleated cloth. Her close-fitting toque matched the bead embroidery of her coat. She wore large pearl earrings.

Mrs Maule Ramsay's costume was of silver grey duvetyn, and it was worn with a picture hat of silver-grey silk with pendant veil. Her sash of grey silk was lined with blue, and her shoulder wrap was of white fox.

The Queen on the Battlements

Her Majesty spent about an hour in inspecting the Palace. She was on the battlements for some time, enjoying the wonderful view afforded here, and every time the crowd in the street below caught a glimpse of her, they cheered lustily.

Photographed in the Palace Enclosure

There were crowds of photographers, eager to obtain a snapshot of Queen Mary, and one of them, a cinematograph photographer, tried to train his camera on to the roof, where the Queen was. Ultimately, Her Majesty, with characteristic kindness, consented to allow herself to be photographed in a group posed on the grass enclosure in the Palace grounds.

Mary Queen of Scots

The Chapel, which has been restored by the late Marquis of Bute, and which contains the Royal pew, the old oak antechapel screen, and priceless tapestries, was gone through, and Her Majesty was greatly interested in the little glass enclosed portion on the north wall, on which the name of 'Marie Stuart' (Mary Queen of Scots) was scratched.

The Queen Impressed with Bottle Dungeon

She then entered the guide's room, to sign the visitors' book, and Mr W. Bruce, the official guide to the Palace, was presented to her. She ascertained that he was an ex-Service man, and she questioned him about his service in India, the Mediterranean, West Africa, and latterly in Ireland. She asked the name of his regiment, and he told her it was the 27th Artillery. He then lifted the trap-door in his room, and showed her the famous bottle dungeon of the Palace. This is a special treat, which he reserves for honoured visitors, and Her Majesty seemed duly impressed.

Preserving Her Majesty's Signature

The Queen's signature, written in a clear firm hand, 'Mary R., 30th August 1923' is the only writing on the page, and the Falkland people are considering the advisability of putting the page in a glass case, to prevent American visitors, who are alleged to have predatory inclinations, taking it away. The last Royal Sovereign to visit the Palace was Charles the 2nd, who, the records show, was there on 6th July 1650.

Other signatures by the Queen's party were 'Elphinstone, Carberry'; 'Hew H. Dalrymple, 24 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh'; 'Archbishop of York'; 'Derek Keppel, Carberry'; 'Ian Malcolm, Poltalloch'; 'Mildred Anstruther, Balcaskie'; 'Jeanne Malcolm, Poltalloch'; 'Rhoda Doubleday, New York'; 'Younger of Leckie, Stirling'.

With the Queen

Those who accompanied the Queen in her tour of inspection of the Palace were Sir Ralph and Lady Anstruther; Master Michael D. Crichton Stuart; Miss Claudia Crichton Stuart; Master Alec Maule Ramsay; Miss Ramsay and Miss Vera Ramsay (sisters of Captain Ramsay); Master Anthony Preston (nephew of Mrs Maule Ramsay); Master Alec. Ramsay; and Mr G. Gavin, factor of Falkland estate.

Both Master Michael and Master Ramsay were wearing Stuart tartan Highland dress.

Permission to stand inside the Palace enclosure was given to the following: -

Mrs Gulland, Miss Gulland, and Miss Russell, Millfield House; Mrs Granger (sister of Mrs Hopkins); Dr and Mrs Shand, Falkland; Miss Dunn, Largo; Bailie and Mrs Hunt; Councillor and Mrs Drysdale; Bailie and Mrs Robertson; Councillor Horne and Miss Horne; Councillor Robertson and Mrs Robertson; Councillor and Mrs Chisholm; Councillor Nellis, and Mrs Nellis; Councillor Annand and Mrs Martin (his sister); Councillor Garland and Mrs Garland; Councillor Grant and Miss Grant; Mr and Mrs Baillie, Bank House, Falkland; Mrs Nisbet, Schoolhouse; Mr and Mrs Shanks, Falkland Wood; Mr and Mrs D. Bonthron, Falkland; Mr and Miss Gibson, Woodmill; Miss Gavin and Miss Polly Gavin; the Rev. J.K. and Mrs Russell, Falkland; Mr and Mrs James Anderson, Falkland; the Rev. J.P. Batchelor and Mrs Batchelor, Falkland; Miss Innes, Rosemount, Cupar.

The Queen was shown through Mr Gavin's house, which is part of the Palace, and she admired the old oak panelling on the walls, and the tapestries.

A graceful tribute to the Queen, paid by Master Michael Crichton Stuart, was to present her with a bouquet of red roses, arranged by himself.

The Queen and her Ancestress

On leaving the Palace, Her Majesty told Provost Hopkins that her visit had been most interesting, and she thought the Palace was beautifully kept. The Provost reminded her that the Palace was of particular interest to her, because her ancestress Princess Elizabeth was born there. 'Oh', said Her Majesty, 'I was in Dunfermline recently, and I understand they claim that.' 'Yes', said the Provost, 'I know that they say that, but it is authentic that she was born in Falkland.' 'It's interesting to know that', said the Queen."

Lunch at House of Falkland

She drove off amid cheers to House of Falkland. Among those who lunched with her and her suite were the Earl and Countess of Crawford and Balcarres; Sir Ralph and Lady Anstruther; Lord and Lady Cochrane of Cults; and Colonel and Mrs Anstruther of Charleton.

After lunch, the Queen motored to Melville House, the residence of Mr and Mrs R.S. Millbank Leslie-Melville.”