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Title: Letter from James McKenzie to Charles Nisbet

Date: January 30, 1804

Location: MC 2001.7, B1, F4

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Reverend Dear Sir

Glasgow 30th Janry 1804.

Your esteemed letter of the 4th Oct^r I only received the 17th inst. I was afraid my last letter had miscarried. I was so long in hearing from you. With regard to the Invasion of this country by France, we have been in a state of alarm for four months past. It was positively said this would take place in October; and well it is for this country that it did not happen then, as we were ill-prepared to meet it. Since that time we have been arming, and have now in Great Britain and Ireland 720,000 men in arms — their number might have been much greater had all who offered their service been accepted; but Government could not find arms for more. — On the coast of England an army of 70,000 can be collected at any place in a day or two. — In Edinburgh (where people are much afraid) there are about 10,000; and in the neighbouring towns are 10,000 more, which are ready at an hour notice. Lord Moira resides at Edin^g. as commander in chief for Scotland — He sent notice to the volunteers here lately (about 3,600) to be ready to march at an hour warning. At Leith there is an Admiral, and a number of armed ships &c. — Some ships of war are placed at Campbelltown

and Stranraer to guard Glyde. I see by the newspapers that a guard is kept at the point in the parish of Craig, and another at Lunan bay. - So great is the demand for fire locks, that Government has been obliged to arm some thousand, of volunteers with pikes. - There are no democrats in our Country now; the Gentlemen who were keenest in finding fault with Government last war, are Officers among our volunteers now! - In London there have been public meetings for prayer on account of the war, once a month since it commenced; in Edin^g: they have had a prayer meeting once a week since Aug^t last; here there has been a meeting for prayer in our Chapel of Ease on Tuesday evening weekly for some months; by two Ministers; on Thursday evening the ministers of the town, take by turns a meeting in our parish Kirk; on Monday evening our Relief clergy have meetings once a fortnight; on Wednesday evening our Antiburghen meet also, once a fortnight; on Thursday evening our Burghen meet once a week; and on Friday evening our Tabernacles meet once a three weeks for prayer.

Our Fleets are as formidable as our armies; and watch the motions of the French so closely, that they cannot get out of their ports. We have a fleet off Toulon which prevents any ships from getting in or out: Admiral Cornwallis has blockaded Brest with a large fleet, for nine months, except a few days when driven off his station by violent winds in the end of December; only one of his ships received no damage, and

and kept her station! We have a fleet on the coast of
Holland, who watch the motions of the Dutch, who are
dragged into the service of the French, and are longing
for deliverance. We have also a fleet on the Irish coast,
and in the Downs &c &c. - We are now so well prepared,
for the French, that people wish they would make the
attempt of invading us. - We have heard a great deal of
their preparations for this, by marching many thousands
to their sea ports, and that some hundreds of flat-bottomed
boats were built &c -

"On the 19th inst there was another violent gale of wind on
the coast of England. This hurricane was preceded by an
uncommon agitation in the sea, which seemed to indicate
an extraordinary concussion of nature. The water in
Falmouth harbour, about three hours before rose suddenly
to the height of six or eight feet perpendicular, recoiled,
and rose, and rose again three successive times, in the course
of a few minutes! in the same manner it is remembered
to have done in the time of the earthquake that destroyed
Lisbon. - It lasted from 5 o'clock P.M. till 12 at night; and
has done great damage to houses, shipping" &c. -

I have not heard from Dr Paton for several months;
Last time I heard from him, he informed me that, he had
got an agreeable helper, a young gentleman from Edin^{burgh}
named Brewster. The present Lady of Rosie is Inquis,
and was terrified, in case of Dr Paton's death, they would have
a son of Dr Hill's & Andrews thrust in to the parish, as the
College

College of St Andrew are Patrons to Craig; and finding
Mr Brewster a gospel preacher, she applied to Lord
Melville, (formerly Henry Dundas) to use his influence
with the College, that Mr Brewster should be placed as
help & successor to Dr Paton; which she obtained. As Mr
Coutts, minister in Brechin died about the same time,
and the people of Brechin getting a hearing of Mr
Brewster, made choice of him for their minister; and a
presentation for him was wrote for to the King, which
was granted. - Mrs Ross of Rossie was greatly alarmed
again at this circumstance, as she was certain Mr Hill
would be presented to Craig; and Dr Paton to satisfy
her, and his own mind, agreed to demit, and accordingly
gave up his charge; and Mr Brewster is our minister
of Craig; and the Doctor, I suppose is our an inhabitant
of Montrose; for Alex Molloson told me about three
weeks ago, that his Father wrote him, that he had
preached the funeral sermon of a man, who was sitting
by his side in good health. - I am very sorry to say
that the town Council of Brechin have erred exceedingly
in their choice of another young man, a Mr Whitson
from about Blairgowrie, whose call was signed only by
15, and these mostly under influence; none of the Elders
came forward; and some of the Presby were against sustain-
ing the call; but the majority carried sustain. Mr Guthrie
one of their present Baillies & an Elder, farther says, "matters
with respect to Religion, wear a very gloomy aspect with
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No; we had a very full and attentive Congregation; but I am afraid it will now be sadly scattered, if his doctrine be such as we have twice heard from him, which was very much on the Arminian strain, and contrary to what this Congregation has been accustomed to hear". — Well may this be said for a century past, under the ministry of Mess^{rs} John Willison, Robert Gray, David Blair, Tho^s Mathison, & Andrew Bruce &c. The majority of the Council were influenced by a Mr Maul, heir to Lord Panmure, who resides at the Castle of Brechin; and in this matter he has snatched them compleatly: —

I am sorry you have reason to be dissatisfied with your situation; but I have no doubt, if there had been a minister in Scotland who was fitter for your place, he would have been called to it. "Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way"? You may not be treated with that respect you deserve. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. — They hated me without a cause. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you". — I am glad you
have

Been enabled to send forth so many young men to preach
the gospel. I hope on reflection, this will balance all your
troubles.

It affords much pleasure here at present to hear that the
French have been obliged to evacuate St Domingo, and
that the remains of their army, said to be 5000, with their
ships of war, stores &c have fallen into our hands. —
Our Jamaican merchants, it is said, have declared that
they will ward no more Negroes for five years! The
slave trade it is hoped is near an end.

The Emperor of Russia has wrote our College to send
him over seventeen young men, as professors to a College
he is going to erect in some part of his dominions; he
offers them a salary of £250 Sterling each per annum.

I trouble you with the inclosed pamphlets, as a small
token of the esteem I entertain for you; and if shared,
will continue to send you more occasionally. I shall
direct, as you mentioned, to the care of the Rev Samuel
Miller, New York. — Below the seal of your letter was
wrote "Favoured by your most Ob. S^t Robert McCulloch, New
York 6th Nov 1803." When at the school in Montrose, I knew
a young snow lad of this name, who went to America; Is
this he? —

You will see by the letter to Principal Hill, that matters
are not mended in our General Assembly, and that we
want your assistance as much as ever. The News from the
Hottentots

Hottonots will afford you much pleasure. —

Thro' the year I have plenty of time to write a friend, except in Jan'y when we Balance our Books, this will excuse this hasty scrawl. — I wished much to let you know the state of this country with regard to the war, and heard a ship would sail for New York from Greenock this week, and embraced the opportunity. —

I shall be glad to hear from you; and if shared, will not fail to let you know the issue of our present war. —

I am —

Reverend & Dear Sir,

Your most obed^t. Serv^t

James M'Keay

The Reverend

Doctor Charles Dierkes

President of the College of New

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James McKim
6 E. N.
30 July 1804

21

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