



Davies, J. R. (2018) The Brothers Forbes and the liturgical books of medieval Scotland: Historical scholarship and liturgical controversy in the nineteenth-century Scottish Episcopal Church. *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 47(1), pp. 128-142.

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Deposited on: 13 August 2018

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The Brothers Forbes and the Liturgical Books of Medieval Scotland: Historical Scholarship and Liturgical Controversy in the Nineteenth-Century Scottish Episcopal Church

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In 2015 the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church authorised for a period of experimental use Collects for Sundays, Holy Days, Special Occasions, and the Common of Saints. The collect (in this context) is the short opening prayer of the Eucharist proper to every Sunday and Holy Day, and the new set of prayers was the result of several years' work by the Liturgy Committee.¹

The Liturgy Committee's starting point for the collects for Sundays and Principal Holy Days was the series of Latin prayers preserved in the *Temporale* of the Sarum Missal and which have their origin in the ancient Roman sacramentaries. The Sarum Missal is the service book that was (strangely enough) used throughout Scotland before the Reformation, having first been established in the Scottish kingdom at Glasgow by Bishop Herbert (1147–1164).² From the Sarum Missal it was also that Thomas Cranmer derived

The work for this essay was carried out during the summer of 2015 in the Special Collections of St Andrews University Library, and the University of Dundee Archives. I am grateful indeed to Dr Glynn E. Jenkins of Gordonstoun for hosting me at his fine home in Craig during this time.

¹ The author is, at the time of writing, Convener of the Liturgy Committee of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

² *Registrum episcopatus Glasguensis* [ed. by Cosmo Innes] 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1843), 1, p. xxx, and nos. 208, 211–13, 215, 227*.

most of his collects, which are found in the present Scottish Book of Common Prayer of 1929.³

The Liturgy Committee's process and rationale in the drafting of these collects is a subject that can be left for another place, but the Sarum collects were a starting point because they represent an historic use in Scotland. They have been widely prayed over the course of many centuries, and as such may be viewed as a venerable part of the Episcopal Church's liturgical and doctrinal inheritance. Indeed, if we include their Cranmerian translations, many of them have been in continual use since the days of the early sacramentaries.

I mention this because throughout the process of drafting these collects, the work of those two most important Scottish liturgical scholars of the nineteenth century, Alexander Penrose Forbes (Bishop of Brechin from 1847 to 1875), and his brother, George Hay Forbes (priest of Burntisland, 1849 to 1875), was an imposing historical presence. For it was at the Pitsligo Press in Burntisland, Fife, founded by George Hay Forbes in the basement of his parsonage house in 1852, that their first significant work of liturgical scholarship was printed and published in 1864.

But before we proceed a brief outline of the life and careers of the Forbes brothers is called for. Their papers are preserved in the archives and special collections at the Universities of St Andrews and of Dundee, and my study of them in the Summer of 2015 forms one of the bases of this essay.

Alexander Penrose Forbes, bishop of Brechin, was the most prominent and influential adherent of the Oxford movement in Scotland, and the first to become a bishop anywhere. He came to be

³ Francis Procter & Walter Howard Frere, *A New History of the Book of Common Prayer: with a Rationale of its Offices* (London, 1902), chapter 13; Martin Dudley, *The Collect in Anglican Liturgy: Texts and Sources, 1549–1989* (Collegeville, MN, 1994), pp. 45–54; Bridget Nichols, 'The collect in English: vernacular beginnings', in *The Collect in the Churches of the Reformation*, ed. Bridget Nichols (Norwich, 2010), pp. 9–27, esp. pp. 16–23.

known as ‘A Scottish Pusey’.⁴ Indeed, it was Pusey, not Newman, who was Forbes’s hero. Having been ordained deacon in 1844 and priest in 1845, Alexander took on the incumbency of Stonehaven in 1846, moved less than a year later to a parish in Leeds, and within a few months was elected bishop of Brechin at the behest of W. E. Gladstone, in September 1847, aged 30. He held the bishopric in conjunction with the incumbency of St Paul’s, Dundee, for the rest of his life. He died in October 1875, aged 58.⁵

George Hay Forbes, Alexander’s younger brother, was his junior by four years. At the age of four, George became permanently disabled, probably as a result of polio, and had to use crutches for the rest of his life. He received no formal schooling, but read extensively in the classics and became an accomplished linguist. He was ordained deacon in 1848 and priest in 1849 (aged 28) and was appointed to the mission of Burntisland, where he spent the rest of his life and ministry. In 1852 George began the Pitsligo Press in the basement of his parsonage house, as a vehicle for his own scholarship and for high-church (as opposed to Tractarian) theological views. He devoted much energy to championing the Scottish Communion Office, the eucharistic liturgy deriving from the 1637 Scottish Book of Common Prayer. He considered that a lack of knowledge and support for the native non-juring traditions of the Scottish Episcopal Church by contemporary Episcopalian clergy exposed the Church to Anglicisation and Tractarianism. These views also caused George to disagree with his brother, Alexander. George died within a month of Alexander, in November 1875.⁶

⁴ William Perry, *The Oxford Movement in Scotland* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 64; idem, *Alexander Penrose Forbes. Bishop of Brechin. The Scottish Pusey* (London, 1939).

⁵ The standard account of Alexander’s life is Rowan Strong, *Alexander Forbes of Brechin (1817–1875): the First Tractarian Bishop* (Oxford, 1995).

⁶ The standard account of the life of George Hay Forbes is W. Perry, *George Hay Forbes: A Romance in Scholarship* (London, 1927); see also Rowan Strong, ‘Forbes, George Hay (1821–1875)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

Returning now to that first significant work of liturgical scholarship published at the Pitsligo Press: the work in question was an edition of the the Arbuthnott Missal.⁷ The Arbuthnott Missal is a fifteenth-century recension of the Sarum Missal adapted for use in the diocese of St Andrews, and it is the only surviving example from the middle ages of what might be called a ‘Scottish Use’.

In his extensive Preface to the Arbuthnott Missal, Alexander Penrose Forbes left us an insight into his ecclesiastical mindset. He outlined an argument that whatever Christianity reached the native ‘Kelts beyond the walls’, it ‘must in form and ritual have been Roman’.⁸ He went on to argue that the liturgy used by the southern Picts, as introduced by Saint Ninian, while it may have been Gallican in type, was just as likely, on the evidence of Bede, to have been Roman. Bishop Forbes then gave a detailed exposition of the surviving liturgical manuscripts from Ireland, which he argued must have had a bearing on the rites used in those parts of Scotland influenced by Columba, and making an argument that Irish liturgy was essentially Gallican in nature (in other words, was part of the family of liturgies ultimately derived from Syriac-Greek rites of Jerusalem and Antioch).

Bishop Forbes suggested that ‘even before the time of Saint Margaret’ – that is, the late eleventh century – the Gallican and

⁷ The work of cataloguing all the pre-Reformation liturgical books and manuscripts in Scotland was done around the middle of the twentieth century by David McRoberts (1912–1978), ‘Catalogue of Scottish Medieval Liturgical Books and Fragments’, *Innes Review*, 3 (1952), 49–63, revised and updated by Stephen Mark Holmes, ‘Catalogue of Liturgical Books and Fragments in Scotland before 1560’, *Innes Review*, 62 (2012), 127–212; the Arbuthnott Missal is no. 97 in Holmes’s ‘Catalogue’.

⁸ *Liber ecclesie beati Terrenani de Arbuthnott. Missale secundum usum ecclesie sancti Andreae in Scotia* [ed. by A. P. Forbes & G. H. Forbes] (Burntisland, 1864), p. iv.

Roman liturgies were used contemporaneously in Scotland, though in different parts.⁹

In making the argument that Gallican and Roman liturgies – in other words, quasi-Eastern and Roman liturgies – were used contemporaneously in early medieval Scotland, Alexander Forbes was delivering a proxy argument for the existence of two rites in nineteenth-century Scotland, that is, the English Communion Office (representing the Roman family of liturgies), and the Scottish Communion Office, which contains elements of what he would have described as the Ephesine type. He continued:

But the question arises – Was the English service which S. Margaret introduced, the Sarum Office as reformed by S. Osmund? We are inclined to think that it was most likely the common Office (so far as there was a common Office of England) that prevailed before the emendation by that illustrious prelate.¹⁰

And so he was almost providing a rationale for the historic priority of an English use throughout Scotland. He went on to expound the (correct) view that the Sarum Use was introduced into Scotland in the twelfth century by the Scottish bishops, either by their own desire, or at the ‘earnest request of their Canons and Chapters’.¹¹ He used as his example the Church of Glasgow, where Bishop Herbert (1147–1164) first settled the Sarum Use in his Church, which was confirmed by a bull of Pope Alexander III in 1172.

Forbes’s study of the Arbuthnott Missal also disproved a prevalent idea that it bore considerable traces of a late Gallicising influence. Rather, the Arbuthnott Missal, as Thomas Innes had pointed out, was simply a Sarum Missal, with a few Offices, chiefly

⁹ *Liber de Arbuthnott*, pp. lv–lvi.

¹⁰ *Liber de Arbuthnott*, p. lvi.

¹¹ *Liber de Arbuthnott*, pp. lxiii.

for national saints, being added, as was always the case when a Service of one diocese was used in a different one.¹²

George Hay Forbes and Francis Henry Dickinson (of Trinity College, Cambridge) had collated and classified the eighteen typical editions of the Sarum Missal in 121 copies and had concluded that the Arbutnott Missal appeared to agree most closely with that of 1498. In a letter to George in 1862 Alexander seemed excited to tell his brother that he had recently seen another copy of the Sarum Missal with some prayers at the end for Henry VII but he had not looked whether Thomas Becket was erased: he thought it was the edition of 1492 (which was one of the earliest printed editions).¹³

The result of George's labours in collaboration with F. H. Dickinson was an edition of the Sarum Missal based on the typical printed editions.¹⁴ (This contrasts with Wickham Legg's later edition of 1916 which collated the three earliest extant manuscripts of the missal, dating from the thirteenth century.)¹⁵ A portion of the proceeds from the sale of Dickinson and Forbes's edition of the Sarum Missal went towards the formation of the Henry Bradshaw Society in 1890 – a learned

¹² Thomas Innes, 'Of the Salisbury Liturgy used in Scotland', edited in *The Miscellany of the Spalding Club* 2 (Aberdeen, 1842), 364–7, at 365–6.

¹³ St Andrews University Library, Special Collections [SAUL], msdep19/2/306. The first printed edition of the Sarum Missal was by Michael Wenssler, Basel, 1486; the edition of 1492 was printed by Martin Morin in Rouen. The erasure of the feast day of Thomas Becket is significant because it shows the book was still in use in England after the royal proclamation of 16 November 1538 which decreed that Thomas Becket should 'be no more esteemed nor called a saint', and that 'the days used for his festival shall be no more observed, nor any part of that service be read, but that it should be razed out of all books' (printed in Gilbert Burnet, *The History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, 3 vols (Oxford, 1816), III, p. 238; calendared in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 13 Part 2, August-December 1538* (London, 1893), p. 354).

¹⁴ *Missale ad usum insignis et præclaræ Ecclesiæ Sarum*, ed. by Francis Henry Dickinson (Burntisland, 1861–83).

¹⁵ *The Sarum Missal: Edited from Three Early Manuscripts*, ed. by J. Wickham Legg (Oxford, 1916).

society which, to this day, publishes editions and facsimiles of rare liturgical texts.¹⁶

Perhaps George's greatest achievement was his *Ancient Liturgies of the Gallican Church*, 1855, 1858, 1867 (unfinished).¹⁷ In his studies he had been struck by the number of collects that are found both in the Gothic missal (the pre-Carolingian archetype of Gallican rites) and in the Leonine Sacramentary (the oldest of the Roman Sacramentaries); this correspondence also stretched across other Roman service-books, and even to the Mozarabic rite of Toledo.¹⁸ His intention was to separate out what was borrowed from the other churches from what might be considered the genuine compositions of the ancient French ritualists.¹⁹ It was this comparative method of study of these ancient liturgical texts and manuscripts that made the work of George Hay Forbes so valuable. In the Dedication, as so often with both Forbes brothers, the ideas behind his work were succinctly expressed: 'To the Hon. G. F. Boyle [it read] these Liturgies cognate to the great Eastern Family whence the Communion Office of the Church of Scotland is derived, are dedicated by the Editors'.²⁰

George had planned a translation of the Arbuthnott Missal, with the title, *The Divine Liturgy according to the Use of the Church of Scotland, translated from the only extant copy, known as the Missal of Arbuthnott*.²¹ This idea of the 'Use of the Church of Scotland' was fundamental to George's approach to the liturgy of the Episcopal Church. Indeed, there was no concession to the idea that the Established Church was the 'Church of Scotland'.

¹⁶ Anthony Ward and Cuthbert Johnson, 'The Henry Bradshaw Society: its birth and first decade, 1890–1900', *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 104 (1990), 187–200.

¹⁷ J. M. Neale & G. H. Forbes, *The Ancient Liturgies of the Gallican Church*, 3 parts (Burntisland, 1855–67).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, part 1, p. vii.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, part 1, p. [iii].

²¹ SAUL msdep 19/3/13 (George Hay Forbes to Alexander Penrose Forbes, 15 May 1863)

The term ‘Divine Liturgy’, moreover, held a strong echo of oriental Orthodox usage, and in 1865, a year after the publication of the Arbuthnott Missal, George’s brother, Alexander, produced *Ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία* [The Divine Liturgy]: *The Scottish Communion Office done into Greek* (London: Joseph Masters, 1865).²² The production of this book was not unrelated to a dispute surrounding the Scottish Communion Office that had been in process since before Alexander Forbes was elected to the see of Brechin, a controversy which had come to a head at the Synod of 1863.²³

In the Code of Canons of 1811, Canon XV was intended to secure ‘the primary authority’ of the Scottish Communion Office as the authorised service of the Church in the administration of the Holy Communion, while it ratified the permission previously granted by the bishops to retain the English Office in all congregations where it had been in use. The Scottish Communion Office was, however, ordered to be used at all consecrations of bishops, and every bishop, when consecrated, was required to give his full assent to it.

The Scottish Communion Office, it should be remembered, was the non-juring liturgy of 1764 – with no specific naming of the monarch – still used by Episcopalians. The prayer of consecration had an epiclesis, which, like the non-juring Communion Office of 1718, came in the ‘Eastern position’, after the words of institution, rather than – as in the first Prayer Book of Edward VI – before. The English Communion

²² *Ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία*, preface. The basis of this translation was that of the Anglican Liturgy into Greek by James Duport (1606–1679) who had been Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge before the Civil War. Forbes had ‘not hesitated to alter some of [Duport’s] expressions when they seemed lacking in theological precision’. In doing this, he looked to the ‘ancient liturgies’. His translation was revised by Richard Frederick Littledale (1833–1890), a learned Church of England clergyman of Irish origin, who wrote and translated many hymns.

²³ See, for example, J. Marshall, *Fragment of a Brief Defence of the Scottish Communion Office against the Attacks of the Rev. Edward Craig, the Rev. D. T. K. Drummond, and others* (Edinburgh, 1843). For a full account of Alexander Forbes’s involvement in the controversy, see Strong, *Alexander Forbes*, pp. 101–58.

Office was that of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England.²⁴

During the early 1860s, using Gladstone's powerful political support, Alexander Forbes was leading a campaign to save the use of the Scottish Communion Office, now used by only a minority of Episcopalians, from being repudiated in favour of the English Book of Common Prayer. The attempt at repudiation was an Anglicising move by the Episcopal church in a campaign to have legal disabilities on Episcopalian clergy serving in the Church of England removed by parliament. The parliamentary support of English evangelical bishops hostile to the Scottish Communion Office was deemed necessary for the campaign's success.

In the decisive Synod of 1863, it was enacted through Canon XXIX that the English Book of Common Prayer 'is, and shall be held to be, the Service Book of this Church for all the purposes to which it is applicable'. Forbes's limited measure of success, however, was that under Canon XXX the use of the Scottish Communion Office was allowed in any congregations whose existing practice had been to use it. The order for Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer was to be used in all new congregations unless representations were made to the Bishop from the beginning by a majority of the promoters of the new congregation that they wished the Scottish Office to be the use of that church. The bishop meanwhile retained authority to refuse an application for the Scottish Office if he thought undue influence had been exerted. The use of the Scottish Office could be discontinued, moreover, if the cleric and a majority of communicants agreed on the matter; but there were no corresponding provisions in respect of the 'English Office'. Finally, the order for Holy Communion from the Book of Common Prayer was stipulated for all Consecrations, Ordinations, and Synods.²⁵

²⁴ William Jardine Grisbrooke, *Anglican Liturgies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Alcuin Club Collections 40 (London, 1958), ch. 19.

²⁵ 'Ecclesiastical Law and the Code of Canons', in *Scottish Episcopal Church: Code of Canons 2017* (Edinburgh, 2017), pp. 5–31 (p. 11).

During the late spring and early summer of 1863 George had been ‘chiefly occupied’ on ‘his pamphlets against the English Prayer Book’.²⁶ Such was George’s antipathy towards the English Communion Office that, in the letter just mentioned, he informed his brother that he would ‘not be able to communicate with the synod’ when it met at St John Baptist’s chapel at Perth.

Returning now to Bishop Forbes’s translation of the Scottish Communion Office into Greek – In a letter to Alexander, written in May 1863, George wrote that,

As to the title page of the Greek S.C.O. what I demur to would be κατὰ το ἔθος της Σκωτικης εκκλησιας [‘according to the use of the Scottish Church’]. If the new canon is “received” this will be simply untrue. The English Office would then be the Office κατὰ το ἔθος, etc.

What you would need would be something like this

Λειτουργία τις ἢς ἡ χρῆσις ἔτι συγχωρεῖται εν τισι κόμαις της Σκωτικης εκκλησιας [‘The Liturgy whose use is still agreed in some parishes of the Scottish Church’]²⁷

The relevant paragraph of Canon XXX was quoted in the front matter of Bishop Forbes’s translation of the Scottish Communion Office in Greek. But what was still preoccupying George’s psyche, it seems, was the notion of the Σκωτική εκκλησία, the medieval

²⁶ SAUL msdep19/3/19 (George Hay Forbes to Alexander Penrose Forbes, 30 June 1863); the pamphlet was *Doctrinal Errors and Practical Scandals of the English Prayer Book: A Letter to the Right Rev. the Bishop of S. Andrews* (Burntisland, 1863); he was planning another on the errors of the English baptismal offices, which became ‘much more elaborate than I at first suspected’ (letter of 30 June 1863, as above), and may have emerged as *Baptism by Immersion Primitive, Scriptural, and Rubrical* (Burntisland, 1866).

²⁷ SAUL msdep19/3/13 (George Hay Forbes to Alexander Penrose Forbes, 15 May 1863).

ecclesia Scoticana, as recognised by the popes since the late twelfth century.

Likewise, as we have already noted, George's *Gallican Liturgies*, done with J. M. Neale, had in its dedication the words, 'these Liturgies cognate to that great Eastern Family whence the Communion Office of the Church of Scotland is derived'.²⁸

Bishop Forbes's translation of the Scottish Communion Office into Greek, like George's proposed translation of the Arbuthnott Missal into English, would have been without any active liturgical use; it was prepared instead with the primary intention of providing religious knowledge about Anglican liturgical practice for Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians. Likewise, we can detect ecumenical motivations – or at least ecumenical consequences – for the publication of the Arbuthnott Missal. Among the subscribers (for two copies on Fine Paper, no less) was Ambrose de Lisle (Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps de Lisle, 1809–1878), a Roman Catholic convert, who was devoted to the reunion of the churches, and had been instrumental in the foundation in 1857 of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom.²⁹ True to his vision, in writing to Bishop Forbes to subscribe to the Arbuthnott Missal, he observed,

Nothing can be more important for the furtherance of Liturgical Study, than the publication of antient and approved Ritual works, which embodying, as they do, the concurrent testimony of the different Great Churches of Xtendom, proclaim the Unity of the Faith, enhanced as it is by accidental varieties of Form and Expression.³⁰

²⁸ Neale & Forbes, *The Ancient Liturgies of the Gallican Church*, part 1, Dedication, p. [iii].

²⁹ Margaret Pawley, 'Lisle, Ambrose Lisle March Phillipps de (1809–1878), Roman Catholic layman and ecumenist', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

³⁰ SAUL, msdep19/2/32 (Grace Dieu Manor, 27 May 1857).

Indeed, Bishop Forbes also had a well-known and close friendship with E. B. Pusey, who was heavily involved in endeavours to reunite not only the Church of England with Rome, but also the Anglicans, Lutherans and Old Catholics with the Orthodox. Indeed, one of Alexander's liturgical collaborators was a Belgian Jesuit and Bollandist, Victor de Buck, who suggested that Forbes should go in person to a proposed council on reunion with Rome, taking Pusey as his theologian.

It is in this context, then, that we might view both Bishop Forbes's translation of the Scottish Communion Office into Greek, and also his essay 'On Greek Rites in the West'. In this short article, Alexander collected Greek usages in western rites. An obvious example, familiar to all, would be that, 'In all the services of the Latin Church, the *preces* immediately before the Lord's Prayer are always in Greek. Men do not say *Domine Miserere* but *Kyrie eleison*'.³¹ Bishop Forbes's theme, however, was really Christian unity, rather than Greek liturgy.

Indirectly [– he wrote–], such questions are most important, in view of the mighty process of Reunion which is stirring the hearts of men, as the weariness and the doubts of three centuries of division are becoming intolerable ... And surely, in the great restoration of Church Unity, to which the prayers of so many earnest thinkers and pious Christians are directed, the great question of language will come to be considered ... the scanty hints we have gathered together here of the relations between the Greek and Latin tongues in the worship of God, will stand as precedents for that mighty *unia*, which shall express in that blessed hour the religious emotions of all Catholic Christians³²

³¹ 'On Greek rites in the West', in *The Church and the World. Essays on Questions of the Day in 1867*, ed. by Orby Shipley (London, 1867), pp. 145–65 (p. 145).

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 164–5.

The last of the great liturgical works published before the death of the Forbes brothers within a month of each other in October and November 1875 was *Kalendars of Scottish Saints*, which appeared in 1872. Its subtitle was, *With personal notices of those of Alba, Laudonia, & Strathclyde. An Attempt to fix the Districts of their several Missions and the Churches where they were chiefly had in Remembrance.*

It is an important work of liturgical scholarship, and an early example of the scientific study of liturgical kalendars. Bishop Forbes's deductions about the careers of saints are interesting, but now entirely outdated in their assumptions and technique. *Kalendars of Scottish Saints* remains, however, an important work of reference for anyone interested in the liturgical history of Scotland.

Hints of Alexander's anglicising tendencies, and sympathies, over against his brother's tendency towards Scottish exceptionalism, re-emerge in the Preface. He argues that the Culross kalendar is a witness to the complete 'Anglicanisation' [sic] of the Scottish Church which took place after the epoch of S. Margaret, since so few of the Celtic saints occur among its entries. Perhaps what he had forgotten to do was to compare this kalendar of a Cistercian house with that of other Cistercian houses.

His is a somewhat typical line taken by historians of the Celtic-speaking peoples. There was a common thesis, which prevailed until very recently, that new monastic orders, penetrating the Celtic-speaking lands during the twelfth century, swept away devotion to native saints. In fact, the opposite was often the case.³³ In the first

³³ For the case as it applied to Wales, see John Reuben Davies, 'The Cult of Saints in the Early Welsh March: Aspects of Cultural Transmission in a time of Political Conflict', in *The English Isles: Cultural Transmission and Political Conflict in Britain and Ireland, 1100–1500*, ed. by Seán Duffy and Susan Foran (Dublin, 2013), pp. 37–55; for a particular aspect of the twelfth-century Scottish context, see John Reuben Davies, 'Bishop Kentigern among the Britons', in *Saints' Cults in the Celtic World*, ed. by Steve Boardman, John Reuben Davies & Eila Williamson (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 66–90.

place, Forbes was comparing twelfth- and thirteenth-century kalendars of religious houses in Scotland with very early kalendars from Ireland. Secondly, one might reasonably argue that an Augustinian kalendar from Holyrood that contained Monan, Baldred, Duthac, Kessog, Constantine, and Ninian was rather highly localised.

Alexander Forbes rediscovered the Drummond Missal, a late-twelfth-century book of Irish provenance, in the Library at Drummond Castle in 1861.³⁴ It was George who did all the work preparing an edition for the press, however, and it was published posthumously. Likewise, the Pontifical of David de Bernham, a thirteenth-century bishop of St Andrews, was published in 1885 under the Pitsligo imprint, but in Edinburgh, not Burntisland. It is essentially a book of pontifical services of the type used at Canterbury, and a similar twelfth-century pontifical still survives from Glasgow (London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius B. VIII). George had prepared only six sheets of *The Pontifical Offices Used by David de Bernham* for the press by the time of his death: Christopher Wordsworth (1807–1885), the bishop of Lincoln, supervised the rest of the work.

One of the results of the Oxford Movement in England was a greatly increased interest in the pre-Reformation missals in use at York, Hereford, and Sarum. It was as part of this first wave of interest in such medieval liturgical books that the Forbes brothers began their publishing endeavours, but they also wanted to place the Scottish liturgical tradition in what Alexander thought of as on the one side closely linked to that of England but, as George would be keen to stress, also significantly influenced by Gallican and Greek elements.

³⁴ *Missale Drummondense: The Ancient Irish Missal in the Possession of the Baroness Willoughby de Eresby, Drummond Castle, Perthshire*, ed. by G. H. Forbes (Burntisland, 1882).

There was a large component in the Forbes brothers' endeavours of concern for the unity of Christendom. They showed how Scottish liturgical practice fitted into a Scottish ecclesiastical tradition, as well as into a more universal liturgical patrimony. Approval not just for their scholarly publications, but also for the Scottish Communion Office, of which George was the greatest champion of his day, came from continental Catholic scholars and clergy. And, indeed, the work of the Forbes brothers could be said to have been an ecumenical project in its own right. They were fully enmeshed in the network of scholarship in all fields. Cardinal Pitra of the Vatican Library, Jacques-Paul Migne of the series of Latin and Greek Patrologies, Victor de Buck of the *Acta Sanctorum*, the Abbé Francois Marie Bertrand of the *Dictionnaire universel historique et comparatif de toutes les religions du monde*, as well as the Celtic Scholars, W. F. Skene, William Reeves, Whitley Stokes, and the medievalists, Arthur West Haddan, James Raine, Cosmo Innes, Joseph Stephenson, and Henry Bradshaw, were all correspondents and collaborators in the Forbes brothers' liturgical project. 'What a world of your own you must be living in!', wrote John Henry Newman in a bad-tempered letter to George.³⁵ But in fact both George and Alexander's interactions with the most learned historical minds of mid-nineteenth-century Europe and the British Isles shored up the scholarly bulwarks that have supported the distinctive, catholic, liturgical tradition which has continued to the present time in the Scottish Episcopal Church.

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³⁵ SAUL msdep19/4/102 (John Henry Newman to George Hay Forbes, 11 August 1871, rebuking Forbes for his criticism of his essay on justification).