

# TRAVELS OF THE YOUNG PRETENDER

Joseph Yorke (1724–1792), Secretary to the British Embassy in Paris (1749–1751)

to John Russell (1710–1771), **Duke of Bedford**, Secretary of State for the Southern Department (1748–1751)

*The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748). In this treaty, the French recognized the Hanoverian claim to the English Throne and promised to expel Charles Stuart (1720–1788), the Young Pretender, from France. On 10 December 1748, several French musketeers arrested and bound Charles. The Young Pretender left Paris four days later, and France itself on 23 December, travelling to the Papal state of Avignon. Within a few months, he left Avignon and travelled widely across Europe, moving every few months until he settled in Rome in 1766.*

Paris, 8 March 1749 [NS]

The news of this place has been for some days past, that the Pretender's son<sup>1</sup> has been obliged to leave Avignon. His sudden departure from that place was said to have arisen from the apprehensions the Pope<sup>2</sup> was under that the Port of Civita Vecchia was threatened with a bombardment by an English fleet. The Pope's Legate<sup>3</sup> was reported to have gone to him and to have represented that under the present circumstances it was impossible for him to continue his residence at Avignon. The same accounts added that the Pretender's son had affected to take no notice of the Legate's representations, but that notwithstanding, he had thought proper to leave the town one evening after a ball which was made for him.

Whatever was his intention at the time these first letters left Avignon, he seems not to have adhered to it; for I am told for certain that he is now returned to that place and even talks of continuing there. He has written to this town that the reports the French ministry had raised of his having given his parole of honour to cross the Alps are not founded, for that he was not even asked to give it. I am however inclined, I own, to believe that he did, and the officer that conducted him to Pont de Beauvoisin<sup>4</sup> insists upon it.

From what I had the honour to write to Your Grace formerly of my conversation with Monsieur Puisieux,<sup>5</sup> I am disposed to believe the French ministry do not mean he should continue there. I intend in my next conversation with Monsieur Puisieux to talk further with him on the subject, and will take care to give Your Grace the earliest information possible of that Minister's answers.

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**Sir Horace Mann** (1706–1786), British Minister in Florence (1740–1765)

to John Russell (1710–1771), **Duke of Bedford**, Secretary of State for the Southern Department (1748–1751)

Florence, 28 August 1750 [NS]

It has given me great concern that, notwithstanding the utmost diligence and infinite pains that I have taken to discover where the Pretender's eldest son conceals himself, I have not been able to get any information about him. All my correspondents at Rome persisting in the same story that the Pretender himself nor any of his adherents there knew anything of him.

I wrote to Cardinal Albani<sup>6</sup> very lately on the same subject, who by the last post acquainted me that it was certain that nobody there knew anything of him, and that in an interview which he himself had a few days before with the Pretender's second son, the Cardinal,<sup>7</sup> the latter enquired with great earnestness about his brother and desired

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Edward Stuart (1720–1788), the Young Pretender

<sup>2</sup> Benedict XIV (1675–1758), Pope (1740–1758)

<sup>3</sup> Pascal Acquaviva d'Aragona (1718–1788), Papal Vice-Legate in Avignon (1744–1754)

<sup>4</sup> A small village on the French-Savoy border

<sup>5</sup> Louis Philogène Brûlart (1702–1770), Marquis de Puisieux, French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (1747–1751)

<sup>6</sup> Alessandro Albani (1692–1779), a strongly pro-Hanoverian Cardinal resident in Rome

<sup>7</sup> Henry Benedict Stuart (1725–1807), Cardinal York

Cardinal Albani, as a particular favour, to try by the means of his friends and correspondents, to discover where he resides. He owned to him that the Pretender his father now and then received a letter from him, sometimes by one and sometimes by another, with news of his health only, but that those letters were never dated nor any mention made of the place whence they came, adding that the Father was quite in despair. Cardinal Albani assures me that he was fully persuaded there was no mystery or deceit in the young Cardinal's discourse, and concludes by saying that if his father and the Pope (who is equally curious to be informed of him) cannot succeed, it is no wonder that other people cannot discover where he is.

I have frequently acquainted my Lord Albemarle<sup>1</sup> with the opinion that he was concealed in Lorraine, but His Excellency has constantly replied that he has not been able to get the least information of it. I have likewise employed some Lorrainers here who have relations in that country, but all to no purpose. And very lately hearing that he was concealed in a Convent at Bologna, I used various means to make enquiries, by the means of priests and others, but to no better purpose; nor indeed is it probable that he would choose that place to conceal himself, as the Court of Rome would be so soon informed of it.

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**Sir Horace Mann** (1706–1786), British Minister in Florence (1740–1765)  
to **William Pitt** (1708–1778), Secretary of State for the Southern Department (1757–1761)

Florence, 3 October 1761 [NS]

By a very fortunate accident I have information by undoubted authority that the Pretender's eldest son lives for the most part of the year in the Bishopric of Liege, at a house in the country, not far from a hunting seat of that Prince, though he frequently makes excursions from thence. He commonly goes to Paris in the Carnival; at other times he goes into Switzerland and to other places, but always disguised and under a different name from that he goes by when he is at his house near Liege, which is Smith.

He has only with him Mr. Sullivan and a few servants out of livery. The woman he had with him and by whom he had a child,<sup>2</sup> being provoked by bad usage, ran away from him about a year ago, and took refuge in a convent. This affected him much, and he wrote a letter to the King of France<sup>3</sup> to beg that he would give orders that she should be sent back to him; but the King acquainted him that he could not force the inclination of anybody in that situation.

Since that accident he is said to be very melancholy and to have taken more to drinking than usual. He has totally discontinued of late writing to his father, from whom he had not received any money since the former yielded to him the money he had in the public funds at Paris ever since the late Regent's time, which I am told amounted to a revenue of between 400.000 and 500.000 French livres. He has several servants at Paris, others at Avignon and in other places, to whom he allows salaries and pensions.

By some dispositions that were made by his orders at Rome when the Pretender was dangerously ill, it was supposed that in case of his death, he would have gone thither, though probably not to fix there, as he has so great an aversion to his brother.

Philip Henry Stanhope, *The Decline of the Last Stuarts* (London: W. Nicol, 1843):1–2, 10–11, 19–20.

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<sup>1</sup> George Keppel (1724–1772), Earl of Albemarle

<sup>2</sup> Clementina Walkinshaw (1720–1802) became the Young Pretender's mistress in 1752. They had a daughter Charlotte in 1753. In 1760, she left Charles to join a convent, bringing their daughter with her.

<sup>3</sup> Louis XV (1710–1774), King of France (1715–1774)