

JOURNEY TO SCOTLAND

Charles I (1600–1649), King of England and Scotland (1625–1649)

to Archibald Campbell (1607–1661), Marquess of Argyll

James Graham (1612–1650), Marquess of Montrose, commanded Covenanter forces against the King during the First and Second Bishop's War (1639–1640, 1640). Montrose came to suspect his fellow commander, the Marquess of Argyll, was working to usurp royal authority in Scotland. Montrose therefore drew up the Cumbernauld Bond, a secret agreement with many Covenanters to defend their principles against Argyll's machinations. In 1641, Committee of Estates, Scotland's governing body, captured correspondence between Montrose and Charles I, resulting in the former's imprisonment on suspicion of treason.

Whitehall, 12 June 1641

I am informed that one Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, employed here (as it is said) by the Earl of Montrose, has deponed something of his dealing with Traquair,¹ and that by him I should have given assurance of disposing of some vacant places to such persons as were joined in a late bond with the Earl of Montrose, thereby insinuating that my journey to Scotland was only desired and procured by Montrose and Traquaire, and likewise that my intent therein is rather to make and forder parties than to receive from and give contentment to my subjects. Now since that (by the grace of God) I have resolved of my journey to Scotland, it makes me the more curious that my actions and intentions be not misconceived by my subjects there.

Therefore in the first place, I think fit to tell you that I intend my journey to Scotland for the settling of the affairs of that Kingdom, according to the articles of the treaty and in such a way as may establish the affections of my people fully to me. And I am so far from intending division by my journey that I mean so to establish peace in state, and religion in the Church, that there may be a happy harmony amongst my subjects there.

Secondly, I never made any particular promise for the disposing of any places in that Kingdom, but means to dispose them for the best advantage of my service, and therein I hope to give satisfaction to my subjects. And as for my letter to Montrose, I do avow it as fit for me to write, both for the matter and the person to whom it is written, who, for anything I yet know, is no wise unworthy of such a favour.

Thus having cleared my intentions to you as my particular servant, I expect that as occasion may serve, you may help to clear those mistakes of me which upon this occasion may arise.

Lastly, for the preparations for my coming home I do rather mention it to show the constant resolution of my journey than in any doubt of your diligence therein. And so I rest your assured friend.

Alexander MacDonald, ed. *Letters to the Argyll Family from Elizabeth, Queen of England, Mary, Queen of Scots, King James VI, King Charles I, King Charles II, and Others* (Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1839):36–37.

¹ John Stewart (–1659), Earl of Traquair, Lord High Treasurer of Scotland (1636–1641) and long-time ally of Charles I