

Letter of King James VII to the Scottish Convention

March 1, 1689

[King James VII](#) wrote this letter while he was aboard the St Michael on the way to Ireland. It was alleged¹⁾ that [Melfort](#) intercepted the letter that [Viscount Dundee](#) and other Privy Council members had asked him to send and substituted this less than helpful version in its place. It was delivered to the Scottish Convention on March 16, 1689, by a certain Mr Craine. Before opening the letter, the Convention voted an act declaring itself a free and lawful meeting.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Whereas we have been informed that you the peers and representatives of the shires and boroughs of that our Ancient Kingdom who are to meet together at our good town of Edinburgh some time in this instant March by the usurped authority of the [Prince of Orange](#), we think fit to let you know that we have at all times relied upon the faithfulness and affection of your our Ancient People, so much that in our greatest misfortunes heretofore we had recourse to your assistance and that with good success to our affairs.

So now again we require of you to support our royal interest, expecting from you what becomes loyal and faithful subjects, generous and honest men, that will neither suffer yourselves to be cajoled nor frightened into any action misbecoming true-hearted Scotsmen. And that to support the honour of the nation, you will condemn the base examples of disloyal men and eternise your names by a loyalty suitable to the many professions you have to us. In doing whereof you will choose the safest part, since thereby you will avoid the danger you must needs undergo, the infamy and disgrace you must bring upon yourselves in this world, and the condemnation due to the rebellious in the next, and you will likewise have the opportunity to secure to yourselves and your posterity, the gracious promises which we have so often made of securing your religion, laws, properties, and rights, which we are still resolved to perform as soon as it is possible for us to meet you safely in a Parliament of our Ancient Kingdom.

In the meantime, fear not to declare for us your lawful sovereign, who will not fail on our part to give you such speedy and powerful assistance as shall not only enable you to defend yourselves from any foreign attempt, but put you in a condition to assert our right against our enemies, who have depressed the same by the blackest of usurpations, the most unjust as well as most unnatural attempts, which the Almighty God may for a time permit and let the wicked prosper, yet then must bring confusion upon such workers of iniquity.

We further let you know, that we will pardon all such as shall return to their duty before the last day of this month inclusive; and that we will punish with the rigour of our laws all such as shall stand in rebellion against us or our authority. So not doubting that you will declare for us, and suppress whatever may oppose our interest, and that you will send some of your number to us with an account of your diligence, and the posture of our affairs; we bid you heartily farewell.

Given on board the St. Michael, March 1, 1689.

By His Majesty's Command, [Melfort](#).

A printed version of the text can be found on pages 52-56 of Royal Tracts (Paris: Printed for Estienne Lucas, 1692) (Wing J384).

¹⁾
“Bonnie Dundee: John Grahame of Claverhouse”, Andrew Murray Scott, ISBN 0859765326

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