ARTICLES

THE EARLS OF ARGYLL AND THE REFORMATION

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Of all the countries that accepted the Reformation in the sixteenth century Scotland was probably the most unlikely. With a turbulent nobility, a corrupt church and a relatively poor economy there seemed to be little chance that a radical religious and social reform would take place. Yet Scotland experienced a religious and intellectual revolution that drastically altered its whole orientation. One of the reasons for the success of the movement was that a strong group of nobles gave their constant support to the new religious beliefs. Among this element none were more important than the fourth and fifth earls of Argyll.¹

Among the peers of the realm as among the lesser nobility reactions to the Reformation varied considerably. While the recently created earls such as Glencairn, Rothes and Eglinton seem to have accepted the new doctrines quickly, the representatives of the older houses took their time. Some, such as Huntly, remained firmly Roman Catholic while others seemed to hesitate as to what their response should be. The fourth earl of Argyll and his son, later the fifth earl, were exceptions and early in the day took their stand on the Protestant side.

Yet while they were, in matters of religion, followers of Knox's doctrines, this did not mean that they also adhered to his political views. In fact their religious beliefs seem to have exercised relatively little influence on their political actions. They followed what one might describe as a rather zig-zag political course that caused even themselves, to say nothing of those looking to them for guidance and direction at times, a certain amount of confusion. Both earls were loyal to a monarchy that sought to stem the tide of Protestantism. This comes out clearly in the support that the fifth earl gave to Mary Queen of Scots,

¹ A considerable amount of the source material used in this article has come from the Muniments of the Duke of Argyll to which the author was given access in Inveraray Castle, Argyllshire, Scotland by the father of the present duke.
after her imprisonment in Loch Leven Castle in 1567. His actions brought him into direct conflict with some of his former allies, such as John Knox and the Earl of Moray.

This apparent contradiction between religious beliefs and political loyalty and action characterized a number of the nobles. The lines of religious division were, despite Knox's clearly defined position, still quite fluid. Those who accepted the new doctrines did not immediately recognize their implications in the political or even the moral spheres. Consequently they kept on very much as they had before, only gradually coming to recognize that their Protestantism had something to say concerning the whole of life. In this the earls of Argyll were typical. Therefore, a study of their relations to the Reformation during the period 1543-73, will provide something of an understanding of both their importance in the Reformation and of the reactions and difficulties of many of the Protestant Scottish nobility of the day.

To understand the part played by the earls of Argyll in the Reformation, and also to obtain some idea of the reasons for their policies, one must attempt to appreciate something of their position within the country.

Surviving records indicate that successive earls did everything they could to gain control of the whole of Argyllshire. By one means or another they succeeded in obtaining land-grants to become the dominant power throughout the area. One of the districts to which successive earls devoted much of their attention was the jurisdiction of Cowal where, by 1560, they seem to have held most of the property. Not content with controlling Argyll the earls also followed an expansionist policy during the first half of the sixteenth century by which in private deals of one sort or another they gradually accumulated lands to the south in Dumbartonshire and Ayrshire, and to the east through Clackmannan, Stirlingshire, Perthshire to Fife on the north shore of

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4 *H.M.C.* IV: 483, 484; *R.M.S.* IV no 230; *A.T.*, V 16.
the Forth and Haddington⁶ on the south. Added to this they also obtained properties in the north in Inverness.⁷ In this way the earls of Argyll, far from being owners of just rulers of poor lands in the Highlands, had extensive holdings spread throughout the whole country, furnishing them with broad based economic and political powers.

From the beginning of the reign of James IV royal grants of lands were constantly being made to the earls. Furthermore, the monarchs repeatedly consolidated Campbell lands they had obtained either by royal gift or by private arrangement, into free baronies and lordships. Kintyre, Knapdale, Tarbert, parts of Skye and a number of the western isles all fell into Argyll hands and they brought with them not only economic resources but many other privileges and perquisites.⁸ One notices an increase in Campbell lands in the Lowland areas also when the crown was having certain political difficulties. For instance, after the exile and forfeiture of the Earl of Angus in 1528 Argyll received Angus's Barony of Abernethy. Then following the forfeiture of the Earl of Lennox other properties came into Argyll’s hands including some islands in Loch Lomond and other properties in Fife.⁹ In this way the crown assisted the earls in their expansionism. Unfortunately no financial documents are in existence which would give an indication of the earl's annual income during this period.

Economic wealth however, by itself did not provide the only power necessary for a great Highland magnate. With James IV's destruction of the Lordship of the Isles he had created a political vacuum which the monarchy itself could not fill, with the result that in fact the earls of Argyll took over the function of the Lord of the Isles without his title. They did this in the first instance by signing "bonds of

⁵ These included the Barony of Abernethy. H.M.C., IV: I, 484; R.M.S., II: 3783; III: 716, 1318, 1733; IV: 641, 834.

⁶ H.M.C., IV: I, 483, 484; R.M.S. III: 564, 565, 3290; A.T., III: 42, 125, 130, 210; V: 35.

⁷ H.M.C., IV: I, 479, 482; R.M.S., II: 3509; A.T., III: 147, 155. Most of these lands were in the Lordship of Lochaber.

⁸ H.M.C., IV: I, 473 ff; A.T., IV: 96; V: 17, 36; Argyll Letters (Inverary), II: no. 2.

⁹ R.M.S., III: nos. 3291, 3300; IV: 1327; Argyll Inventory, 1671, p. 45.
manrent" with various nobles and chieftains who promised their loyalty and support in return for protection and assistance. From 1513 the earls entered into such agreements with many individuals, for example, the Captain of Clan Ranald, McAllister of Morar and Glengarry, MacDougall of Raray, Sir Hugh Campbell of Calder, McNeill of Gigha, Ninian Stewart sheriff of Bute and Arran, Ross of Balnagowan, Farquhar Bishop of the Isles, and Calrachen O'Donnel who held land in both Scotland and Ireland. With those who were their equals the earls signed bonds of friendship and maintenance such as the earls of Angus, Huntly and Menteith, and David, Cardinal Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews. Marriage also helped to strengthen their hands. The fourth earl, for instance, married first, the daughter of the Earl of Arran then the daughter of the Earl of Menteith and finally Katherine MacLean daughter of Hector MacLean of Duart. He also arranged to marry his children off satisfactorily: his son and heir to Jean Stewart, illegitimate daughter of James V and half sister of Queen Mary, his second son Colin to a daughter of Lord Methven, and three daughters to important Highland chieftains: one to Torquil MacLeod, eighth chief of Lewis, a second to Tormod MacLeod twelfth chief of Harris and Dunvegan and a third to Hector MacLean of Duart. Usually the political aspects of these marriages were cemented by bonds of manrent and maintenance by which means Argyll's power was extended widely not only in the Highlands but throughout much of Scotland as a whole.

That the crown felt it necessary to support the house of Argyll officially in its effort to replace the Lord of the Isles became evident very soon after the lordship had been dissolved. In 1500 the Earl of Argyll was made lieutenant-general of the lordship, only Islay and

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Kintyre being exempted from his authority. Within four years even this restriction had been removed and Tarbet had been added to his jurisdiction. In 1516 the whole of the western isles along with much of the western mainland were under the earl's control. In 1518 the earl became justiciar of Breadaibane, this later being extended to include Rannoch and Glenlyon as far as Balquhidder. By 1528 he had received the justiciary of Lothian, Teviotdale, the Merse and Lauderdale.\(^{15}\)

Then in 1542, not long before his death James V made these offices hereditary and five years later his widow Mary of Guise gave the earl the same office in Perth, Forfar and Kincardine to be held at her pleasure.\(^{16}\) In 1552 he also became baillie of Trotternish and Uist which gave him a firm foothold in the Isles.\(^{17}\) Coupled with these offices went the captaincy of numerous castles including Dunoon, Dunaverty, Dunstaffnage, and Tarbet.\(^{18}\) The earls of Argyll also received various royal commissions to deal with special matters. Not only were they given the responsibility of renting royal lands in the western isles but they were often ordered to pursue clans such as the MacGregors, the MacDonalds or the MacLeods 'with fire and sword' for depredations they had committed.\(^{19}\) All these offices and commissions were subordinate, however, to the offices that the earls held at court. While these were to a certain extent honorific, they nevertheless gave both prestige and a certain amount of authority. From the fifteenth century the earls of Argyll had been Masters of the Household to which office was added Master of the Royal Wine Cellar. More important still they also were created the Justices General of the Kingdom in 1514 which gave them rights and authority throughout the country.\(^{20}\)

With all of these properties, alliances and offices also went a large amount of influence within the church. As lords of numerous

\(^{15}\) *H.M.C.*, IV: I, 585, 487.


\(^{17}\) Grant, *MacLeods*, 93 ff, 12ff.

\(^{18}\) *H.M.C.*, IV: I, 477, 484, 488; *R.M.S.*, III: 527.

\(^{19}\) *H.M.C.*, IV: I, 487f; VI: 614; *A.T.*, V: 5.

baronies and lordships the ears of Argyll had wide rights of patronage
in the various parish churches throughout the west Highlands and
Islands as well as in the lands they held in central and eastern Scotland.
Furthermore by virtue of the offices of justiciaries they could help or
hinder the work of the church by their enforcement of the laws,
especially those dealing with heresy. This all placed the ears in a
crucial position with regard to the Reformation.

On December 14, 1542 James V died in despair and frustration
leaving behind as heir a young daughter and a sadly divided country.
Almost immediately a dispute arose over who should be regent, the two
principal candidates being James Hamilton, Earl of Arran backed by an
Anglophile party and Cardinal Beaton supported by the Queen Dowager
and the pro-French element. For the time being Arran achieved the
doubtful honor of the regency, imprisoned the cardinal, restored the
exiled Earl of Angus and his followers, relaxed some of the laws against
heretics and arranged for the marriage of Queen Mary to Edward,
Henry VIII's heir apparent. Naturally Beaton and Mary of Guise were
opposed to much of this, but particularly to the marriage of the young
queen to Prince Edward. Without too much difficulty they won over a
good many of the nobles to their anti-Arran faction. Among those who
joined this opposition was Archibald, 4th Earl of Argyll who at the same
time received a gift of lands in the barony of Muckhart from the
Cardinal. 21 His opposition to Arran was apparently the result of
conviction for he worked hard to bring the pro-English lords over to the
Cardinal's and Dowager Queen's side. In this he received material
assistance by the arrogance of Henry VIII who quickly antagonized his
strongest supporters with the result that Argyll was able to bring about
a reconciliation of all parties at Greenside in January 1544. 22 The
treaty of Greenwich signed with England in July of the preceding year
had been repudiated by the Scottish parliament and the Scots, now
somewhat more united, set themselves to resist the inevitable blasts
from the south of the border.

The apparent unification of the Scots proved, however, to be
rather ephemeral. Henry's envoy, Sadler, had reported even before

21 A.T., IV: 128; S.P., I: 339; The Scotish Correspondence of Mary of Lorraine, ed. A.L.
Cameron (Edinburgh: Scotish History Society, 1937), 14, 20; A Diurnal of Remarkable
Occurents (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1833), 28ff.

22 Scottish Correspondence, no. XLVI.
Greenside that Argyll had become somewhat disenchanted with the Cardinal and Mary of Guise, which may be the explanation for Argyll's efforts to achieve unity.\(^{23}\) By April 1544 Lennox having come into conflict with Beaton was in exile and Argyll had received orders to seize Glencairn's house because of his pro-English actions. But gradually Beaton's supporters were moving once again over to the side of Arran who could report in October that Huntly, Marshall and Argyll had all changed sides.\(^{24}\)

Meanwhile important events followed each other thick and fast. In 1544 and 1545 Henry launched vicious attacks upon Scotland without much positive result. In 1546 Cardinal Beaton caused the execution of George Wishart and in turn was murdered in St. Andrews Castle. The assassins then took over the castle and called on England for help. Although the Regent Arran probably shed few tears over Beaton's sudden demise he nevertheless had the responsibility of retaking St. Andrews. This he probably hoped to do with his own and his supporters' forces. Argyll promised some 8,000 men and others brought their contingents.\(^{25}\) The siege was, however, half-hearted and finally was only brought to an end in July 1547 by a French fleet which came primarily at the request of the Queen Dowager.

English policies throughout this period showed a complete lack of understanding of the Scots and their wishes. Instead of seeking to win their friendship they endeavoured to force them into submission. Consequently the Protector Somerset who had assumed power on Henry's death now sought to gain control of the firths of Forth and Tay by seizing Inchcolm and Haddington on the former and Broughty Crag on the latter. Arran and Queen Mary both appealed to France for help in this difficult situation, but Argyll urged immediate action by the Scots themselves to capture Broughty and also to harass the pro-English Protestant lairds. In this advice he had the support of the clergy who promised £5,000 while he himself on November 9 brought 10,000 men

\(^{23}\) *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.* (London,) XVIII, 2, 483.

\(^{24}\) *H.M.C.,* 488, no. 281; *Scottish Correspondence*, nos. LXXIV, LXXXVI.

\(^{25}\) *Calendar of the State Papers relating to Scotland and Mary, Queen of Scots 1547-1603,* (C.S.P. Scot) edd J. Bain and others (Edinburgh 1898-1969), I: nos. 10, 19.
to Perth to assist in the siege of Broughty.\textsuperscript{26} At this point the confusion becomes worse confounded. While Argyll was ostensibly seeking to drive out the English even launching a futile attack against the Crag he was at the same time, negotiating with the English and the Anglophile Protestant lords for assistance in the capture of Edinburgh Castle and the kidnapping of the new Archbishop of St. Andrews, John Hamilton. Furthermore, Lord Gray who was pro-English borrowed 1,000 crowns with which he bribed Argyll to leave Broughty taking with him all the artillery. By February Argyll had retired to his own lands apparently quite confused as to his future policies.\textsuperscript{27}

Involved in this confusion was the question of young Queen Mary's marriage to Edward VI. Just about the time that Argyll withdrew from Broughty, Lord Gray reported that Argyll was "awfullie" given to the idea of the marriage. As a result of this Somerset sought to confirm the earl in his position by the offer of a present and a pension. He urged him, if possible to have Mary sent to England, but if he could not do this to stay in his own country and support neither Mary of Guise nor Arran.\textsuperscript{28} Word of Argyll's possible defection leaked out, however, forcing him to make a vigorous disclaimer of any pro-English sentiment. Yet since he was quite disenchanted with both France and the Governor he was willing to continue talking with Somerset's envoy who commented that he was "greedy of geres, desyrous of auctoritie and impatient of perteners". Apparently further double-dealing now took place for Gray seems to have revealed to both Governor and Queen Dowager his dealings with Argyll, which put the latter in an awkward position.\textsuperscript{29} All parties immediately began to work to obtain his support, but finally he threw in his lot with Arran, providing assistance for an attack upon English-held Haddington.\textsuperscript{30} Furthermore he had apparently come to the conclusion, bribed by the

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{26} Ibid., 88, 91, 94.
\bibitem{27} Ibid., 119, 134, 148; Scottish Correspondence, CXLIX, CL. It may be that the reason for Argyll's retreat was that he was running out of funds with which to pay his troops. This is indicated by the fact that on February 16th he acknowledged receiving 3375 livres for the hire of his soldiers. A.T., IV: 190; C.S.P., Scot, I: no. 176.
\bibitem{28} Ibid., 150, 177.
\bibitem{29} Ibid., 180, 186, 192, 199, 202.
\bibitem{30} Ibid., nos. 263, 274; Scottish Correspondence, CLXX, CLXXII, CLXXIV, CLXXIX.
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Order of the Cockle according to Knox, that the young queen should be sent to France.\textsuperscript{31} Thus, despite all the English hopes, flattery and offers of bribes, and the French failure to keep their promises Argyll supported the now pro-French governor.\textsuperscript{32}

Argyll’s actions at this time raised the important question of his attitude to the Reformation. Was he now a Protestant? In 1544 he was undoubtedly still a Roman Catholic since on April 9, 1544 he granted to the vicar of Kevir certain lands on the Island of Lismore in honour of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary and "our patron Moluag", hardly a Protestant type of action.\textsuperscript{33} By 1552 his views had changed. Completely disgusted with Arran’s incompetence he had supported Mary of Guise’s successful bid for the governorship. But when Mary, having taken over the country’s direction, then ordered the Protestants, who had supported her to conform to Roman Catholicism, Argyll with James Stewart, Prior of St. Andrews and later Earl of Moray, appeared before her to protest against this decree.\textsuperscript{34} In taking this stand Argyll made his Protestant views known quite clearly indicating that he already had reached firm conclusions on the matter. It may be therefore that he had converted to Protestantism about 1548 and if so he would be one of the first of his rank to do so.\textsuperscript{35}

According to Knox the person largely responsible for the fourth earl’s change of heart was John Douglas, who somewhat later preached in Leith. The earl employed him as the tutor for his son and heir and followed his advice in reforming many things in the church. Douglas also preached in the earl’s home, apparently establishing one of the first “privy kirks.” The Archbishop of St. Andrews protested to Argyll about


\textsuperscript{32} C.S.P., Scot, I: 345; Scottish Correspondence, CCXIX, CCXLIII.

\textsuperscript{33} Reliquiae Antiquae Scoticae, (Edinburgh, 1848), 150

\textsuperscript{34} A.F. Stewart, Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill, (London, 1929), 51.

\textsuperscript{35} S.P., I: 339.
Douglas's actions, but the earl refused to pay any attention.\footnote{\textit{Knox, History}, I: 125, 138.}

In 1556 Knox, who had recently become minister of the English congregation in Geneva, visited Scotland. He did not however, travel incognito, for he moved around the country proclaiming Protestant doctrine and attacking the Roman Church which actions made him very unpopular with the authorities. Despite the disfavour in which he stood, however, the Earl of Argyll invited him to pay a visit to Castle Campbell at Dollar where he heard him preach and conferred with him on various matters. Then, when Knox decided to return to his congregation in Geneva, Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, perhaps at the earl's suggestion, tried to persuade him to stay in Scotland. Consequently it would seem quite clear that the Campbells, led by their chief were by this time well-disposed to the new doctrines.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, I: 123; T.M'Crie, \textit{Life of Knox}, 6th ed. (Edinburgh, 1839), 304.}

Meanwhile the forces of opposition to Protestantism were organizing. The Counter-Reformation was taking form on the Continent and the war between France and Spain was drawing to a close, all of which encouraged the anti-Protestant element in Scotland. The Protestant strategy for meeting this threat was the establishment of an informal agreement, by which the leaders in 1556 bound themselves to support each other in their defence of "the true preaching of the evangel of Jesus Christ", formalising this arrangement by a band of maintenance in December 1557, the first signature appended thereto being that of the Earl of Argyll, followed a little later on by that of his son and heir, Lord Lorne.\footnote{\textit{Knox, History}, I: 136.} Because they claimed that they represented the Congregation of Christ in Scotland, covenanted together to serve Him, the signatories henceforth were known as "the Lords of the Congregation" and represented the spear-head of the Protestant movement. By the beginning of 1558 the Earl of Argyll and his heir had assumed the leadership of the Protestant forces.

The question then arises as to how far the acceptance of Protestantism influenced Argyll's political policies and actions at this time. This is very difficult to determine since doubtless like most
people his political, and perhaps even his religious, motives were very mixed. Furthermore, it would seem that signing the band had not lost him the favor of the Queen-regent for throughout the summer of 1558 she summoned him a number of times for consultation. In September she went farther, conferring on him the chamberlainry of Bute as a reward for his good services to her.39 Perhaps she hoped by this means to win him back to Roman Catholicism or perhaps she sought to keep him from defecting to any pro-English party. She need not have worried, however, for firm Protestant though he was, when he died that autumn, he was still on her side.

His death according to Knox, was a cause for rejoicing among the bishops, but their jubilation was somewhat premature. They apparently hoped that the new earl, around twenty-one years of age, would at least remain neutral in the religious controversy. Trained up under John Douglas and having listened to Knox's fiery eloquence, however, the young earl was apparently whole heartedly committed to the cause of religious reform. Even Knox was obliged to admit this although in later years he was violently opposed to Argyll's political stance. Knox could not understand how one who supported the Reformed cause, could at the same time be a loyal follower of Mary, Queen of Scots. And indeed, this is a curious problem, but one that was by no means unique to the fifth Earl of Argyll. His history from 1558 to 1573 was in many ways very confusing to both his friends and his enemies, as it is to historians today.

The confusion found its origins perhaps in the extremely complex religious and political situation that prevailed in Scotland at the time. Ever since she had become regent in 1554 Mary of Guise had found it necessary to conciliate the Protestants in order to maintain her position, first against the Hamiltons who had lost their dominant position when their chief, the Earl of Arran, now Duc de Châtelheraut, had been ousted from the governorship and against, secondly, the English who under Mary Tudor had been allied to Spain against France. In 1558, however, the situation changed suddenly. France and Spain reached an accord in the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis and Mary Tudor died, leaving her half-sister Princess Elizabeth to succeed, although Roman Catholics regarded the young Queen of Scots as the legal heir.

This change in the situation gave Mary of Guise her opportunity. With France free from the Anglo-Spanish threat she could now obtain French troops to support her government, suppress Protestantism and perhaps provide a base for a take-over of England. This rapid alteration of the state of affairs seems to have taken everyone, including the chief actors by surprise.

Besides the religio-political confusion of the times, other aspects of the situation kept the country in a state of considerable turmoil. As a French report made on the situation at the time pointed out, the crown had relatively little power. The Scots had succeeded in driving out the English in the late '40s only with the aid of the French who then occupied Broughty, Inchkeith, Dunbar and Eyemouth. Thus some of the principal east coast strongholds were in foreign hands. The Scots controlled only Edinburgh Castle and the Bass Rock. Furthermore, the crown's financial position was not too stable. Indeed it was by no means either as wealthy or as powerful as some of its great vassals, particularly some of the earls who, although often hard up for cash, had large tracts of land which supported numerous retainers, as in the case of the Earl of Argyll. In 1558 the crown's position was rendered even more difficult by the fact that its authority was wielded by a French woman in the name of an absent teenage daughter.

Added to all of this was the growth of Protestantism. Although, as the French report indicated, the church with its wealthy archbishopries and sixty odd rich abbeys and priories was economically and politically strong, it was losing ground as a religious influence. In the towns along the east coast: Montrose, Dundee, Perth and Edinburgh, Protestantism had gained a firm foothold with many of both the merchants and the craftsmen turning to the new doctrines. Of equal importance, in the countryside surrounding these burghs the lairds were also becoming Protestant. Above these in rank came some of the nobles: the lords of parliament and earls, such as Lord Ruthven, the earls of Glencairn, Morton, Rothes and Argyll who gave weight and respectability to the movement.

What added to the confusion was, however, the fact that there

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were no clear-cut religious or political lines drawn between the nobles. Their feudal loyalties very often became confused with what they might have considered their religious duty. Furthermore, their actual cash situation was so low that the possibility of obtaining bribes in the form of English or French subventions or pensions undoubtedly wielded an unduly important influence on both thought and action. The result was a constant state of uncertainty, not only in the minds of the nobles themselves, but also in the plans of those leading the conflicting forces. The Queen Regent and later her daughter, attempting to implement a pro-French policy, must often have come close to despair trying to figure out the nobles' moves. John Knox, on the other hand, must have found himself in much the same situation for the same reason. This state of affairs explains at least in part the events of the period 1558-1573 in which the Earl of Argyll played an important but at times incomprehensible role.

That the fifth earl was assuredly Protestant would seem obvious, yet one is faced with the fact of his close alliance with the Roman Catholic party. In 1549 he was betrothed to Margaret Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly one of the principal Roman Catholic peers. Then in 1553 he married Jean Hamilton natural daughter of James V, her tocher being paid partly by the Queen Regent, partly by the Earl of Arran and partly by her brothers who were commendators of various abbeys. Three years later the Archbishop of St. Andrews renewed the grant of various lands in the Barony of Muckhart given to his father in 1543 and for the same reason, namely his defense of the church against the Lutheran heresies, which he was now expected to continue. One cannot but help wonder at the apparent contradictions that appear in these different agreements and arrangements.

Any uncertainty as to the earl's religious position however, was soon to be removed. In October of 1558 the Queen Regent convened parliament to discuss a very important matter. In the preceding April the young queen in France had been married to the Dauphin on the basis of a formal agreement that Scotland's independence and liberties would be guaranteed. In fact, however, Mary had secretly promised that if she died without issue, Scotland would become an appanage of the

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43 A.T., IV: 203; V: 25, 63.
French crown. To make this move certain, Mary of Guise now requested that the crown matrimonial be sent to Queen Mary's husband, in order that he might be King of Scots. The Protestants were rightly alarmed. Mary, however, promised them freedom of religion if they agreed. Argyll and Lord James Stewart therefore acceded to the plan.44 The Queen Regent then appointed Argyll as one of those to bear the crown to France, which he apparently considered a great honor for he called in his principal relations and allies to help him finance the trip which they in February 1559, promised to do on condition that he kept them free of military service while he was away. At this point, however, Argyll's plan fell through, for he suddenly changed his mind and refused to go.45

What caused the change? While there is no clear indication, it looks as though he suddenly came to the realization that Mary of Guise was playing a double game. She had no intention of granting the Protestants toleration. This became clear at Easter 1559 when she demanded that they conform to the Roman Catholic rites. Argyll and Lord James Stewart protested, saying that they would rather die than do so.46 Shortly after this Mary decided that she could take action against the Protestant preachers who had been particularly active in Perth, summoning them to appear before her under pain of outlawry. When the Lords of the Congregation gathered at Perth in support of the ministers, she sent Argyll and Lord James to ask why they were meeting. To this question Knox, who had just arrived from France, replied that she had failed to keep her word regarding freedom of religion, but that if she would now guarantee it to them they would surrender Perth and submit. He also pointed out that since Romanism was merely humanly devised superstition, by her opposition to reform Mary was fighting against God.47 In this way Knox hurled back the gauntlet thrown down by the Queen Regent.

Argyll must have been in something of a quandary. Mary had told him that the Protestant forces were in rebellion against her and he

44 T.A., X: 394; Knox, History I: 141.
had said he would disassociate himself from them if they were. But when he dealt with "the brethren", Knox rebuked him and Lord James for deserting them. The two envoys however, seem to have felt that Mary might be won over at least to a toleration of Protestantism. Knox and his cohorts, on the other hand, did not believe this and drew up another band of maintenance for their mutual defence of the Protestant religion and to this on May 31, both Lord James and Argyll gave their adherence. The Queen Regent had guaranteed religious liberty to Perth promising that it would be garrisoned only by Scots. If she should fail to keep her word, the two men insisted they would join the ranks of the Congregation. On June 1st she entered Perth and in complete disregard for her guarantee brought in French troops and proceeded to persecute the Protestants. Immediately Argyll, Lord James and a number of others joined the Protestant forces.\textsuperscript{48} The die had been cast and civil war was imminent.

The problem faced by the Protestants at this time was that they lacked the military power to deal with the Regent's forces, particularly the French mercenaries. They therefore found it necessary to retreat to St. Andrews with the royal army following at a distance. On June 11th against Archbishop Hamilton's wishes, and contrary to Argyll's and Lord James's advice, Knox preached in the cathedral with such effect that the authorities "removed the monuments of idolatry."\textsuperscript{49} Meanwhile the Queen's forces had stopped at Cupar where Argyll and Lord James opened negotiations with the Duc de Châtellerault and the French commander d'Oysel. On June 13th they signed a truce, and agreed to arbitration. They then wrote Mary stating that they had gone over to the side of the Congregation because of her breach of promise regarding Perth.\textsuperscript{50} The royal forces now finding their numbers decreasing and the Protestants increasing, retired through Perth and Stirling to Edinburgh followed closely by the Congregation who entered the capital early on the morning of June 30th after the withdrawal of the Regent's troops to Dunbar.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{48} Knox, History, I: 181f.

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., I: 185; C.S.P., Scot, I: no. 469.

\textsuperscript{50} C.S.P., Scot, I: 469, 475, 480; Knox, History, I: 189ff.

\textsuperscript{51} C.S.P., Scot, I: 480.
The first action of the Lords of the Congregation was to draw up another covenant that would include those who had recently joined them and at the head of the list of signatures was the name of the Earl of Argyll. Meanwhile Queen Mary had received word that her daughter had become Queen of France. Encouraged by this news she advanced from Dunbar to Leith where she entered into negotiations with Argyll and others acting on behalf of the Congregation. As many of the Congregation's soldiers had gone home to take care of their crops and farms the leaders found it advisable to agree to evacuate Edinburgh on certain conditions. What these conditions were has been the subject of much dispute, but it would seem that the continuance of Protestantism in Edinburgh was guaranteed. Châtelherault and Huntly promised Argyll and the other Protestant negotiators that if Mary did not keep this treaty they would desert her, and so the Congregation, accompanied by Knox, withdrew to Stirling.

Meanwhile, according to Knox, Argyll had received word from the west that the Queen Regent had stirred up some trouble for him probably by inciting the MacLeans or the MacLeods to revive one of their feuds. At any rate Argyll left the Congregation at Stirling for his own country. By September 10th, however, he met a number of the Protestant lords along with Châtelherault and his son Arran in Glasgow where they drew up a protest to the Queen Regent concerning her fortifying of Leith. And they did more than protest. They gathered an army including a large contingent of Argyll's Highlanders and advanced once again on Edinburgh which they occupied on October 16th. Their major problem now was Leith, fortified and held by the Queen Regent with a contingent of French soldiers. After further futile negotiation with Mary, the Protestant lords, assuming the powers of a parliament, declared her deposed from the regency and appointed a council to govern the country until the next parliament. Of this council Argyll was one of the principal members. The only difficulty was that the Lords were running short of money. Because of this, the mercenaries of the Congregation and Argyll's Highlanders came to blows, a full

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54 Ibid., I: 228, 251; 'Hist. of Estate of Scotland,' 70; C.S.P., Scot, I: 551, 552.
scale battle being only averted by the earl's personal intervention. Then shortly afterwards, when the French troops made a sortie from Leith against Edinburgh, it was only Argyll's calmness that prevented a rout of the Congregation's forces.\textsuperscript{55} Yet despite his efforts the Congregation found it impossible to maintain themselves in Edinburgh and on November 6th it retired precipitately once again to Stirling.

While negotiating with the Queen Regent, Argyll and his allies had been taking action in other directions. On July 19th he and a number of the leading nobles: the Earl of Glencairn, lords James Stewart, Ruthven, Boyd and Ochiltree had signed letters written by Knox to Queen Elizabeth and to Sir William Cecil, requesting assistance in driving out the French. They gave their assurances that they were not rebels but were merely trying to resist the Queen Dowager's oppression. In August, Argyll and Lord James, who were working in close cooperation, wrote further letters explaining their difficulties and asking for immediate help. Finally along with some others they issued a commission to Maitland of Lethington authorizing him to negotiate a treaty with England.\textsuperscript{56} They had come to realize that without English assistance they could not possibly gain the victory over Mary of Guise and her Frenchmen.

In December 1559 the Protestant forces received an addition to their strength by the firm adhesion of the Duc de Châtelherault. This gave added prestige since he was next in line to the throne. Argyll had been active in trying to persuade him to take this step and was no doubt pleased when he did so. At first the accession of the Duc to the party seemed to cause something of a rift between the eastern and western branches of the Congregation. Argyll, Châtelherault, Glencairn and some other of the western lords sought to set up headquarters in Glasgow, and requested Lord James to come to them. Knox, however, immediately wrote them pointing out that they were deserting the men of Fife who were putting up the main resistance.\textsuperscript{57} This effectively stopped the division and the two groups once again united to carry on

\textsuperscript{55} C.S.P., Scot., I: 493, 516, 543.

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., I: 599.

\textsuperscript{57} H.M.C. Salisbury, I: no. 613; Ashmolean Collection 860, Bodleian Library, p. 480; Knox, History, I: 308ff.
negotiations with England.

These conversations with the English had been going forward slowly but by February the Scots had agreed to give certain hostages in pledge for the fulfilment of a treaty. One of these hostages was Argyll's cousin. Although the earl did not actually participate in the negotiations he did sign the authorization of the Scottish representatives and the resulting Treaty of Berwick. (Feb. 27th) 58 This agreement promised English support for the Congregation while at the same time guaranteeing Scotland's independence. The principal objective of both English and Scots was the expulsion of the French. As far as Argyll was concerned personally, the most important article in the treaty was number nine in which he agreed to help subdue the north of Ireland to English obedience in order to release troops for service in Scotland. Since one of Argyll's brothers-in-law was Calrachen O'Donnel in Ireland who had a bond of manrent with the 4th earl, he probably felt that the problem of pacification would not be very great, but by assisting Elizabeth in this way he would be able to further the cause of the Congregation in Scotland. 59

The Treaty of Berwick was the beginning of the end. In the closing days of March, an English army entered Scotland to be joined at Prestonpans by the Scottish forces among whom was Argyll with his Highlanders. Soon afterwards the siege of Leith commenced but without very great success. For one thing the allies were divided in their purposes. Although the Scots wished to get rid of the French so that they could establish Protestantism the English wished to expel them merely to protect their own borders. While matters were thus at a kind of stalemate Argyll seems to have tried to stimulate action by offering to bring in 1,000 more Highlanders to assist with the siege. At the same time the Scots, feeling that they must redefine and clarify their own objectives signed another band ("the last Band of Leith") in which they expressed their purpose of expelling the French and reforming religion. This they followed with a reaffirmation of the Treaty of Berwick. In both these documents Argyll's name stands among the first. When the French envoys arrived to try to get their countrymen out of the box in


59 Calrachen O'Donnel by 1560 had married the 4th earl's widow, who was daughter of MacLean of Duart.
which they found themselves at Leith, Argyll was one of the Scottish representatives who negotiated with them.\textsuperscript{60} Although the Bishop of Valence refused to recognize the Scots and insisted on dealing instead with the English, Argyll and his confreres undoubtedly had much to do with the final Treaty of Edinburgh that rid Scotland of the French and left the way open for the establishment of Protestantism.

On April 1, 1560 the Queen Regent, suffering from a fatal sickness, had entered Edinburgh Castle and there she died on June 11th. Just before she passed away she called for the earls of Argyll, Glencairn and Marischall, and Lord James Stewart to make her peace with them. That Argyll was of this number would indicate the esteem in which he was held. There are also some other comments made concerning him that give some indication of how he was regarded at that time. Randolph, the English ambassador writing to Killigrew on April 15th commended the earnestness and devotion of the Protestants, remarking especially on the “virtu” of the earls of Arran and Argyll both of whom were under 23 years of age. The following June Sir William Cecil, a man not easily fooled, wrote from Edinburgh to Elizabeth that “Argyll is a goodly gentleman of person, and universally honoured here of all Scotland.”\textsuperscript{61} The English undoubtedly felt that they had an ally whom they could trust, and the Scottish Protestants had good reason to look to him as one of their ablest leaders.

Argyll displayed his religious point of view when the Scottish Estates met in August of 1560. Although by the Treaty of Edinburgh no change of religion was to be made without the agreement of Mary and her husband, so many attended the meeting, and the leaders were so strongly Protestant, that action regarding religion could not but result. Furthermore, Francis II on his accession to the French throne had made it so unmistakably clear that he planned to carry on his late brother Henry II's anti-Protestant policies, that the Scots realized they would have to take action on their own if they wished to have a reformed church. As one of the Lords of the Articles Argyll was active in all that took place at the meetings. He was one of the first to sign the Confession of Faith and gave his support to the abolition of the old medieval “superstitions”. He realized, however, that the Scottish

\textsuperscript{60} C.S.P., Scot, I: 743, 751, 754, 786; Knox, History, I, 311ff.

\textsuperscript{61} C.S.P., Scot, I: 734, 821.
Reformation could never become well established without English support. He, therefore, was one of those who also signed the request sent by the Scots to Elizabeth, asking her to marry the Earl of Arran son of the Duc de Châtellerault. He also sought in every other way to ensure the cooperation of the two countries.\(^{62}\) Friendship with England went hand and hand with reform of religion in Scotland.

Argyll, however, was not content with the passing of acts in parliament, for he apparently believed in "personal work." Randolph in reporting the earl's activities to Cecil praised him highly for his loyalty and piety pointing out that he had promised to serve the Duc de Châtellerault and the Earl of Arran as long as they feared God, sought the welfare of Scotland and fulfilled their promises to Elizabeth. He also reported that Argyll and Lord James Stewart had shown great activity in trying to persuade the lords absent from parliament to accept the Reformation and back Arran's marriage to Elizabeth. Argyll had even gone farther in attempting to convert to Protestantism the visiting ambassador of the O'Neill. The earl had now left for Argyll for three months, as he had much that he wished to do in his own country.\(^{63}\)

Although Argyll planned to return home, probably to institute reforms in the church, he had to postpone his trip because of the other pressing matters. He met the Earl of Athol and Lord James at Perth to discuss possible action against Huntly who disapproved of the actions taken by the Estates for the reform of religion. Shortly afterwards he also became involved in the siege of Castle Sempill whose lord refused to accept the Reformation. Arran captured it around the end of September.\(^{64}\) Once these matters had been attended to he could devote his attention to matters closer to home.

His first cares seem to have been the confirming of his friendship with Archibald MacLauchlin of that Illk and of bringing Hector MacLean of Duart and his son back to their obedience. In 1560 they had made a band with Macdonald of Dunveg contrary to their obligations to the earl. This they now renounced, returning to their


original allegiance.64 These actions on the part of the earl were important for ecclesiastical reform as they gave him a free hand to control the church in the area.

Although material concerning the Reformation in Argyll and the Isles is scarce, one can find some indications that action was taken to initiate Reformed services as early as 1560, presumably while the earl was present in the west.65 A number of the Roman Catholic incumbents conformed without any apparent objection not from indifference, but because of acceptance of the Reformation. A notable example was John Cartwell, rector of Kilmartin, who in 1565 became the first Protestant bishop of the Isles and the translator into Gaelic of the Reformed Book of Common Order. Along with him went James Lindsay of North Knapdale, Gilbert MacKintosh of Craigish, John Cameron of Dunoon, James McWartie of Rothesay and Alexander M'Alister of Kilmore in Arran. Other names such as Ninian MacVicar of Glenairn, John M'Cullum of Glenmorith, Henry Balfour of Kilfinan and Nicholas Campbell of Lismore appear in the records shortly afterwards indicating that they too had conformed about the same time.66 It would look as though the earl had been active in promoting the Reformation throughout the west with considerable success.

By the beginning of 1564 Argyll was back in Edinburgh. At that time Knox submitted his Book of Discipline, with its ambitious but abortive plans for the use of the old church's property, to a number of the nobles for consideration and approval. Among these was the earl who was one of the first to signify his acceptance of its program. The Estatus, however, dominated by those who had already taken over much of the church's property turned down the proposed ecclesiastical reorganization. What part Argyll took in the debates we do not know, but that he was seeking to extend the Reformation territorially is evident for in May, he and Arran received instructions from the Privy Council to take further action against some of the abbeys in the west: Paisley, Fallford, Kilwinning and Crossraguel which they did very

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66 Pass Ecclesiastici Scotiae, ed. H. Scott (Edinburgh, 1913-), IV: 2, 8, 13, 15, 32, 39, 61, 75, 86, 98.
effectively. At this point a change took place, for a young lady of nineteen years arrived on the scene to shake up the well-planned programme of the Reformers.

Mary Queen of Scots, landed in Leith on August 19, 1561, in what was to Knox a symbolic downpour of rain. The young widow now arrived, almost alone, to face a complex situation that would have taxed the diplomatic powers of even the most seasoned statesman. Furthermore, having been trained up in the autocratic French court under the eyes of her fervently Roman Catholic Guise uncles she had virtually no intellectual or spiritual preparation for the situation she now faced. As one seeks to take a balanced look at her situation, one cannot but wonder that she lasted as long as she did.

One of the reasons for her temporary success was that she possessed considerable ability and a great deal of personal charm. Another was that she was able to attract to her support a number of the leading Scottish nobles, particularly those who had led in the establishment of Protestantism. Before leaving France, according to Melville, some of the French who knew Scotland had advised her to depend upon her half-brother Lord James Stewart, the Earl of Argyll, and a number of other nobles whom they felt would be trustworthy. Apparently Argyll had made something of a name for himself for reliability, even among the French. Consequently it is not surprising that he, among others, was summoned by the Privy Council to come to Edinburgh. Shortly afterwards he himself was appointed to the Council and as one of its members took the oath of allegiance to Mary on behalf of all the nobles. This was the beginning of a friendship between the earl and the queen that was to last for many years.

During the spring of 1562 he was occupied with official duties as one of the auditors of the Exchequer and as one of the Queen's privy councilors. Then in August, as Mary prepared for her journey to the north to deal with Hunsley, she decided to appoint a small council of

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44 Kerr, Henry, i. 343, 345, 364.
45 Ibid., ii. 7; Melville, Memoirs, 62.
47 P.P.C., 1. passim, T.A., XL. 116E.
four men to remain with her for two months after which they would be replaced by another four. Argyll was one of the first appointed to act for September and October. He, however, was with her in December and continued to act on the council throughout most of the following year. In the meantime he also served in his father’s office as justice general, and probably in this capacity carried the sceptre at the meeting of parliament.  

Unofficially he was also active politically, for in cooperation with Lord James Stewart he sought to mediate a conflict that had developed between Arran and James Hepburn Earl of Bothwell. Arran, who may have been showing signs of his later insanity, had talked of kidnapping the queen. Since this had raised the ire of Bothwell, who was later to do exactly the same thing, Lord James and Argyll sought to bring peace between the two. Argyll also sought to bring about reconciliation at an even higher level for he advocated a meeting between Mary and Elizabeth. Writing to Randolph in January 1562 he expressed his support for such a plan "quhilk I hop in God it sall [be] to the glorie of name, the comfort of all thair subjects and the tranquilitie of thair realms."

While active in matters pertaining to the political situation, Argyll had by no means lost his interest in the movement for religious reform. He had apparently supported Lord James Stewart’s defense of Mary’s attending mass in Holyrood but he had also objected to her setting up the service elsewhere in Scotland. When she had planned to hear mass in the Royal Chapel of Stirling, along with Lord James he had taken steps to prevent it by beating some of the choir. In the Parliament of February 1562 he supported more positive measures by favoring the plan whereby one third of the revenues from ecclesiastical benefices was allocated to the crown to meet the queen’s and the Reformed church’s needs. Although he had originally supported the Book of Discipline that laid down a project for the new church’s complete take-over of the old church’s revenues, he had evidently come to the conclusion that the third of benefices was about all that Knox and

74 Ibid., I: 1023.
his colleagues could obtain. Knox was bitterly disappointed with the arrangement, and it may have been partially to allay his fears that Argyll was appointed as one of those to assess the ministers' stipends.

The close cooperation began to cool, however, in the spring of 1563. Knox blames this on the intrigues of Queen Mary and he may well be right for no doubt one of her principal desires would be to separate Knox from his supporters among the nobility. According to Knox after he had one of his argumentative interviews with Mary she had called him back to ask him to intervene in the marital difficulties of the Earl of Argyll. From what one can read between the lines of Knox's account, neither the earl nor the countess had been entirely faithful to their marriage vows, and because of the countess's actions the earl had in some way separated from her. Queen Mary therefore urged Knox to work for a reconciliation, probably giving as one reason for her interest that the countess was her half-sister. Knox, apparently flattered by this request, wrote Argyll a very straightforward and direct letter. He urged a reconciliation on the ground that if the countess had not committed adultery since their last reconciliation, the earl had no ground on which to seek a divorce. He also pointed out that Argyll himself was by no means without sin. According to Knox, this letter of pastoral admonition displeased the earl with whom Knox never again had the same cordial relationship. 25

In closing this letter to Argyll, Knox had urged him to be on hand at the next meeting of parliament to help deal at Justice General with the papistical bishops who had been placed in the care of Lord Erskine, a well-known compromiser. This may also have annoyed Argyll. But whether it did or not, when the parliament met it proved to be very half-hearted in its support of reform. The nobles did not demand the official establishment of Protestantism nor did they take action to deal with the bishops. As Knox put it, Mary had everything her own way. Because of this Knox protested most vigorously to Lord James Stewart, now the Earl of Moray. He felt that the earl and his supporters, including Argyll, had sold out the Reformation. The difference with Moray became so sharp that they had no further communication with each other for the next eighteen months. In one month Knox had lost the friendship of two of the chief advocates of reform among the nobles.

25 Knox, Ninety, II: 72ff.
Nevertheless they were both still prepared to stand by him in a crisis. In September 1563 some of the burgesses of Edinburgh attended mass at Holyrood where they caused a disturbance which led to their arrest. Knox immediately sent out letters to "the brethren" calling upon them to meet in Edinburgh at the time of the trial to protect the prisoners. Because of this action Knox was hailed before the Queen and her council as a fomentor of sedition. After a long argument between Knox and Maitland of Lethington over Knox's right to summon such a meeting the council, on which sat both Moray and Argyll, voted unanimously in favor of his acquittal.\textsuperscript{2} Though they might disagree with him because of his strongly worded letters, Moray and Argyll were still prepared to back him in his efforts to defend the Reformation.

More important events, however, were now in the making, events that although they were primarily political were also significant for Scottish Protestantism. Mary had by this time apparently come to the conclusion that in her rather difficult situation she needed a husband. This had of course been the view of many who for sometime had been advocating her marriage to the unstable young Earl of Arran. At the same time Elizabeth's representatives in Scotland had been pushing the advantages of her union with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. When she called in Argyll to ask the earl for his advice on the matter, he replied that she should marry whomsoever she wished.

His confidence did not last very long. Randolph told Cecil that it was rumoured that the Earl of Lennox might be recalled from exile and that Mary might look favorably on his son. To the possibility of such a match, he adds, Argyll was strongly opposed. From what one can see in the sources of this period Châtelherault became very worried over the possibility of Lennox's son Henry, Lord Darnley becoming king as this would effectively bar the Hamiltons from the throne. He therefore, hoped to have Mary marry Arran and in this Argyll gave him his support.\textsuperscript{77} Yet the issues were very confused. Lennox returning early in October, was reconciled to his former opponents, one of whom was Argyll who handed back the land he had received from Lennox's forfeiture. However, neither he nor Moray appeared at the parliament

\textsuperscript{2} C.S.P., Scot, II: 43.

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., II: 72, 93.
at which the forfeiture was revoked.\footnote{ibid., II, 128.} Perhaps they were beginning to have some misgivings concerning the possible outcome of the reconciliation of Lennox and the return of the Catholic Darnley. This interpretation is borne out by the fact that within a month of Lennox's restoration, Moray and Lettington were actively pressing for an English marriage, a move for which they had Argyll's hearty support.

Before long it was reported that not only Argyll, but also the Campbells as a whole, including "the Errrhe of the isonrye" and their allies, were in opposition to Darnley. Argyll himself expressed his strong opposition to Cecil's permitting Darnley to cross the border, "for he says the affections of women are uncertain."\footnote{ibid., II, 144, 157.} It was probably Argyll that Randolph had in mind when he reported that many of the people were discontented with the queen, some on account of religion, some because of threats to their houses and some lest she marry a papist. This discontent was ready to break into open warfare. When, spurred on by Atholl and Lennox, Mary threatened to punish Perth for imprisoning a priest who had said mass, Moray and Argyll rallied their supporters behind the burgh so effectively that Mary found it necessary to back down.\footnote{ibid., 158, 171.} But they did not by this action endorse themselves to her, nor did they make her any less desirous of having a husband to fight her battles.

That she was soon going to need some sort of protection became clear when Murray and Argyll arrived with five or six thousand men to keep law day against the Earl of Bothwell accused of a treasonable conspiracy to kidnap the Queen and kill her advisers. Although the court condemned Bothwell, Mary forbade any further action.

This was but the prelude, for Mary had now decided to marry Darnley. According to Randolph she was opposed to Chilthernsall's ideas about her marriage, suspected Murray of scheming to obtain the crown, and "mortally hates Argyll." What caused her to hate Argyll, Randolph does not say, but his comment a few days later that Argyll more than any other had been stout in his defence of religion and the safety of his house and that he was the leader of the west country
Protestants might provide the explanation. Furthermore Argyll along with Glencarin had joined the Duc's party against Morton, Lethington and Ruthven who supported Mary. Yet Mary realized that she must obtain some backing for the marriage to Darnley. It was probably to this end that she twice summoned Argyll to court, but he simply did not appear. She apparently won over Châlonsa and another dozen of the nobles to agree that Darnley be created Duke of Ross, but Moray refused to go along with this without some guarantees for Protestantism, and Argyll ignored the whole proceeding. He did not attend the Privy Council although he and Moray agreed that when one was absent from court, the other would be there to keep an eye on things. The rift between Mary and the leaders of the Protestant party was almost complete.

Matters worsened when Elizabeth warned Mary against a hasty marriage. Argyll along with many of the other nobles appeared at the same time before the queen at Stirling to register their opposition to her proposed union with Darnley. She, however, would take no advice. Instead she sought to reconcile Argyll with Lennox in the hope that this might bring Argyll to favour the match. If he did a good many of the other lords, particularly those from the west, would probably go along with him. Her plans came to nothing, for after their protest the lords all returned home. Randolph pointed out to Cecil that this would be a good time to win over Argyll who because of his discontent with Mary might be used as Elizabeth wished "and for little," but that if the English should miss getting his support and should ever need him, they might find him a shrewd enemy.

Meanwhile Argyll immediately turned his attention to the strengthening of the Reformation in his own lands. Although one cannot give actual evidence, it would seem that his presence in Argyll may have been responsible for Patrick MacLean's demission at this time of the temporaries of the Bishopric of the Isles and of the Abbey of Iona to John Carwell. Shortly afterwards Carwell was nominated by the General Assembly to be superintendent of Argyll and the Isles.

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46 Sib., 174, 187; Knox, History, II: 139.


Holding the episcopal revenues and having the support of the earl, he was able to take effective action on behalf of the Reformation. From this time down to the earl's death in 1572 there is evidence that Reformed ministers were placed by Carswell in Lorne, in Lochbroom and Lochalsh to the north, in Duirinish, Glendale in the heart of Tormod MacLeod's territory on Skye, among the MacLeods of Harris, and on the islands of Isla, Mull, and Lismore. Some of the ministers may have been priests who had already conformed, others were newly appointed incumbents, usually presented by the earl. However they may have obtained their positions one can see that under Carswell's regime the Reformation, by the time of his death, had taken a firm grip of the lands under Campbell control, a grip further strengthened by the use of his Gaelic Book of Common Order. In this way the earl and the superintendent together played an important role in the consolidation of the Reformation throughout Scotland, for by their endeavours one of the most powerful areas militarily accepted the new faith, a fact that in the ensuing conflicts was to be of the utmost importance.

How significant military power was, becomes clear when one considers the other aspect of Argyll's activities while he was in the west. The indications are that on their way home from Edinburgh Moray and Argyll had foregathered in Perth to discuss possible action against the two leaders of the queen's party, Lennox and Atholl. The outcome was that as soon as Argyll arrived in his own country, he laid plans for an attack on the neighboring Athol territory. Hearing of this Atholl promptly hurried home to raise forces to resist. Since it looked as though Atholl would get the worst of it in any conflict with Argyll the queen sent the Justice clerk, John Bellenden, to warn both earls to stop their mobilization. At the same time she called upon the men of Angus to back Atholl, not a very wise move since Angus was a hot bed of Protestantism. Such a move on Mary's part, however, forced all the Protestant anti-Darnley nobles to look to their arms. Randolph suggested that if Bellenden succeeded in establishing peace between Atholl and Argyll this would only lead to an attack on Lennox.

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66 Donaldson, Reformation, 89; Scott, Pamb, VII: 847.
67 Scott, Pamb, VII: 91, 110, 154, 155, 169, 188, 199, 222.
Apparently the Privy Council felt the same way for on July 17th they summoned Moray and Argyll to appear and exculpate themselves. This action perhaps explains why the next day Châtelherault, Moray and Argyll and others sent Cecil a pressing request for assistance.\footnote{C.S.P., Scot, II: 210, 212.}

Meanwhile despite the threats to the peace of the country involved in her proposed marriage Mary went straight ahead. On July 29th 1565 she and Darnley were married according to Roman Catholic rites. Immediately the earl of Moray raised the standard of rebellion, and was promptly joined by the earl of Rothes, Kirkcaldy of Grange and a number of others all of whom on August 6th were declared rebels. Argyll’s position is a little difficult to assess. He was obviously regarded as being on Moray’s side, for on August 9th he and Arran were both forbidden by the Privy Council to have anything to do with the rebels. Randolph however reported the next day to Cecil that Moray and his party were in Argyll with the earl waiting to see what Mary would do. He added that a little English assistance would be of great help, so he was planning to bring in some money for Moray from Berwick.\footnote{Ibid., II: 226; T.A., XI: 396; R.P.C., I: 350, 357.} The Council now began to issue proclamations in great profusion. On August 16th they charged all authorities in the western burghs of Glasgow, Dunbarton, Ayr and Irvine to make sure that no victuals or arms be sold that could find their way to Moray in Argyll. Shortly afterwards they twice repeated their prohibitions to Argyll and Arran against assisting Moray.\footnote{T.A., X: 357, 359, 397.} At the same time, Mary was gradually beginning to make headway. By September 1st while she was in Glasgow looking for them, the rebels arrived in Edinburgh, but Argyll was not with them. Because they had no arquibusiers they were unable to withstand the royal forces and so had to flee across the border into England. Such was the ignominious "Chase About Raid."\footnote{C.S.P., Scot, II: 241.}

Melville of Halhill would not seem to be correct when he states that Argyll was involved in the raid and fled to England along with the others. The Council always made a distinction between the rebels and
Argyll, Boyd, Ochiltree and others whom they termed "abettors." The latter group the Council summoned to appear before the Queen but without any success. Randolph stated in a letter of September 9th that the government of the country was disintegrating. "There is neither justice nor the punishment of vice", and no one supported the crown. As a good indication of the situation, Lennox who had been made lieutenant of the West Country was taking from everyone whatever he wanted. Argyll on the other hand, who still had not outwardly joined the rebels, was raiding both Lennox's and Athol's lands, apparently as a diversionary move.92 Throughout the month of October this situation continued, punctuated every so often with summonses to Argyll and Lord Boyd to appear before the Queen on pain of being declared rebels. Finally on November 3rd the Council declared that Argyll had been sealed off from all food and weapons. Aided by a general desire for peace, by the fact that Moray and Kirkcaldy were in England and by the divided councils of the opposition, Mary was gradually winning the day.93

As Mary began to recover control of the country most of the nobles, who had remained aloof from the struggle now began to come in and submit. Argyll however, was in a somewhat difficult position. He had not joined the rebels openly but had attacked neighboring lands. This was not treason, merely disobedience. For this reason, overtures were made to him to persuade him to submit. He refused apparently because no guarantee had been given for the maintenance of Protestantism. He said that his first duty was to God for whose Word in the country he was prepared to venture life and lands.94 At the same time, he also sought to accomplish his own political ends. Probably as a restraint on Mary he kept John Brand, the messenger who brought him a summons, a prisoner from November 16th to April 21st.95 Simultaneously he sought to pressure to Elizabeth into treating Moray and Kirkcaldy more favorably by quite obviously threatening to assist Shane O'Neill in Ireland in his attempt to gain his independence from England. O'Neill was even talking of becoming a subject of Mary, with

92 Ibid., II: 251, 261, 275, 294; Melville, Memoirs, 135.


94 C.S.P., Scot, II: 302.

95 T.A., XI: 495.
Argyll acting as the chief negotiator; Randolph indicated that only better treatment of Moray and Kirkcaldy would forestall these moves.\textsuperscript{96} One other area in which Argyll was making some advance was in his dealings with Athol, who had experienced enough of the Campbell's raiding to desire peace, and who back at court by December 1st sought the return of Argyll also to Edinburgh.\textsuperscript{97}

No desire for peace however, was expressed by the Queen. Argyll and his supporters she regarded as equally rebellious as Moray. Therefore on December 1st they were all summoned to appear before the Privy Council to answer the charge of \textit{lise majeste}. When they did not appear, Mary called for a parliament to meet on March 12th in which they were all to be forfeited, and the Council proceeded forthwith to order the rebels' lands seized and their revenues sequestered.\textsuperscript{98} Mary was irreconcilable, declaring that as soon as she had given birth to her child she would go to Argyll to deal with the earl. Her intransigence could not but lead to the defeat of her plans. The nobles could not possibly allow a large number of the great lords to be forfeited, for if Argyll, Moray, and others of the same importance were to be dispossessed, no one could tell whose turn would come next. They therefore began to draw together. First of all Argyll and Shane O’Neill agreed to maintain each other - apparently against their respective queens. Then Argyll and Lennox began to negotiate, with the addition of Darnley who promised in return for the crown matrimonial which Mary had refused him, to restore and guarantee Protestantism. Events were moving to a checkmate, for by March 6th a secret but general agreement had been reached by most of the nobility headed by Moray and Argyll against the Queen.\textsuperscript{99}

Besides the growing fear of Mary's power, another factor had entered the situation in the person of the Italian, David Riccio, who soon became a royal favourite. Quite naturally this caused much ill-feeling on the part of the nobles, who blamed Riccio for Mary's

\textsuperscript{96} \textit{C.S.P., Scot}, II: 304.

\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Ibid.}, II: 302, 310.


\textsuperscript{99} \textit{C.S.P., Scot}, II: 335, 346, 351.
unforgiving attitude towards Moray and Argyll, and for her treatment of Darnley, who was completely ignored. This helped to bring the opposition together. A number of Protestants headed by the Earl of Morton, and Darnley decided to remove Riccio permanently. They chose March 9th as the night for the deed as this would be three days before the meeting of parliament called to forfeit the lords involved in the Chase-About-Raid. Neither Argyll nor Moray would be in town although they were on the way and so could not be blamed. Both of them knew of the plot and were in agreement with it. According to the plan the blow was struck, and Riccio dramatically removed from the scene.

The immediate result of this act was that Mary was so angry that she was quite prepared to receive back the participants in the Chase-About-Raid in order to destroy the murderers. Moray arrived on March 10th and submitted, but Mary, mistrusting him and in fear of her life, fled that night to the protection of the Earl of Bothwell in Dunbar Castle. At this point the reports as to what happened become confusing if not actually contradictory. It seems that although Moray had submitted he was not taken back into favour. Others of the "rebel" lords now deserted their colleagues, returning to their obedience. Meanwhile Argyll had approached with an armed force from the west, arriving at Linlithgow where he was joined by Moray. Thence the two combined forces advanced on Edinburgh. At this point, Mary, who realized that she could not fight all the Scottish nobility, sent them a statement of the conditions upon which they would be received back into favour. These they accepted promising to come to court if she would remove the arquebusers. This she did and the "rebels" submitted. On April 29th Argyll, after more than a year's absence, resumed his seat on the Privy Council.¹⁰¹

It was now that Argyll's relations with Ireland became important. Morton and the others involved in Riccio's murder had found safety only in flight to England where, like Moray before them, they received a very cool reception. Furthermore, Darnley having deserted his fellow conspirators had been ostensibly received back into favor and declared innocent of the murder. These two things annoyed Moray and Argyll greatly. Moray could do little about the matter, but Argyll felt

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., II: 353; H.M.C., Salisbury, I: 405.

that by intervention in Ireland he could force Elizabeth to accord the
refugees better treatment, and simultaneously force her to guarantee the
maintenance of Protestantism in Scotland. He therefore let it be known
that unless she was prepared to accede to his wishes that he would
support Shane O'Neill in his rebellion.\(^{102}\) That the penurious Eliza-
beth was worried by these threats is indicated by her suggestion that
Randolph might try to bribe Argyll to stay out of the Irish situation.
Mary, on the other hand, believing that any action that might embarrass
Elizabeth would at this point be advantageous, and not understanding
Argyll's motives, had authorized him to give whatever assistance he
could to the Irish rebels.\(^{103}\)

Argyll thereupon took action; leaving the court he went to the
west where he met with representatives of the O'Neills and the
O'Connells whom he sought to reconcile in their feud. At the same
time the O'Neills made him large offers of land and cattle if he would
help them. O'Neill already had some 600-700 Scots, presumably from
the Isles, serving with him, but he needed more support and was
prepared to pay Argyll if he would but give his aid. By the end of June
the earl and the young O'Connell had dispatched between 1,000 and
1,200 men to Ireland to parley with O'Neill concerning the O'Connell
lands that he had seized. Killigrew reported to Cecil, however, that
even if they reached some sort of agreement, the Scottish troops were
not to join O'Neill without special authorization by Argyll. At the same
time, the earl let it be known that he was thinking of going to Ireland,
himself, with a considerable force.\(^{104}\) The threats to Elizabeth through
Ireland were becoming very real.

Elizabeth had reacted quickly, seeking to apply pressure
wherever possible. Despite her miserable treatment of Moray when a
refugee in her kingdom she had appealed to him through her special
evoy, Henry Killigrew. The latter was to seek to convince Moray that
to support the Irish rebels was evil and ungodly, particularly after the
way she had supported Scottish Protestants! Yet he was, not to make
Shane's power appear so great, but that her majesty, if she pleases to

\(^{102}\) C.S.P., Scot, II: 381, 386.

\(^{103}\) Ibid., II: 385, 396, 396.

\(^{104}\) Ibid., II: 402.
deal with him, has any cause to intreat any in Scotland to forbear aiding him." 105

Moray had understood the message and had remonstrated with Argyll, who replied that if Elizabeth would support the Reformed religion and help to bring back the exiled lords he would oppose O'Neill and would block all communications between Mary and the English Catholics, but he insisted on an answer in fourteen days. As he apparently did not receive it his 1,000 men had left for Ireland despite Mary's withdrawal of permission for this expeditionary force. Moray claimed that he knew nothing about this move until after the Battle of Langside the following spring. He must have felt that Elizabeth's representations to Mary that had resulted in her counter-manding of the permission to invade Ireland had put an end to Argyll's dealings with O'Neill. 106 In fact it did not, but it also does not seem to have achieved anything to restore Riccio's murderers or guarantee Protestantism. These ends would have to be achieved by other means.

Throughout all these moves relating to Ireland, Argyll had continued to be active on the Privy Council, and in January 1567 was named one of those who could help make up the quorum of five who would have authority to summon the burgh representatives and levy taxes. 107 Yet despite his and Moray's apparent restoration to favor there was still obvious division in the country's government. Moray, Argyll and Athol kept close together against Mary's two principal henchmen Bothwell and Huntly. Darnley and Lennox were ignored by both sides. Argyll had a license to leave the country, probably to go to Ireland, but would no do so until he was sure how matters were going with religion and with Morton and the rest of the exiled lords. In September, Mary decided to put an end to all of this as she needed a wider base of support, particularly if, as one may suspect, she had turned her affections to Bothwell. Therefore she made arrangements for a conference in a friend's house in Edinburgh where she prevailed on Argyll, Moray and Bothwell to be reconciled. On this basis Moray and

105 Ibid., II: 397.
107 C.S.P., Scot, II: 400, 415.
his allies were completely restored to favor and to office.\textsuperscript{108}

Now began the moves that led on the night of February 9, 1567 to the blowing up of the house at Kirk o’ Field and the strangling of Darnley. Since there is little reliable evidence concerning this whole matter, judgements concerning the identity of the perpetrators of it are legion. That the generality of Scots was stunned and that Bothwell was regarded as the culprit would seem clear, but that many others were involved is also rather certain. This possibility is borne out by the fact that when the Earl of Argyll as Justice General conducted Bothwell’s trial for the crime he found him not guilty. It is true that Bothwell sought to overawe the court by a show of force and the Queen wished him acquitted, but Argyll had too strong a position to submit easily. On Argyll’s own later admission he knew something of the plot, and Moray believed that he also knew who had actually done the deed.\textsuperscript{109} If Bothwell had been found guilty he might have made revelations that would have incriminated many. Once cleared of the charges Bothwell resumed his seat on the Council and on April 14th, two days after his acquittal Bothwell was named one of the Lords of the Articles for parliament. Then on the 19th at a supper given by Bothwell a large number of the nobles, including Moray and Argyll signed a bond with the earl asserting his innocence of Darnley’s murder and promised to support him should he marry the Queen.\textsuperscript{110} On the basis of this promise Bothwell proceeded forthwith to take action. On April 24th he kidnapped Mary on her way to Stirling, carrying her off to Dunbar, but later returning her to Edinburgh. On May 3rd his countess, Lady Jean Gordon obtained a divorce from him in the Commissary Court of Edinburgh on grounds of adultery, and four days later Mary’s reconstituted consistorial court of the Archbishop of St. Andrews annulled the marriage on the grounds of propinquity. The following day Mary and Bothwell were married at Dunbar by a Protestant minister who was later deposed for this action.\textsuperscript{111}

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., II: 400, 415.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., II: 947, III: 53.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid., II: 492.

\textsuperscript{111} W.C. Dickinson, Scotland from Earliest Times to 1603. (Edinburgh, 1961), 343.
The reaction to all of this by Knox and the rank and file of the Protestants was violent and even the nobles who had signed the Supper bond felt that Bothwell had moved too far too fast. As soon as word of the kidnapping was out a number of nobles banded together to 'rescue' the Queen and steps were taken to raise men in the west and also to obtain Elizabeth's support. Others, however led by Moray, seized Mary and imprisoned her in Lochleven Castle. The reply to this action came from the Hamiltons supported by Argyll and Huntly, who on June 29th signed a bond along with various other lords and ecclesiastical dignitaries including Carswell, for her rescue. At the same time they also promised their support to Bothwell.

A "Queen's Party" composed mainly of western lords had now come into existence, and Argyll seems to have been the leader. They demanded that the murderers of Darnley be punished, the security of Mary's young son James be guaranteed and that Mary be released. They were not too effective, however, for those who had imprisoned Mary had two things in their favor. They had all the royal artillery and the support of Knox and the common people, particularly in urban centres such as Edinburgh, Perth and Dundee where money was available, but they were prepared to negotiate. It was reported to Elizabeth that Mary might turn over the government to Lennox, but he was incompatible with both the Hamiltons and Argyll. The former would prefer to have her killed rather than held by another faction, while Argyll desired to marry her to his brother. Whether this was true or not, four days later it had become a question of whether the country would be ruled by Moray as regent or by a committee of the earls, although both sides might turn to France if Elizabeth did not take some action. If she would back the lords in control and declare James her heir, they would undoubtedly send him to England. The same day (July 24, 1567) the report was written, Mary was pressured by her captors into agreeing to abdicate the throne in favor of her young son James, with Moray to be the regent. Five days later James was crowned King at which ceremony John Knox preached the sermon and five earls and eight lords took the

112 C.S.P., Scot, II: 50ff.

113 Ibid., II: 527, 551.

114 On this see Gordon Donaldson All the Queen's Men: Power and Politics in Mary Stewart's Scotland, (London 1983).

115 Ibid., II: 555, 560.
oath of allegiance. One of the earls was Argyll, who carried the sword of state.

As Moray seemed to have had some doubts about assuming the regency, the Privy Council appointed Argyll on July 25th to act in that capacity temporarily, or even permanently if Moray refused.\(^{116}\) Moray, however, after consultations with Argyll decided to accept the responsibility. In so doing he had to face immediately the question of Mary's future. Some of the nobles along with Knox and his supporters inclined to the idea that she should be executed. "The Queen's Party" opposed this and succeeded in persuading Moray to treat the Queen more leniently. The result was that by September 15th Moray could claim that the whole country, including Argyll, Huntly and the Hamiltons had submitted to his rule, and by December the Privy Council was operating smoothly with all the usual lords in attendance.\(^{117}\)

All was not well, however, for the Hamiltons led by Châtelherault, seemed to feel that they, not an illegitimate half-brother of the Queen, should be in charge. Argyll also seems to have considered himself on Mary's side for in March 1565 he occupied an important position on the Privy Council's committee to treat on articles concerning the Queen.\(^{118}\) Therefore, when Mary escaped from Lochleven in April it was not surprising to find the Hamiltons, Argyll and others of the western lords rallying to her cause. On the band her adherents signed on May 8th, the first name to appear was that of Argyll who once again became chief of the Queen's Party and rallied her forces against those of the Regent. When the two armies met at Langside on May 13th, Argyll commanded Mary's army, but before the commencement of hostilities he fell into a swoon which partially disrupted his forces and helped to bring about their defeat, resulting in Mary's flight to England.\(^{119}\) The Queen's supporters now either had to give in to the Regent or keep on fighting, but for a monarch in absentia. They chose the latter course under the Earl of Argyll.

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\(^{116}\) *R.P.C.*, I: 540.


\(^{118}\) *C.S.P., Scot*, II: 618; *R.P.C.*, I: 650.

\(^{119}\) *C.S.P., Scot*, II: 605, 655.
At this point, we must pause to consider the situation of Argyll. Since the mid 1550s he had been a mainstay of the Protestant party in close cooperation with Moray. He had not only pushed the Reformation in the Western Highlands and Isles, but had sided with those who had opposed Mary in the Chase-About Raid and who had participated in the murder of Riccio. Then just about the time of Darnley's murder or shortly afterwards he seems to have changed sides. While apparently remaining wholeheartedly Protestant he had become the leader of the Queen's Party against his old ally, the Earl of Moray. What caused this apparently sudden reversal of his political position?

Many explanations have been given for Argyll's change. Balfour Paul believes that he felt that Mary was badly treated by Moray and so took her part. But this hardly seems correct since as a member of the Council he had much to do with the way she was treated. Thomas M'Crie refers to Argyll's opposition to Moray as a family quarrel, but if this is so it is a little surprising that this conflict had not developed earlier; the causes of the earl's change-over would seem to be more complex. First of all there was his basic loyalty to the crown which he had earlier displayed. His support of Moray in the Chase-About Raid and Morton in Riccio's murder he could always justify on the ground that he was only assisting in ridding her of undesirable influences. It may be also, although we have no direct evidence for it, that he favored the removal of Darnley at Kirk o'Field, and may have been privy to the plot, with Mary's approval. Indeed, if he had been involved, might he not have felt it necessary to support her later lest his complicity be revealed? If this interpretation is correct, it might have had something to do with his swooning at Langside which some mistakenly attributed to lack of courage; he may rather have suffered from an attack of conscience. Besides these reasons he may have experienced a growing disenchantment with the Protestant party and its leaders. There was his displeasure with Knox's letter concerning his treatment of his wife. Probably he also disapproved of Knox's attempts to rouse the country against the Queen after her marriage to Bothwell. The General Assembly's tendency to control the superintendents and to read lectures to the nobility and the Queen may also have played their part. Finally the fact that he had acted temporarily as regent before Moray accepted the position may have whetted his appetite for power for which could be satisfied only by leading Mary's forces so bringing about her return. Probably all these influences were forces in his

120 S.P., i: 341.
decision, but which were the most powerful one cannot determine and he himself could hardly have articulated. Whatever the reasons he apparently did not see his support of Queen Mary as inconsistent with his continuing support of the Reformation, or if he did, he may have attempted to ease his conscience by being even more vigorous in promoting Protestantism throughout the west.

Mary may have left the country, but her departure by no means brought peace. On May 31st 1568 John Willock, superintendent of Lothian wrote to Cecil that Argyll, Huntly, and a number of others were continuing to stir up the country in her favor. A little later he added that they were doing their best to bring in the MacLeods, the MacLeans and the MacDonalds, but with no great success as the Highlanders were constantly fighting among themselves. The towns had remained loyal to the young King and some of the western lords had come in, but the country was sadly divided, and this in turn, was causing serious trouble for the Church.\footnote{C.S.P., Scot, II: 683, 688, 728.}

In all of this Argyll played an important part as leader of the Queen's Party. On July 28th at Largs as Mary's lieutenant he first of all issued a proclamation to all Queen's lieges to muster on August 10th with twenty days victuals at Glasgow against the party that had excluded Mary and was now threatening to forfeit those supporting her. At the same time the Queen's Party renewed their band of maintenance with the added warning to the burghs not to support Moray on pain of attack. They also issued a letter to Elizabeth calling upon her to restore Mary, as the treatment received by her was a bad example to the commons and dishonoring to princes.\footnote{Ibid., II: 741, 742, 744.}

Although Elizabeth recognized this last point quite well she was in a difficult position and to stall a little she talked of having a trial. Argyll, however, was back to his old tricks of attempting to force the English queen's hand by making covert threats against Ireland.\footnote{Ibid., II: 750, 763. Argyll disavowed any intention of invading Ireland with the forces he had raised in the Islands, which was probably true as he wanted to use them against Glasgow. He promised help to Elizabeth if she installed Mary. (780).} Elizabeth seems to have taken the hint and immediately put pressure
upon Moray who had called a meeting of parliament to forfeit the rebels, to take no such action. At the same time she persuaded Mary to command Argyll to cease his attacks on Moray. This helped a little but not much. Moray’s parliament declared forfeited the lands of ten men including Carswell and called upon Argyll and others of his noble supporters to come in and surrender on pain of dire penalties. Parliament then adjourned and betook itself to the relief of Glasgow which was under siege by Argyll and Huntly. Although they drove off the besiegers this did not settle the matter for Argyll then complained to Elizabeth, that it was because of her insistence that he did not attack Moray’s parliament which then condemned as traitors some of his followers. It was all Elizabeth’s fault and she had now better provide a remedy.

Since the Queen’s Party had failed to overthrow Moray they now started on another tack. They raised the question of whether Moray was the proper person to be regent, claiming that the country should be governed by the person next in line to the throne. Châtelherault would be the one to rule and failing him, Huntly or Argyll who came third on the list. This was obviously a move to gain the support of Elizabeth’s legitimist proclivities, but she was warned against falling into this trap. Meanwhile Mary from England was urging on her friends to attack the Regent’s party, particularly while he was in England presenting the evidence for her complicity in Darnley’s murder. Argyll responded by making a raid on Lennox’s land, but even more important he and Huntly issued a statement saying that Lethington had promised to free Mary from Darnley, and that he and Moray were the murderers. To this statement the Regent replied with a flat denial, which was at least outwardly accepted by Elizabeth who sent him back to Scotland with assurances of her support.

The backing of Elizabeth for Moray spelled the end of Mary’s hope of returning to Scotland although neither she nor her adherents

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124 Ibid., II: 759, 770.
125 Ibid., II: nos. 775, 781. Argyll undoubtedly alienated himself from the burgesses of the west coast by seizing some 200-300 fishing boats at the height of the fishing season. This action was no doubt in reprisal for Glasgow’s support of Moray. (no. 836).
126 Ibid., II: 866, 873.
127 Ibid., II: 915, 942, 947; H.M.C., Salisbury I: 1214, 1230, 1237.
recognized this fact. Mary continued to send letters to the leaders calling upon them to keep up the fight. They responded by demanding that Kirkcaldy hand over Edinburgh Castle which he refused, and they in turn refused to hand back the royal lands they had seized while Moray was in England. Moray, therefore, called for an army to meet at Glasgow on March 8, 1569 and to this move Mary replied by appointing Châtelherault, Huntly and Argyll her lieutenants to dispense justice, call parliaments and raise an army to fight Moray. Yet despite all this brave talk, rumours had already begun to fly around that Argyll and those with him had come to recognize the hopelessness of their position. On March 13th there were some preliminary but abortive discussions between representatives of the two groups, but by the end of May, Argyll and Moray had submitted and Huntly came in shortly afterwards. A frail peace was now established.

How frail the peace really was soon became apparent. At the end of July 1569 Moray called a convention of the nobility at Perth. Argyll did not attend but Carswell did. The convention considered Mary's claims to reinstatement and to a divorce from Bothwell, but rejected them both. The convention also prepared a band for protection of the King which they all signed, Argyll subscribing a special one later on in the same terms.

The reason for Argyll's absence would seem to have been another rift with the regent although that they had reportedly been newly reconciled once again. When Moray took action against some English Roman Catholics who invaded Scotland on Mary's behalf, Argyll went with him but when the Regent arrived back in Edinburgh at the beginning of January 1570, with some English prisoners, including the Earl of Northumberland, secret negotiations were commenced between the prisoners and the Queen's supporters, Argyll and Huntly who had now turned against the regent. The peace was about to collapse once more.

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128 C.S.P., Scot, II: 956, 964, 1008, 1011.
129 Ibid., II: 1019, 1075; Salisbury, I: 1275.
130 R.P.C., II: 2ff; C.S.P., Scot, II: 1115.
131 C.S.P., Scot, III: 38, 46, 47, 63, 80, 221.
The first manifestation of the revival of the Queen's Party was the assassination of the Regent Moray on January 23rd by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh. At this the hopes of Argyll and others of the Queen's Party were raised high. Argyll immediately laid plans to take over the government and to this end entered into negotiations with the Earl of Morton and Maitland of Lethington. At the same time, the Queen's supporters seemed to feel that if they could make an armed demonstration in her favor this would strengthen their hands, but most people did not want Mary back. Coupled with these efforts Argyll was straining every nerve to have Elizabeth recognize the Queen's Party as the ruling faction. On February 18th he wrote Randolph assuring him that he was prepared to give Elizabeth any service, saving his duty to Queen Mary, for he was anxious "for the advancement of God's glory and the common weal." These expressions of loyalty and faithfulness did not prevent the Earl of Sussex from arriving with a large army at the borders in search of the English rebels and Scottish reivers. The Queen's Party thereupon dispatched further missives to Elizabeth asking her to refrain from interfering in Scotland, but, at the same time, to help stop the conflict in Scotland by coming to some agreement with Mary. They also wrote Cecil asking that England guarantee "true religion" and internal peace. They added that if religious persecution should come none would be found more constant in the Protestant cause than Châtelherault, Huntly and Argyll, and closed by saying that he would have better assurance in dealing "with those who be the ancient nobility and born peers of Scotland" than with a small remnant who think only of their own gain. Yet despite all their efforts, the Earl of Lennox on July 12, 1570 became Regent.

Lennox's assumption of power still did not bring peace. The regent's party refused to accede to Mary's insistence that she should return, and in this they had English backing. Carswell negotiating with Cecil for the queen found him very unsympathetic, and the English Privy Council was inflexible in its demands. Mary must renounce her claims to the English throne, must guarantee that foreign troops would be kept out of the country, must hand over the English rebels along with Scottish hostages, and some fortalices must be placed in English hands.

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\[132\] _Ibid., III: 130._

\[133\] _Ibid., III: 178, 182, 185, Châtelherault, ten earls, fourteen lords, and a number of others signed the letters._

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Protestantism must be maintained and Lennox must be recognized as regent.\textsuperscript{134} With these terms Sir William Drury was then sent to negotiate with the two parties. The results at first seemed to be good. Châtelherault, Huntly and Argyll gave up their siege of Glasgow and went home, and in July, Argyll and Lennox met in Stirling to discuss a settlement. But nothing came of the talks and on July 31st Lennox wrote to Morton that as Argyll and Huntly were gathering forces at Lanark, he was to seek English aid as quickly as possible. It would seem that the convention of the Queen's Party was for the purpose of choosing representatives to negotiate with England. Mary had asked Argyll to assume the responsibility of heading the delegation, but he refused on the ground that he was not interested unless he could have some assurance of Mary's release.\textsuperscript{135} In the meantime, however, Argyll and the other members of the Queen's Party had come to the realization that despite their big talk they were actually a small minority, since most of their former allies had submitted to Lennox. Consequently, while negotiations were going on in England they signed a treaty with Sussex by which they agreed to accept the regent and hand over the English rebels.\textsuperscript{136}

All the talk and the agreements, however, came to nothing. The Queen's Party determined to make one more attempt to bring about Mary's return. Their representatives reopened negotiations with the English in March 1571 promising, if Mary were restored to her throne, hostages to include James VI, Châtelherault, Huntly and Argyll. The Earl of Morton on the other side took steps to try to bring about some form of reconciliation, actually opening conversations with Argyll and some of his allies.\textsuperscript{137} When this did not succeed he took direct action by defeating them in battle. Yet even this did not bring peace for the Bishop of Galloway preached a sermon the next day in Edinburgh in favor of the Queen, saying that though she were an adulteress let him that was without sin cast the first stone! In that congregation there

\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Ibid.}, III: 216, 218, 235.

\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Ibid.}, III: 250, 350, 389, 438, 452, 455.

\textsuperscript{136} \textit{Ibid.}, III: 461, 488, 492.

\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Ibid.}, III: 666, 781.
would be little response. The determination to carry on the fight for the queen also received encouragement from the French who now intervened. Henry III dispatched a M. Virac to take letters to Huntly and Argyll promising that he would do everything to bring Mary back, and would persuade her to forgive and forget the past. Unfortunately for Virac, Lennox captured his four coffers with all the correspondence, including letters from Argyll and others asking for men and money. 

French help under these circumstances could amount to nothing. Elizabeth and her councillors were anxious for peace in Scotland and so were most of the Scots, as indicated by the decline in numbers of the Queen's Party. Only a few like Châteherault and Argyll in the west, Huntly in the north and Kirkcaldy of Grange in Edinburgh Castle still held out, but even some of these were weakening. On July 24th Morton and Mar met with Argyll and some of the others for discussions, while both sides awaited suggested articles of agreement from Elizabeth. The Regent's Party controlled to a large extent by Morton was not prepared to wait too long. It called for parliament to meet on August 4th in Edinburgh with the threat that unless peace were achieved an attack would be made on the castle and forfeitures imposed. The effect was that on August 12th agreement was reached with the earls of Argyll, Cassillis and Eglington who because of the anarchy submitted. In return all crimes were remitted except those which involved participation in the murders of Darnley or Moray. All friends of Argyll and the other signatories were also to be received on the same terms. Argyll was once more a King's man.

Although Argyll was now ostensibly the vassal of James VI and obedient to the regent, many problems still required solution, for Châteherault and Huntly still remained obdurately on the Queen's side. The day after he had submitted therefore, Argyll wrote Châteherault a letter defending his action. His three reasons for his submission were that the country was in a state of anarchy and James was de facto king while Mary, a prisoner in England, could do nothing. Consequently he felt it his duty to seek Scotland's peace. When Châteherault and Huntly replied by asking him to come to Edinburgh to discuss the

138 Ibid., III: 805.
139 Ibid., III: 806, 832.
140 Ibid., III: 840, 847, 852, 864.
disposition of the crown, apparently by English arbitration, he refused, declaring that no foreign prince had authority. On the other hand, he did not turn up in parliament until some time after those still of the Queen's Party, Chaletherault, Huntly and others had been adjudged forfeited, and he apparently let it be known that henceforth he was going to take no active part in politics. Yet even this did not win him the trust of Drury, the English emissary, nor perhaps of the Earl of Morton. Some thought that he and others had submitted merely to escape forfeiture, rather than because of any loyalty to the King. This surmise may be borne out by the fact that he promised to resign his lieutenancy to the queen if he were given the lands of Dunkeld. Drury summed him up with the judgement that he was "very inconstante and respecteth no promyss." Obviously he was no longer trusted by either side.

On the death of Lennox, the Earl of Morton undoubtedly hoped that he would obtain the position of regency but many of the King's Party did not favour him. One cannot but wonder if Argyll's serious sickness at this time may not have been to a certain extent political as it would keep him from becoming involved in the choice. But whether it was or not, the Earl of Mar became the third regent. A middle-of-the road type of person he might be able to bring peace by compromise.

Argyll accepted Mar's appointment with a good deal of enthusiasm. He apparently felt that it would be possible to bring the civil war to an end by negotiation. He now became active in seeking to persuade various Islesmen to come in and submit, and early in 1572 he was also busy trying to negotiate the surrender of Edinburgh Castle and a general peace. In this endeavour he was in complete agreement with Elizabeth who had proposed that the Privy Council should be made up of representatives of both parties. Furthermore he was also prepared to agree to the restoration of the lands of those forfeited the preceding

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141 Ibid., III: 869, 875.
142 Ibid., III: 892, 895, 898, 911.
143 Ibid., IV: no. 7.
144 Ibid., IV: 115, 145, 149.
August and the pardoning of all their offences except murder. On these terms Argyll and the others all received full remission, but those actually forfeited would not submit because Morton and the others who had obtained their lands refused to give them back. The lines were thus drawn hard and fast. The dejected Queen's Party continued its rebellion with Edinburgh Castle as the focal point of infection.

The hope of the regent and his forces was that they might draw the Castilians out of Edinburgh for a battle on open ground. Kirkealdy and Maitland, however, were much too "cannie" to be so foolish. Consequently close siege was the only alternative since the regent did not have sufficient forces to take the castle by storm. Argyll brought in some 300 Highlanders who were posted in the villages round about Edinburgh in order to cut off all supplies, but they accomplished little.

Certain cracks now began to appear in the solid front of the King's Party when it met at Perth to establish an alliance among themselves. What this alliance was to be, or against whom is not stated. It failed to materialize for Argyll and Athol divided on the issue of the lands of the Bishopric of Dunkeld recently granted to Argyll although Athol had been receiving the rents from them for some years. Added to this the French again intervened sending money to the Castilians and promising orders and pensions to others including Argyll. The earl thereupon planned to go to France immediately to obtain the fulfillment of the promise. Under these circumstances the siege of the Castle hardly went forward expeditiously.

Then came the death of the Earl of Mar on October 28, 1572. Again a regent had to be chosen. Argyll immediately entered the lists, seeking the support of the Castilians and other former allies in his quest of the office. Presumably he felt that his former position as Queen's Lieutenant would open up the way for him as one who could bring peace by negotiation. He was, however, entirely unsuccessful. Killigrew explained that even his friends would not support him because he was implicated in the murder of Darnley, he was connected with the Hamiltons by marriage which gave him some claim to the crown, and

146 Ibid., IV: 242.
147 Ibid., IV: 345, 398.
last of all he was poor with his lands in a wild country. While the last argument probably did not carry much weight particularly as it was not entirely correct, the other two indicated that the Scots did not want anyone as regent who might find it advantageous to do away with the young King. Another reason for their doubts may have been that they did not consider Argyll entirely stable in his conduct generally. Yet when it soon became apparent that the only alternative to Argyll was the ruthless Earl of Morton, the Castilians and their friends began to look upon Argyll’s candidacy with great favour.\(^\text{148}\) But whatever their wishes might have been it was Morton who took over the dangerous post of regent.

One of Morton’s first acts after assuming office was to try to win over the remaining leaders of the Queen’s Party, particularly Châtelherault and Huntly. To accomplish this difficult task he enlisted the support of the Earl of Argyll to whom he gave the responsibility of conducting the negotiations. Apparently Argyll and the others who had already come in were by this time in favor of Morton, so that when he summoned parliament to meet in January 1573, he had a reasonably good attendance of nobles headed by Argyll as chancellor. Of all the actions taken in this session, probably the most important to Argyll was the act of oblivion that exonerated him and all other noblemen who had returned to the King’s obedience from any civil or criminal charge that could be brought against them. This finally and formally cleared Argyll of any prosecution for complicity in Darnley’s murder, an act that must have provided some relief of mind.\(^\text{149}\)

Meanwhile the siege of Edinburgh Castle continued. Huntly who had not yet submitted was trying to find some means of bringing about a negotiated peace and surrender of the Castle and kept writing Argyll on this matter. The latter was clearly interested in the same objective, and to this end called for a conference with Huntly at Perth. There on February 23rd Huntly and Lord John Hamilton second son of Châtelherault, after long negotiation with Argyll and others, agreed to submit to the King and the Regent Morton. Huntly agreed to become a Protestant and to practice nothing to the detriment of the crown or

\(^{148}\) Ibid., IV: 464, 476.

\(^{149}\) Ibid., IV: 517.
religion. Another of the Queen's Party had given up the struggle.\(^{150}\)

Loyalty to the King and his regent appeared to be a somewhat uncertain commodity even among leaders such as Argyll. At least this was Killigrew's view of the situation. In December 1572 when the Regent had been very sick he had suggested that if he should die, Argyll might take his place and that a pension might help to keep him in line with English policy.\(^{151}\) Then early in March he reported that the King of France, to gain the loyalty of Argyll, Athol and others was offering them large bribes which he felt Elizabeth herself could not be induced by some modest payments. The English representative suggested that an outlay of £1200 per annum would do the trick, £500 for the regent with £200 each going to Argyll, Huntly and Boyd. Apparently the suggestion was accepted, for shortly afterwards Killigrew reported that Argyll was very loyal to Elizabeth and was striving to bring Athol to the same position.\(^{152}\) As one reads Killigrew's reports one cannot but suspect that the Scots and the English were in fact playing a game. Did the French ever make any offers or was this a figment of the Scots' imagination in order to pry money out of Elizabeth? At the same time the English pensions also seem to have been mainly promises, without much concrete result. The whole performance has an air of unreality. The one thing that was undoubtedly completely genuine was the Scots' desire for English gold.\(^{153}\)

Their need, however, was for English armed might, since Kirkcaldy in Edinburgh Castle still held out. He had seized part of the town and was prepared to fight on. Morton, on the other hand, was determined to take the fortress since it was the last place of effective resistance to his and the king's rule. He, therefore asked for an English army, offering to give hostages to guarantee its proper reception in Scotland.\(^{154}\) Argyll took his full share in this last phase of the campaign to reduce the whole country to James's obedience, offering his

\(^{150}\) Ibid., IV: 526, 536, 528, 559; R.P.C., II: 193.

\(^{151}\) C.S.P., Scot, IV: 494.

\(^{152}\) Ibid., IV: 576, 584, 586.

\(^{153}\) Ibid., IV: 565, 584. Argyll was also anxious to buy some English horses. Killigrew recommended that he be given permission to "keep him in devotion."

\(^{154}\) Ibid., IV: 594.
favourite (illegitimate) son as one of the hostages, and participating vigorously in planning for the attack when the English army arrived. Possibly because he may have heard that Killigrew had reminded Elizabeth of his pension, he assured the regent that by reason of her good will to James he would serve her, next to his own king, before any other. Mary had lost all her influence over him.

With English assistance it was not long before the Castle fell and its commander hanged for treason. Only in the west did any resistance continue where Lord Sempill and George Douglas held the Abbey of Paisley against the government. As Justice General, therefore, Argyll was appointed to subdue Sempill and take over the Abbey which he proceeded to do. Thus by September 1st Scotland was at last reduced to the obedience of James VI and the Regent Morton.

The Earl of Argyll after some fifteen years of constant warfare was now at peace. Furthermore, on June 22, 1573 he finally gained a divorce from his first wife, and in August he married Janet Cunningham the daughter of the Earl of Glencarn. His new situation, however, did not last long for on September 15th 1573 at the age of thirty-five he died suddenly.

The fifth Earl of Argyll was in his own day and still is an enigmatic person. He was turbulent and very often unpredictable, as can be seen by the comments of various contemporaries who charged him with dishonesty and instability. No doubt in some respects they were quite correct. At the same time one must keep in mind the fact that although he possessed wide lands, he was probably, in those days of rising prices rather short of hard cash. This would partially explain his actions. Also, as a leading magnate he held a position of great political importance. This no doubt carried considerable weight in his thinking, particularly in his relation with Queen Mary. He had a position to maintain as a loyal servant of the queen, a conviction that

155 Ibid., IV: 605, 625, 632, 636.
156 Ibid., IV: 605, 616.
158 S.P., I: 342.
may have been the dominant motive of his actions from 1557 on.

His Protestantism was his second dominant motive for he never seems to have wavered in his adherence to the Reformation. At the crucial times when the fate of Protestantism was hanging in the balance, he was always ready and prepared to make his own position perfectly clear, going so far as to refuse to attend the baptism of Prince James because it was to be according to the Roman Catholic rite. Furthermore, although he was a strong adherent of Mary he also supported John Carswell in the expansion of the Reformed church throughout the western Highlands and Isles. He was thus one of those largely responsible for Protestantism's victory.

To understand the fifth Earl of Argyll one must take both of these factors, his loyalty to the Queen and his Protestantism, into account. To Knox, Randolph and others of his own day and to most interpreters today whatever their religious stripe, he was attempting to harmonize two irreconcilables. If Mary should win, ultimately Protestantism would lose. He knew this from what had happened on the Continent, as well as from what he saw Mary accomplishing in Scotland between 1565 and 1567. If the Reformation should win there could be little doubt that Mary would either have to conform or leave the country. He probably saw this at times himself and the resulting inner conflict may have been responsible for what appear to have been his inexplicable actions such as his swooning before Langside, or his self-contradictory manoeuvres when he would submit to a regent and then almost immediately afterwards rejoin the Queen's Party. In all of this he was not very different from a good many other nobles but his dominant position in the Highlands and Islands gave all his actions particular significance in the first twelve crucial years of the Scottish Reformation.