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David II, King of Scotland (1329-1371): a political biography

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David II, King of Scotland (1329-1371): A Political Biography

by

Bruce Robert Homann

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Agricultural History and Rural Studies

Major Professor: Kenneth G. Madison

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2001

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David II King of Scotland (1329-1371)

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This work examines the life and reign of David II, King of Scotland from 1329 to 1371. Whenever possible, original source material was used. Using charter and chronicle evidence, an itinerary for David II has been developed as well as an accounting of the major points of his reign. A detailed examination of David's life and activities has revealed heretofore unknown aspects of his career, including more frequent trips to Scotland, and an interpretation of his accomplishments and a brief discussion of his sudden death.

Graduate College
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This is to certify that the Doctoral dissertation of
Bruce Robert Homann
has met the dissertation requirements of Iowa State University

Signature was redacted for privacy.

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For the Major Program

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~~For the Graduate~~ College

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INTRODUCTION

Only recently, since the beginning of the twentieth century, has fourteenth-century Scotland received much examination. With the exception of the works of such scholars as G. W. S. Barrow (who has done an excellent biography on Robert I, king of Scotland), and a handful of other authors who have provided general overviews of Scotland, in-depth examinations of this period of Scottish history have largely been ignored by most scholars.¹ This deficiency of scholarship extends to the topic of this work, David II, king of Scotland from 1329 to his death in 1371.

David II, king of Scotland from 1329 to his death in 1371, reigned over forty years and had an undeniable effect on medieval Scottish history. However, the lack of current scholarship directly associated with David II (born in 1324), only reinforces the conception of him most nineteenth and twentieth century historians have as a weak and do-nothing king. Certain undeniable facts seem to support this view: namely his government in exile in France during his formative years; his subsequent capture and imprisonment for eleven years during what could have been the height of his power; and an attempted rebellion by his heir apparent and two of his most powerful nobles. All three illustrate such weakness. However, David II not only overcame these handicaps to his

¹ Only recently within the last fifteen years has there been a resurgence of scholarly work on the fourteenth century.

reign but also left his mark on Scotland's future. David II, king of Scotland from 1329 to 1371, influenced the fourteenth century more than any other Scottish historical figure of the period with the possible exception of his father, Robert I. I intend to show through a presentation of the facts that David II was not a weak or indecisive king totally given over to self-indulgence, but a strong monarch that helped lead Scotland through a difficult time not of his own creation.

During the last decade of the thirteenth century and the early decades of the fourteenth century, the Scots fought the great War for Scottish Independence. It generated heroes (such as William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, and the "Good Sir James" Douglas to name a few) who live on in legend even today. Great families fell, and lesser families rose to prominence. The legacy left behind at the war's end in 1327 with the Treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton, namely Scottish unity, lasted a scant five years.

However, the impact of the accomplishments of the Bruce and his allies did not totally dissolve when Edward Balliol, the Pretender, marched north to assume the throne in 1332. The Scots recognized the need for unity. Unfortunately, they were just as unable to get behind a single man effectively as they had been during the Interregnums of 1286 to 1292 and 1296 to 1306.² They had as their choices of rallying points a weak

² Two of the problems the Scots had were their fierce independence and political infighting. The nobility was unwilling to act as a whole behind

and adolescent Robert Stewart,³ their boy-king's heir, the boy-king David II himself, or yet another Guardian of Scotland.

The Scots chose the last. Only a few farsighted individuals had the honor and strength of will to support yet another option, the institution of the Crown itself. (David II rewarded these loyalists handsomely upon his return to Scotland after nearly a decade in exile.) Even so the Scots saw limited success until all three rallying points became in fact the same. With the king's heir, crown loyalists, and the Guardian all supporting the idea of the Crown, the Scots finally rekindled a portion of what burned so brightly for them during the 1320s, nascent nationalism.

Throughout the bulk of his minority, David II contributed to the cause only by the use of his family name as a focus for the Scottish patriots of his time. Royal holdings in Scotland nearly disintegrated by the mid-1330s. They would have entirely disappeared had it not been for the efforts of the Guardian Andrew Moray and a few others acting for the crown. Moray slowly revived the loyalists and began the arduous task of regaining lost land, strongholds, and allegiances from the puppet king, Edward Balliol.⁴

one man during these periods, which created the problem. And no single strong ruler appeared to take that position.

³ Later King Robert II (1371-1390).

⁴ This was the same Moray that was captured while trying to capture Balliol in 1332. He was to remain inactive for approximately two years after his release from captivity. Edward III allowed him to be ransomed in 1333.

By 1342, David II returned to a nearly recovered Scotland. He rewarded those he deemed loyal, such as Sir Malcolm Fleming, as well as those who needed rewarding because it was the politic thing to do (Robert the Steward comes to mind). David II began an aggressive campaign against the English to recover what lands remained in English hands. By 1346, David II succeeded well enough to raid on English soil, an action that provoked confrontation with an English army at Neville's Cross.

Neville's Cross proved a turning point in David II's career. The king found himself wounded and placed in captivity for the next eleven years. This created opportunity for the more ambitious members of the Scottish nobility not only to regain more Scottish lands for Scotland, but also to advance their own personal causes at the expense of the king's authority. To be sure, the Scots retained a Guardian in the name of the heir-apparent Robert the Steward, but it soon became obvious that the Steward was more interested in advancing his own personal power than in bringing David II home.

David II survived his captivity by consorting with the enemy. He enjoyed the courtesy of Edward III and may even have become an admirer. Some scholars have suggested a possible friendship between the two as David II upon his return to Scotland was said to have emulated Edward III's love of pageantry. Whether or not this was true, David II's return

certainly affected the Steward and his allies in ways they had not considered plausible.

Assuming that David II stood a good chance of allowing the Steward to continue his administration of the land, Robert expected more honor than he received, even though David yet again richly rewarded him upon his return from captivity. From 1357 to his death in 1371 at the age forty-seven, David II ruled Scotland more absolutely than the Steward cared for. He did so with a style all his own, having learned from some of the best examples possible during his years of exile and captivity.

David II learned much while away from his homeland in how to govern a kingdom without the permission of the greatest nobles of his kingdom. Scottish lords had a difficult time accepting this, being used to a near absolute control of their own domains and subsequently Scotland itself. Indeed the greatest of these nobles, the heir-apparent Robert the Steward himself, viewed David II's governmental style with such contempt he engineered a rebellion with one of his long time companions William Douglas, the newly created earl of Douglas.

With the aid of several of his closest confidants, David II succeeded in quickly breaking the back of the rebellion and humbling Robert the Steward. After his last and final return from foreign soil, David II used lesser noblemen in key posts throughout his kingdom to guarantee action when he needed it. The king of Scotland no longer had to rule at the pleasure of

his nobility as long as he controlled key offices with men loyal only to himself, a kind of Scottish *ministeriales*.

These men aided David II in carrying out policy where the nobility may have argued. The best of them, Archibald Douglas, went on after David II's death to become major nobility in his own right, ending his days much more powerful than even David II envisioned.

It is my intention through close examination of the reign of David II to show that he was not a weak king, nor as incompetent as many historians would have him appear. David II made significant contributions to foreign as well as domestic policy and helped bring the Scots out of an era fraught with conflict. By his release in 1357, David II emerged as politically astute and savvy as Edward III appeared when dealing with internal and external foes. David's government dealt with some difficult problems: a declining work force, an exorbitant ransom which Scotland was at the very least unwilling and at the most unable to pay, English lords in possession of Scottish lands along the borders, and an erstwhile ally in the French for support in the Scots wars against England. Far from the do-nothing king some scholars choose to see him as, David II earned the honor that went with the Bruce name.

CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW

The source material for the study of David II's reign comes from basically two types: chronicles and governmental records. Due to the fact that Scotland did not enjoy premier status amongst European nations during the middle ages, chronicles that actually cite their events remain few. In addition, nearly all the contemporary fourteenth-century chronicles contain a decided English bias as most of them were written either by Englishmen or in England. Scottish chronicles of the period are based on works completed shortly after the death of David II. It is not possible to determine what additional sources were available to the Scottish chroniclers than the English, but almost invariably the bias found in them is neither as strong as the pro-English bias found in English chronicles, nor is it specifically pro Scotland in its entirety. Numbers and descriptions of events are generally more accurate. By contrast, one can never be sure of those facts if one looks, for example, at ballads. They tend not only to popularize certain events, but also to place certain people in places they could not have been, or doing things we know from other sources that they could not possibly have done.

Several chronicles are more important with respect to Scotland in the fourteenth century than the rest. The Frenchman Froissart wrote a chronicle about the first half of

the Hundred Years War. The chronicle itself is concerned mainly with the events of the war on the continent, but occasionally Scotland, being at certain times important to the progress of the war for both the French and the English, does make an appearance. Froissart actually went to Scotland during the second half of the fourteenth century reportedly to research his chronicle. One might expect a contemporary account such as this to hold immense value and be highly accurate when describing events. Unfortunately, historians have long taken great pains to point out the inaccuracy of his work. Froissart appears not nearly as well informed as one might hope when examined through other corroborating sources about specifics involved in certain events. Nevertheless, his general history of the period is quite useful.

Another chronicle equally important to the subject is Andrew of Wyntoun's Original Chronicle. Not much is known of Andrew of Wyntoun, other than that he "... became a canon-regular in the Augustine Priory of St. Andrews; that he was about or shortly after 1393 made Prior of St. Serf's in Lochleven; that documentary references show him still in office as prior, apparently until the close of 1421."⁵ He lived until at least 1421, for petitions to the Pope

⁵ Andrew Wyntoun, The Original Chronicle of Andrew Wyntoun. with an Introduction by F. J. Amours, (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1914), vol. 1, p. xxxiii.

concerning him exist in December of that year.⁶ Wyntoun almost certainly used John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation, as a source although he never recognized him other than as an anonymous author. Nevertheless, there are several passages lifted directly from Fordun. Some rationale for this behavior might stem from his reported dislike of Fordun, as he is generous in his acknowledgements of others.⁷ Regardless, Wyntoun wrote as a near contemporary of David II, providing a useful interpretation of events which concurs with those of his fellow authors on the subject.

In the late fourteenth century John of Fordun wrote his Chronicle of the Scottish Nation, from the "earliest times"; his presentation of the legendary period is doubtless conjectural unless he had access to information that has since been lost. Unfortunately, his treatment of the latter fourteenth century is superficial. He makes few references to David II and his young protégé Archibald "the Grim," although he does expand to a certain degree our knowledge of other earlier magnates, particularly earlier Douglases in the "Good Sir James" and William, the first earl.

Far more valuable is Walter Bower's the Scotichronicon, which supplements and continues Fordun. Bower's

⁶ Wyntoun, pp. xxx-xxxv.

⁷ Wyntoun, pp. xxxix-xl. With respect to his writing, Wyntoun wrote in Old Scots prose making for difficult reading at some points, but his modern editor, F.J. Amours, provides a glossary and notes to the text.

Scotichronicon, published until recently only in Latin, has frequently been confused with other works. In 1722, Thomas Hearne, an English antiquarian, published John of Fordun's chronicle under the name of the Scotichronicon.⁸ While it remains true that Bower expanded and continued Fordun's work, their works have always been separate. In 1977, a team of Scottish scholars began work on a new edition. This edition is a translation with the corresponding Latin text on the facing page, along with notes concerning the various manuscripts of the Scotichronicon and notes on the text itself. It is a definitive work, not only on Bower, but also for the bulk of fourteenth-century Scottish history's primary sources.

The Book of Pluscarden, an abridged edition of Bower's Scotichronicon, appeared after Bower's death.⁹ This work has been translated. However, as it was published after Bower's death, some things in its text are different from Bower's original. These changes are not fundamental, merely differences or exaggerations in numbers, usually prices, wages, costs, numbers of troops, or numbers of people present at a particular event, all of which are frequently suspiciously high. Therefore, Bower's figures will be used if the actual figures are for some reason relevant to the discussion. A possible explanation for these discrepancies

⁸ Walter Bower, Scotichronicon. ed. by D. E. R. Watt, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), vol. 8, p. ix.

resides in the fact that this work was transcribed at a later date, some thirty to eighty years after Bower's death.

Chroniclers of all ages have the habit of changing information slightly to suit what they have either heard, thought, or in some cases discovered.

Two other more decidedly English chronicles are also important to this work, the Chronicle of Lanercost and Knighton's Chronicle, written by Henry Knighton. The former chronicle was composed by the monks at Lanercost, England, near the border of Scotland and England yet remaining in England. Lanercost felt the sting of frequent depredations whenever the Scots crossed the borders on a raid into the English countryside. As a result, the Lanercost chronicle is decidedly anti-Scottish, and anti-David II. For example, the chronicler on different occasions refers to David as a "wicked king" or "David the Defaecator" and associates David with the devil in pronouncing judgement on a captured knight.¹⁰

Knighton, a fourteenth century English contemporary, keeps his writing more to facts than does the Lanercost chronicler. However like many chroniclers, he gives implausible numbers of troops and payments, such as Balliol entering Scotland after the Battle of Neville's Cross with over three hundred thousand

⁹ Bower, vol. 8, pp.ix-x.

¹⁰ The Chronicle of Lanercost 1272-1346. translated by Sir Herbert Maxwell, (Glasgow: James Maclehose and Sons, 1913), pp. 331-335.

men, or accepting the sum of £9,000 from certain Scottish towns in payments for protection from his troops.¹¹

Other chronicles exist but of much less importance for the purposes of this work. Sources such as the Anonimalle Chronicle and Ranulph Higden's Polychronicon contain valuable information for the period, but little specifically relating to the topic at hand. However, one last chronicle does hold a certain importance and relevance, the *Scalacronica* by Sir Thomas Gray. Gray was himself captured by the Scots near the time of David II's release from his English prison, and was kept for several years in some comfort at Edinburgh castle where he proceeded to write his chronicle. Even though Gray was English, and thus had an English bias, he reports certain events that appear in few other places, for instance the death of Katharine Mortimer on the road near Soutra.¹² His chronicle concerns the events of England also, and while he relates information about Scotland found in few other places, he did not write his chronicle specifically for the Scots but rather more for his king, Edward III.

The primary chronicle sources record the actions of various individuals they have interest in, including apparent prejudices along with the facts. However, there also exist

¹¹ George Martin, ed. and trans., Knighton's Chronicle 1337-1396. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 76-79.

¹² Sir Thomas Gray, Scalacronica; the Reigns of Edward I, Edward II, and Edward III. trans. Sir Herbert Maxwell, (Glasgow: J. Maclehose & Sons, 1907)

other sources of information, namely charters, grants, supplications, calendars, registers, exchequer and chamberlain accounts, legal codes, ballads, and even local folklore. Some of the listed sources provide more accurate versions of the facts than others. For example, royal acts such as charters and grants can provide an accurate picture of the important individuals, residing or traveling with the king, at a particular point during a year, through the list of witnesses to charters issued by the king.

Some dangers of using grants and charters also reveal themselves, especially English charters of approximately the same period, for the accuracy of these witness lists is under debate over whether or not they accurately represent people present on the day of issuance.¹³ While discrepancies in England may be checked using other sources, in Scotland very few alternate sources exist. Also, Scottish monarchs had not changed from the policy of frequent travel across the kingdom yet, issuing charters and grants as they went, because of the consistent unrest in some of the more remote and/or independent areas of the kingdom.

Let us turn to a discussion of the charters issued under the Great Seal of the king of Scotland. The evidence I have derived from these charters comes mainly from the witness lists. Each charter, regardless of who issued it, has at the

¹³ Bruce Webster, ed., Regesta Regum Scottorum: The Acts of David II (Edinburgh: University Press, 1982), pp. 8, 9.

end of the body of the text a list of the people who gathered to witness the act for future generations. Information gathered from these lists not only explains the nature of the grant or charter (i.e., from whom to whom), but also, by virtue of association, allies and possibly even retainers. There are two volumes of primary importance, both of which contain royal acts, in the Regesta Regum Scottorum series: The Acts of David II, 1329-1371, and the Register of the Great Seal. Other primary source documents include the Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland, the Papal Registers, the Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum (the accounts of the exchequer), and the Compota Camerariorum Scotiae (the accounts of the chamberlain), each of varying importance for the purposes of this work.

Most important of these works for information concerning associations with possible allies are the Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland and the Regesta. These two works give more information with respect to associations in one manner or another than any of the other sources. Charters comprise most of the evidence from the Regesta, while such things as writs, commands, letters, safe conducts, and negotiations with the king's council make up much of the information from the Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland. Various other documents, such as the Warrants for Issues and Indentures of War, provide some interesting information concerning the placement and holders of some

offices, but provide little or no information relevant to David's kingship.

I have searched other documents at the Public Record Office in England, notably the Miscellanea of the Chancery, or the Chancery Rolls. Also the Roman Rolls, Accounts Various Army Navy and Ordinance, and Issues Rolls have been examined and found lacking for the type of documents necessary to this work. The Chancery Rolls contain some mention of calls to arms and raising of troops for campaigns against the Scots, including the punitive expedition mounted after the Battle of Neville's Cross.¹⁴ Issue Rolls as they relate to this work are concerned primarily with outlays of cash to various individuals for upkeep or transportation of individuals. It is here that one may find evidence of how well David II lived during his captivity and the expense the English king incurred in keeping him.

Unlike the previous works, the Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum and the Compota Camerariorum Scotiae provide information concerning the amount of money individuals received from the king by way of reimbursement or as payment for services rendered, more specifically as they related to David and his kingship. For example, the exchequer rolls list Sir Archibald Douglas as receiving certain funds for his position as custodian of Edinburgh castle in 1362.¹⁵ Usually,

¹⁴ PRO, Miscellany of the Chancery, C47/2/60/(34).

¹⁵ George Burnett, ed. Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum (Edinburgh: Neill and Company, 1878), vol. 2, p. 92.

reimbursements for outlays made in the name of the crown or in the kingdom's interests and approved of by the king appear along with a brief description on what the money was spent.

Secondary sources have drawn from the primary source material in a manner with varying degrees of effectiveness. Some scholars, such as Ranald Nicholson and Bruce Webster, have undertaken as unbiased a view possible while performing a thorough review of all the primary source material at hand. Others, such as P. Hume Brown; Fitzroy Maclean; William Croft Dickinson; John Hill Burton (historiographer royal for Scotland); J. D. Mackie and Patrick Fraser Tytler have looked at primary sources incompletely. As a result, they have an incomplete and popularized view of David's accomplishments and reign.

For example, Hume Brown states that, "in spite of the desires and endeavors of David II, Scotland found itself a free and independent kingdom at his death."¹⁶ Tytler found that his "inconsistent wavering and contradictory line of policy, ... was the effect of his passion and caprice."¹⁷ He continues by saying that it "is humiliating to think that the early death of the only son of Robert the Bruce must have been regarded as a blessing, rather than a calamity, by his country."¹⁸ Mackie saw David II as "ineffective when he was at

¹⁶ P. Hume Brown, History of Scotland to the Present Time, vol. 1, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1911), p. 145.

¹⁷ Patrick Tytler, The History of Scotland: from the Accession of Alexander III to the Union, vol. 1, (Edinburgh: William P. Nimmo, 1869), p. 231.

¹⁸ Tytler, p. 232.

home."¹⁹ Burton boldly illustrates his distaste for David II even in his table of contents where he complains about David II's "unsatisfactory conduct ... [and] ... secret arrangements."²⁰ Dickinson accuses David II of negotiating with Edward III in a manner unworthy of the son of Robert the Bruce.²¹ MacLean also determined David II "far from being a worthy son of his father."²² Even an article by E. W. M. Balfour Melville accused David II of striving "in league with Edward III to induce his subjects to accept the English overlordship against which their fathers had fought long and successfully."²³ Such views of David II preclude an overall accurate picture of his reign.

This type of treatment of historical figures is unfortunate but is more common throughout the field than one might expect. Having discussed briefly the nature of the source material for David II, one must also have an overview of Scotland in the middle of the fourteenth century.

Fourteenth-century Scotland began in a turbulent manner. A war of rebellion against English rule raged back and forth across the Scoto-English border. Occasionally, the Scots won a battle enabling them, with their new leader, William

¹⁹ John Mackie, A History of Scotland, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1964), p. 89.

²⁰ John Hill Burton, The History of Scotland, vol. 2, second edition, (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1873), p. xi.

²¹ William Croft Dickinson, Scotland: from the earliest times to 1603, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1965), p. 183.

²² Fitzroy Maclean, A Concise History of Scotland, (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), p. 47.

²³ E. W. M. Balfour-Melville, Edward III and David II. (London: George Philip & Son, 1954), p. 22.

Wallace, to strike the infrequent blow upon England, which generally served to infuriate King Edward I of England. It appalled him that the Scots would not simply lie down and accept the governance of the realm by their "rightfully acknowledged overlord." Certainly he had just cause to be upset, for the Scots could not seem to agree on anything amongst themselves as evidenced by the participation of Scots in the war on both sides. Perhaps Edward thought he truly deserved to be overlord of Scotland; he certainly did desire it. He was determined to bring the Scots to their knees for their continued disobedience.

While Wallace remained in charge of Scotland's army in rebellion, this remained possible, not because Wallace was incompetent, but because the Scottish nobility had trouble allowing Wallace, an extremely able commander but not a highborn noble, to lead them along with the commoners that made up the bulk of his army. After Edward crushed Wallace's rebellion and allowed most of the dissident Scots to come back into the fold, it looked as if there would finally be peace for a while, to Edward anyway.²⁴ Little did he suspect that a noble in the person of Robert Bruce, earl of Carrick, would turn Scotland against him once more with a more devastating result.

²⁴ Two Scots that were not repatriated were, of course, Wallace, whom Edward rightly saw as probably the most serious threat to him because of his exceptional military skill, and William "the Tough" Douglas, father of the "Good Sir James," who he thought would never surrender to English rule. In this, Edward was most certainly correct.

Leading a new revolt against the English in 1306, Robert Bruce had a few advantages that escaped Wallace. First, his highborn family did not suffer from relative obscurity as did Wallace. Second, Robert Bruce happened to be the grandson in direct descent of Robert Bruce the Competitor, who along with a dozen others had vied for the throne of Scotland when it became vacant at the death of Alexander III in 1286. Third, this Robert Bruce had served Edward well against the Scots of the previous revolt, possibly allowing him some small amount of time while Edward recuperated from his shock at Bruce's treachery.

With the help of several other key individuals over the next twenty-two years, including the "Good Sir James" Douglas, William Lamberton Bishop of St. Andrews, Edward Bruce (Robert's brother), and Thomas Randolph (his nephew), Robert Bruce succeeded in gaining a lasting independence for Scotland from England. Unfortunately for Scotland, he then promptly died in 1329, supposedly of leprosy, though this remains uncertain as there exists no proof of the cause of death.²⁵ He left as co-regents Randolph and Douglas, an arrangement he knew would cause problems for the kingdom. King Robert knew that Douglas had proven himself the more able commander and certainly the more loyal, for Randolph had originally sided

²⁵ Ranald Nicholson, Scotland: The Later Middle Ages (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1974), pp. 121-2.

with the English. However, Randolph was the king's nephew, and though rash, would be followed more readily by the rest of the nobility because of his kinship with the king. Therefore on his deathbed, King Robert made Douglas promise to go on crusade and convey his heart to the Holy Land, knowing that the two strong personalities of Randolph and Douglas would not work well together. While this seemed a good plan to Robert and indeed showed great prudence, disaster pounced on the Scots when they had finally achieved all of their goals.

Douglas never made it to the Holy Land. He stopped off in Spain to fight the Muslims (which was acceptable as a crusade) where he met his death in battle, reportedly with the heart of Bruce around his neck. Within two years, Randolph had also died, leaving the kingdom in the hands of Sir Andrew of Moray. As if this were not enough, Edward III of England, from whose government the Scots had finally won recognition in 1328 with the treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton, came forcibly to his majority in 1330.

The life of David II began with all the advantages one might expect. Robert Bruce, David II's father, created a Scotland for David that was united, internally peaceful, prosperous, protected by powerful allies, and able to project real power for the first time since the king of Scots William the Lion (1165-1214) in the twelfth century. Robert forced the English to sign the humiliating Treaty of Edinburgh-

Northampton in 1328, guaranteeing David II's indisputable succession to the throne of a truly independent Scotland. A scant one year later, the now boy-king David II, having succeeded at his father's death, began to have his entire world torn from him.

Sir Henry Beaumont, one of king Robert's hated Disinherited, began to organize a faction to address the loss of his and his ally's lands in Scotland with the Scottish government. He met with no success. Scotland would not return to a traitor what they forfeited by their actions against their rightful king during the War for Scottish Independence. Early drafts of the Treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton even stated there would be no compensation for the Disinherited on either side of the border. Beaumont thought differently and began to organize an expedition to not only recover his lands, but to ultimately remove the rightful king of Scotland in favor of the English puppet, Edward Balliol, son of the hapless king John Balliol, who forfeited his entire kingdom in 1296.

Edward III backed Edward Balliol (the son of John Balliol who received the kingship as a result of Edward I's judgment in 1292 and resigned it to the same in 1296), and his claim through his father to the Scottish throne.²⁶ Throughout the 1330s and 1340s Scotland had continuing warfare inside and

outside its borders. At the Battle of Neville's Cross in 1346, Scotland again -- as had previously happened at the Battle of Halidon Hill in 1333 -- lost a large portion of its nobility to the English. Unfortunately, King David II was taken prisoner along with many other nobles, including William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale.

For the next eleven years, Scotland had to endure the humiliation of having its king held hostage and the loss of much of the land that had been recovered during the 1330s and 1340s after the debacle of Halidon Hill. However, by the mid 1350s, especially after the death of the Knight of Liddesdale at the hands of his godson, William Douglas, Lord of Douglas, the future first earl of Douglas, Scotland began to recover much of the border lands then held by the English. Edward III's scheme to acquire Scotland in the 1350s rested to a great extent upon the Knight of Liddesdale.²⁷ After the Knight's elimination in 1353, the Lord of Douglas attained control of the borders, effectively spoiling Edward's plans.²⁸

Another thorn in Scotland's side removed itself a scant three years later. Edward Balliol finally resigned his rights to the kingdom of Scotland in 1356 and the mild chaos of the

²⁶ Nicholson, pp. 123-63.

²⁷ In 1352, the Knight entered into an agreement with Edward III which not only invested the Knight with some of the lands he formerly held, but also guaranteed his cooperation with the king of England and his heirs against any of the king's enemies. At the same time it guaranteed Edward III free passage into Scotland through the Knight's lands at any time, so that Edward III gained an entry point for his armies.

'30s and '40s subsided to a constant rumble.²⁹ Rarely during the rest of the century did either the Scots or the English participate in more than border raiding at anything close to the frequency of the 1320s, the height of the War for Independence. Most of the English efforts at conquest were directed at France, an infinitely more attractive prize to most Englishmen, including Edward III.

From the death of Robert the Bruce to his son's return from exile in 1342, Scotland's domestic political fortunes endured massive shifts dependant upon who controlled the bulk of the country at the time (the Royalists or the Usurpers), and who led the Bruce party in resisting the usurpers. The instability of the first thirteen years of David II's reign characterizes the period and makes it suitable for study.

David returned to Scotland from his exile in France at Chateau Gaillard in 1342 to a much-changed Scotland. Once again Scotland was relatively safe from the then internal predation brought on by Edward Balliol and his ilk. The Pretender ensconced himself in Galloway where his claim

²⁸ Nicholson, p. 159.

²⁹ Nicholson, p. 161.; Edward III's policy of investing Balliol with men and money to make his own bid for the control of Scotland came to an uneventful end when the money and men Edward III had supplied him with dried up. However, when Balliol resigned his rights to the kingdom of Scotland, he became a pensioner of the English king with an annuity of two thousand pounds and a substantial sum as a gift to pay off old debts. Balliol in the end helped the Scots more by uniting them and by causing Edward III to not only pay him a large sum of money as an annuity, but also by closing one more avenue by which Edward III had hoped to gain control of

received the most support from old ties the Balliol family had to the territory. This meant that David II was free to begin the work of recovering the portions of his kingdom sold off by Balliol to the English as payment for his crown.

Unfortunately for David II, the failed military enterprise at Neville's Cross in England ended his personal involvement in the process for the next eleven years. However, Scotland benefited enough from the accomplishments and attitudes of some sufficiently able individuals (William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale for one) to allow it to recover from the disaster of 1346 and progress towards recovery. Therefore the second portion of David II's career suitable for examination runs from 1342 until his return in 1357.

Upon David II's return from captivity, he resumed the reigns of government. This time however, David rewarded the faithful and at the same time kept an eye on those most likely to cause him trouble, especially Robert the Steward and his allies. Eleven years of cooling his heels in the Tower of London and Odiham castle did nothing to increase David's love for his nephew, Robert the Steward, lieutenant of Scotland and one of the primary negotiators for his safe return. A brief period of approximately two years existed where David appeared

Scotland. Now he had only a personal claim, which had already been found to be baseless by his own treaty with the Scots early in his reign.

to follow the lead of some of the great barons of his realm, namely Robert Steward and William Douglas, both of whom he awarded with earldoms in 1358. Ranald Nicholson reported the change in the political climate adequately.

"Yet it soon became clear that the great nobles were being excluded from the king's inner counsels. David's mistress, Katharine Mortimer, seemed a fit victim for their resentment."³⁰

In the June of 1360, Richard Holly and another man named Dewar belonging to Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus, murdered her while she was in the king's company coming back to Scotland from England near Soutra.³¹ For this, Thomas Stewart paid with his life in Dumbarton castle later that summer.³²

Following the death of the earl of Angus, Robert Steward and his allies the earls of March and Douglas openly opposed David II in a short-lived attempt at overthrowing royal power with their own. David put down the rebellion quickly. The previous year, Queen Joan died in England, allowing David another chance to marry and produce an heir. He married Margaret Logie in the spring of 1363 much to the consternation of the Steward. For the next six years, David struggled with the issue of the ransom and to produce an heir. By 1369, he had divorced Queen Margaret and within the next year had planned to marry yet again. By his death in February of 1371,

³⁰ Ranald Nicholson, Scotland: The Later Middle Ages. (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1974), p. 168.

³¹ Gray. pp. 162-163.

³² Bower, vol. 7. pp. 320-21.

David II had reached a stable and beneficial arrangement concerning the ransom, but had failed to produce an heir.

Through the end of David II's and the first half of Robert II's reigns, most of the fighting that took place benefited the Scots. By the 1370s the Scots had slowly recovered almost all they had lost to the English at Halidon Hill and Neville's Cross. At the death of the childless David II, Robert the Steward became King Robert II of Scotland. He came to the throne as a man advanced in years; he no longer had the temperament for warfare. The lackluster manner in which he governed during David II's imprisonment nearly guaranteed a weak kingship.

Throughout the next three reigns (Robert II's, Robert III's, and James I's) the Stewart monarchy found itself plagued by a growing and unchecked power of the nobility. It was only halted by an aggressive and vigorous campaign against noble power by James II and his successors, over sixty years after David II had accomplished the same during the last thirteen years of his reign. The Stewart's saw at last the wisdom of David II's policy. David's policy grew not by chance but by choice. As a result of years of personal hardship, and the ability to watch and learn from Edward III (albeit from prison), David pursued the only course that would allow him to rule Scotland in deed as well as name. The following chapters will not only outline his life, but also

how it became apparent to him that if he wanted to rule Scotland, he had to ultimately find the power and influence to do it by himself.

CHAPTER TWO: SETTING THE STAGE

At the height of the Scottish War for Independence, on March 5, 1324, David II was born at Dunfermline. The kingdom rejoiced in his birth, which guaranteed a direct line of succession for the crown of Scotland. Bower's Scotichronicon recorded the relief of the Scots through the words of Bernard, the abbot of Arbroath:

If you add one thousand, three hundred, twice ten and three,
on the fifth of the month of March a new sword arrived;
David was born in the world, to the delight of the Scots.
Our Scottish king, Robert, still in the prime of life
has fathered before his death a brave man like himself.
This son of the king, following his father, will direct the eyes of
the law,
will increase their sight, and cherish his people with integrity.
This man will play at combat in the gardens of the English; or else
may God make a lasting piece between the kingdoms.³³

Bernard's predictions for the young prince became ironically prophetic for David II's reign. He did indeed play at battle in English fields while he passed the time in England as Edward III's guest during his eleven year long imprisonment. However, lasting peace with the English escaped him.

Aside from the obligatory laudations issued by King Robert Bruce's most important advisors at his birth, chroniclers remain silent about David until his marriage to Joan, the sister of Edward III. Robert I, David's father, arranged the marriage in accordance with the treaty of

³³ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 12-15.

M semel et c ter bis x si junxeris i ter, in quinta mensis marcii novus affuit ensis; natus in orbe David qui Scotos letificavit. Rex noster Scotus Robertus robore totus ante suam mortem genuit similem sibi fortem. Filius hic regis, post patrem, lumina legis diriget, augebit,

Edinburgh-Northampton. Since David II's (and Robert I, his father's) legitimacy as a ruler was tied to the concessions of the treaty, its conditions must be examined.

The treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton maintained certain stipulations held undeniable by the English as well as the Scots. First and foremost, the English recognized Robert I as the king of Scots and Scotland as a free and independent kingdom by stating the conditions of the peace; that it should be "final and perpetual...between said kings, their heirs and successors, and their kingdoms and their lands..."³⁴ By expressly mentioning separate kings, heirs, kingdoms and lands, they consequently demonstrated Scotland's true independence from England.

Secondly, the marriage arranged between David and Joan actually encompassed a larger ideal. The two royal houses were to be joined together (irrespective of the current players, David and Joan, being children). For the assurance of the marriage, "an oath is made on the souls of the said kings, by the persons named below [i.e., the witnesses], and of the prelates and other great men of Scotland."³⁵

Thirdly, the arrangement between the Scots and the French was not to be broken. This meant that the Scots

populum probitate fovebit. Iste manu fortis Anglorum ludet in Ortis, vel faciat pacem Deus inter regna tenacem.

³⁴ Gordon Donaldson. Scottish Historical Documents. (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press Ltd., 1974(reprinted)), p. 61.

³⁵ Donaldson, p. 61.

refused to engage in conflict with England unless specifically called upon to do so by the French according to the terms of their alliance. The English also obtained the following stipulations from the Scots: the Scots would not hinder the English effort in Ireland, and the English retained the right to make war upon the Scots if the Scots attacked England in accordance with the treaty the Scots held with the French.

Fourth, the English were to assist the Scots in resolving issues with the pope in Rome, who had placed Scotland under interdict and excommunicated Robert I early in his reign at the behest of the English. This proved largely unnecessary, for the pope very shortly recognized Scotland as free and independent, deserving of its own rites of coronation.

Fifth, the Scots were to be freed of any and all "writs, obligations, instruments and other muniments touching the subjection of the people or of the land of Scotland to the king of England,"³⁶ In concordance with this point, the return of muniments held by the English to the Scots was mandatory.

Lastly, the Scots agreed to pay to the English twenty thousand pounds sterling over the period of three years.³⁷ Additionally, the Scots agreed to supply their new queen with

³⁶ Donaldson, p. 62.

³⁷ A tidy sum for the Scots. Certainly more than should have been necessary, but with it the Scots purchased their freedom. It is interesting to note, however, that Edward III did not actively seek the demise of the Scots until after this sum had been paid. Also, the sum of two thousand pounds would again crop up with the lands Edward Balliol would

lands amounting to two thousand pounds sterling annual income for her to be maintained in the style befitting a queen.

The fifth point treats most directly the problem relating to David's legitimacy. Here the English have under only token conditions accepted Scotland as a sovereign nation. Had the English, and more importantly Edward III, decided to hold to the treaty, English fortunes most certainly would have been different and I believe better for the English. Edward III chose to view the treaty as something humiliating and degrading to him, forced upon him by his mother and her advisors. However, he failed to look at the obvious benefits.

First, the treaty enabled England to have a more or less secure northern flank. The Scots agreed not to hamper the English work in Ireland, which would have allowed them to bring more pressure to bear there, possibly ending in the type of pacification Edward I had imposed upon Wales.

Second, the English crown knew from past experience that the best way to control the Scots was to make them have a vested interest in peace with England. By continuing war with Scotland throughout the fourteenth century, Edward III insured a long future of contention with the Scots over territory. Lands that men with nothing to lose and much to regain stood

cede to Edward III as the price of his aid from Balliol in wresting Scotland away from the Bruce and his adherents.

able and willing to fight with them over.³⁸ However, peace was not to be. Instead of trusting in the traditional Scottish inability to reach much of an internal consensus, he trusted his own military prowess and that of his protégé and future vassal, Edward Balliol the Pretender.

Unquestionably, Edward III knew David II as the legitimate king of Scotland. Had Edward III truly disputed this fact, he would have had to refute all of the conditions of the treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton, not merely the ones he chose. In fact, he failed to make any provision for his sister Joan (married to David II); nor did he offer to return any of the twenty thousand pounds the Scots paid to the English for the treaty.³⁹

By his actions, Edward III certainly did not dispute the legitimacy of the Bruce legacy. From December 1330 until early 1332, Edward III referred to David II as king of Scots. From early 1332 until the invasion led by Beaumont and Balliol in August 1332, Edward III directed his correspondence more

³⁸ I assert that had the English crown not spent so much time harassing the Scots and attempting to control the borders more directly by a more or less permanent presence there, the situation would not have lent itself to a few lords gaining control of most of the borderlands, as with the case of the earls of Douglas. Had Edward III chosen to keep the Scottish nobility divided in their loyalties, there would have been a strong internal voice in Scotland that argued against continued war with England. Rarely did the Scots attempt to take anything from the English that had not already been taken from them.

³⁹ It would have been rather difficult to do so even had he wanted to. What money that did not go immediately to his mother Isabella, went to pay off his mounting debt to the Bardi. See the Joseph Bain, editor, Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland, vol. 3, (Edinburgh: General Register House, 1887), pp. 180-190.

towards Thomas Randolph, the earl of Moray and Guardian of Scotland. In attempting to achieve restitution for the lands of the Disinherited, Edward III invoked the treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton. At no time did Edward III dispute the legitimacy of the Bruce family as rulers of Scotland, until he had firmly ensconced his puppet Balliol on the throne of Scotland in 1332.

Since Edward III had no real ground to stand on to contest the Bruce family ruling in Scotland, he manufactured some. No doubt exists in the fact that if Edward III could somehow pacify Scotland he could turn his attention to more pressing needs, those of his territories in France. He allowed the idea of a revived Balliol claim to the Scottish throne because it served several purposes for him. First, it gave him control of the whole of Britain as Balliol was made to recognize Edward III as Overlord of Scotland. Second, he secured the future against Scotland by forcing Balliol to hand over some of the best and most productive Scottish land in exchange for the honor of becoming king. This not only took from Scotland a significant portion of its income, it also secured the most likely approaches to Scotland the English would use in case of invasion. Third, Balliol dispensed with the Auld Alliance with France, leaving Edward III even more freedom to deal more appropriately with his French possessions. Seemingly, Edward III's strategy could not fail.

Having examined the issue of legitimacy and Edward III's basic strategy, one must look next at the actual events.

Robert I, king of Scotland died on June 7, 1329. His legacy of independence seemed secure with Randolph the Guardian of the Scotland and the treaty of Edinburgh-Northampton negotiated and signed by all parties. Even the Church saw fit to recognize Scotland as an independent kingdom in its own right. However, events conspired to bring low the accomplishments of a generation.

Edward III replaced the rule of his mother and her lover Roger Mortimer in October 1330 with his own. To all appearances he adhered to the conditions of the treaty, a treaty which had never been popular with the young king.⁴⁰ What transpired to initiate the plan of replacing the Bruce party with a Balliol puppet no one knows.

The chronicler Bower maintains, however that nothing less than adultery was responsible for the onslaught of the Disinherited. According to Bower a rather lusty fellow by the name of Twynam Lourison found that his beautiful and modest wife was simply not enough for him. Therefore he engaged in many extramarital affairs with not only single but also married women. These liaisons did not go unnoticed. Twynam, who had often been prosecuted in court, promised amends as he

⁴⁰ After all, it was at the hands of the Scots that he felt the first taste of defeat and frustration.

had many times before. Unfortunately for Twynam, the magistrate, one William Eckford, chose not to believe him on account of his great many relapses. Instead he ordered Twynam's excommunication.

Twynam did not think much of that idea and proceeded to gather some friends together and waylay the poor magistrate. Twynam then proceeded on pain of death to extort the rather large sum of two hundred pounds from the man. Upon hearing of this deed, Sir James Douglas postponed his trip to the Holy Land with Robert I's heart to search for the man. Apparently Douglas pursued him so keenly that Twynam fled to France to Edward Balliol, where he told Balliol that now was the time for Balliol to reclaim his kingdom.⁴¹

Edward III must have considered his coup d'etat carefully, for not three days before he carried it out on October 19, 1330, he issued a safe conduct to Balliol to come to England with his retinue.⁴² For the next year, Edward III made seemingly earnest attempts at reconciling the Dispossessed with their lands in Scotland. He must have known that his appeals fell on deaf ears, for scarcely more than one year later, the Disinherited began their plans to recover their lost titles and lands.

⁴¹ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 64-67.

⁴² Joseph Bain, editor, Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland, vol. 3, (Edinburgh: General Register House, 1887), p. 183.

Whether or not the story of Twynham Lourisan is true, speculation must focus on the timing and circumstances of the events that followed. First, Edward III issued the aforementioned safe conducts for Balliol to come to England with his retinue. Second, Edward III succeeded in his coup in 1330. Third, a scant two months after his coup, Edward III issued letters to David II concerning the rights to lands formerly held by those Disinherited by David's father, King Robert I. Jonathan Sumption in his book on the Hundred Years War states that sometime in 1331 Henry Beaumont conceived of the plan the Disinherited eventually used; sending a small private army north to recover what they could from the Scots.⁴³

On December 9, 1330, Edward III issued a command that the lands of Thomas Wake of Lidel be restored to him, as he had exonerated himself from wrong doing in the king's eyes. Ordinarily, restoration of lands creates little suspicion, but twenty-one days later, on December 30, 1330, Edward III sent a letter to David King of Scots to make "restitution of lands and possessions in Scotland to Thomas Wake lord of Lidel and Henry de Beaumont earl of Buchan."⁴⁴ This letter places two of Scotland's antagonists firmly in line with their cause at an early date.

⁴³ Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp.124-5.

⁴⁴ Bain, vol. 3, p. 183.

Could Edward III and his adherents have been plotting the demise of Scotland this quickly after taking power? Further evidence only reinforces the view that Edward III and his friends did not sit idly by doing nothing about the Scottish problem. The scheming necessary to remove his mother and Mortimer from power a few months earlier could not have been done at the spur of the moment. Likewise, any operation against Scotland as clandestine as this one needed advanced planning.

Edward III made significant arrangements to return to his grace some of the major players amongst the Scottish nobility, nobles that held claim on a wide variety of lands and titles. One such individual, David of Strathbogie the Disinherited earl of Athol, paid five thousand librates on January 2, 1331 to Edward III to erase any doubt of where his loyalties lay.⁴⁵

Another individual on whom Edward III rested some hope was Walter Comyn, invaluable near Galloway and along the southwest border because of his family name. Comyn received a special writ of protection from the English king to accompany Henry Beaumont over seas on private business. Unfortunately for Comyn, by August 6 1332 he found himself in an English jail to answer for felonies. They must have been serious to deprive Balliol of another name for his cause.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Bain, vol. 3, p. 184.

⁴⁶ Bain, vol. 3, p. 191.

Of course Edward III did not let the Scots know of his intentions or of those of Balliol. As the final example of the timing and planning that Edward III arranged, one must look at the events immediately preceding and including the invasion of Scotland by the Disinherited.

Donald the earl of Mar, closest kinsman to the king after his heir Robert Steward, and Guardian of Scotland at the death of Thomas Randolph, on October 15, 1331 received a safe conduct for himself and twelve of his men to travel to England on his own business.⁴⁷ This visit can be seen as an attempt by Balliol's faction to gain access to the inside of the Scottish government.

Donald had long been associated with not only the English but also many of the Disinherited. Indeed the earl of Mar gave poor accounting for himself. At the instigation of Robert Bruce (who accused him of treachery), the bastard son of Robert the Bruce, Donald led the Scots headlong into the English where a wholesale slaughter took place at the Battle of Dupplin Moor. More Scottish soldiers died for their disorganized rush at the English than either side felled with weapons.⁴⁸

The choice of Donald of Mar as a successor to the deceased Guardian Thomas Randolph was reached unanimously.

⁴⁷ Bain, vol. 3, p. 189.

⁴⁸ Nicholson, p. 126.

Balliol must have known this would be the case. To lend credence to the idea of a conspiracy, one must also look at the *untimely* (or *timely* as far as Balliol was concerned) death of the Guardian Thomas Randolph. According to the chronicler Bower, the Disinherited feared battle against Randolph; so much so that they plotted his demise:

...therefore they devised a new scheme, and (as the Italians say) 'since treachery is more honorable than vile war', they arranged for a certain English friar, the personal chaplain of the said guardian, a man who was corrupt in his faith, to give him poison to drink in his wine. And this was done as stated.⁴⁹

Wyntoun also comments on the demise of Randolph. "For at [th]e Wemys neire [th]e se Poyson at a fest wes he."⁵⁰ Other sources remain silent on Randolph's death; however, one cannot deny the rapidity of events following Edward III's plotting.

By July 20, 1332, Thomas Randolph lay dead at Musselburgh. Eleven days later, on July 31, 1332, Balliol and his army sailed from the Humber towards Kinghorn where they landed on August 6, 1332:

Their leaders included Edward Balliol, Henry Beaumont (claimant through his wife, Alice Comyn, to the earldom of Buchan), his son-in-law David of Strathbogie (claimant to the earldom of Atholl), Gilbert Umfraville (claimant to the earldom of Angus), Richard Talbot, Ralph Stafford, Henry Ferrers, Alexander and John Mowbray. With them they

⁴⁹ Bower, p. 73. "Et idcirco novam artem cunfinxerunt et ut Italici ferunt 'bello tradimento verius vili', effecerunt ut quidam frater Anglicus religione corruptus dicto custodi familiaris capellanus sibi venenum in vino propinaret. Quod et factum est ut supra.

⁵⁰ Wyntoun, vol v. pp. 400-1.

had something like five hundred men-at-arms and a thousand footmen and archers.⁵¹

If one is to believe that there was no collusion between Edward III and the puppet Balliol, then there must have been some incredible good fortune and an amazing level of preparedness on the part of the forces of the Disinherited.

Eleven days after the death of Randolph, the Disinherited had seemingly not only received word of his death but gathered their forces and set sail on a seven day journey to Scotland, landing north of Edinburgh at Kinghorn close to Perth where Balliol eventually made his temporary headquarters.⁵² Donald earl of Mar approached Balliol's army at Dupplin Moor with a Scottish army said to number approximately thirty thousand.⁵³ Bower gives an excellent account of the battle and the sorrow that the Scots felt afterwards.⁵⁴ The Scots were routed, and Balliol held the field.

⁵¹ Nicholson, p. 125.; Gray, pp. 88-89; Gray puts the number at no more than 400.; Ranald Nicholson, Edward III and the Scots: The Formative Years of a Military Career 1327-1335, (Glasgow: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 80-81.

⁵² More than likely, the timing of the events was set well in advance of their execution. The Disinherited certainly set sail before they heard about the death of Randolph. They must have counted on the success of that mission, considering their overall reluctance to engage Randolph personally in battle. His death created the perfect conditions for Balliol's eventual successful campaign.

⁵³ It is worthwhile to note that up until his being made Guardian, replacing the deceased Randolph, at least some of the Scots considered him to be an English adherent, a fact upheld by earlier evidence given of his travels to England during the formation of the Disinherited's plan. We have no way of determining definitively what took place on these trips, but they must have been suspicious, for Robert, the bastard son of Robert the Bruce, called him out for his supposed English sympathies.

⁵⁴ See Bower, vol 7, Book XIII.

Edward III up until this point did nothing to arouse any Scottish suspicions. On the contrary, on March 24, 1332 Edward III issued commands to the sheriffs of Northumberland, York, Lancaster, Cumberland, and Westmoreland "to prevent by force any of his subjects invading the March of Scotland, in breach of the treaty with the late King Robert."⁵⁵ One month later on April 22, 1332, he issued a letter to Thomas Randolph, earl of Moray and Guardian of Scotland, reminding him the one Thomas Wake had not yet received restitution of his lands and asking for this to be done.⁵⁶

This might seem a generous and good faith gesture in keeping with the terms of the treaty. Sumption argues however that Edward III probably told the sheriffs to do no such thing.⁵⁷ However, Sumption may have missed the mark here. Edward III certainly did not want anyone to cross the borders by land. Not only would this directly connect him to a breach of treaty both in Scottish and in English and international eyes, but it would also most certainly give more chance for an expedition of this size to fail (marching across miles and miles of enemy territory).

⁵⁵ Bain, vol. 3, p.190.

⁵⁶ Bain, vol. 3, pp. 189-190. Another point of note here is that by this time, Edward III had ceased referring to David II as the king of Scotland at all in his letters to the Scots in nothing other than as cursory fashion as possible. Perhaps Balliol had already performed homage for Scotland to Edward III and Edward III was hedging his bets, making sure he did not inadvertently refer to David as king after he had already shown support for Balliol.

⁵⁷ Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), p. 126.

The fact that Edward made the proclamation (which failed to stop the north from mobilizing, in apparent contradiction to Edward III's wishes), could also be seen as a serious attempt at keeping restless or ambitious Englishmen with scores to settle with the Scots from helping Balliol out by helping themselves to some Scottish spoils. In addition, the benefits of such an action were enormous: uphold a treaty, and at the same time have the north poised for war should it become necessary to save Balliol, thus saving Edward III's attempt at dominating Scotland.⁵⁸

Immediately following Dupplin Moor, Balliol withstood a half-hearted siege on his base at Perth. The besieger's melted away, doubtlessly daunted by the Scots great loss at Dupplin Moor. By the end of September, approximately six weeks after he landed in Scotland, Balliol proceeded to Scone. On September 24, 1332, the earl of Fife sat him upon the Scottish throne. Bishop William Sinclair of Dunkeld set the crown upon Balliol's head. Balliol left Scone and went to Galloway to rally support. Galloway had always been a strong supporter of the Balliol and Comyn families. One Sir Eustace

⁵⁸ Edward III must have seen himself in a win-win situation. Should the Disinherited lose, at the very least he had pensioners off his back and account rolls. If they won, Balliol would hand over rich lands to the English crown in perpetuity in addition to subordination of Scotland to England forever. Another possibility for the English rested on the fact that Balliol would fail. If Balliol failed, Edward III may have found a reason to use the forces gathering in the north against the Scots.

Maxwell of Caerlaverock led those Galwegians loyal to Balliol and pledged their support.

True to Balliol's uncertain hold on Scotland and as a testament to his English master, Balliol then proceeded to Roxburgh to establish himself in the relative safety of a large if somewhat damaged castle close to the English border.⁵⁹ By November 23, 1332, Balliol signed Scotland away to Edward III. Balliol became not only a pretender (albeit one with a crown) to the Scottish crown, but also the English king's puppet. In exchange for the now acknowledged support of Edward III, Balliol granted him lands worth two thousand pounds a year in perpetuity in the lowlands and border area, which included the town and sheriffdom of Berwick, perhaps the Scottish town with the largest potential for income from trade.

However, the Scots under the party loyal to the Bruce faction did not give up so easily. First, they elected a new Guardian, another relative of the king, his uncle Sir Andrew Moray.⁶⁰ Sir Andrew had not only consistent patriotism on his record but also wealthy and widespread lands. He owned not only the lands and title of Lord of Avoch in Ross but also the lands of Bothwell in Lanarkshire.⁶¹ Moray left with Sir

⁵⁹ Nicholson, pp. 126-127.

⁶⁰ Moray was married to Christian Bruce, the sister of Robert the Bruce, thus making him David II's uncle.

⁶¹ An interesting side note here. One of David II's greatest supporters would be the bastard son of the Good Sir James, Archibald Douglas. Douglas

Archibald Douglas and the engineer John Crabb (captured from the English by Robert I during the War for Scottish Independence) to catch Balliol unaware at Roxburgh. Unfortunately for the Scots, not only did the plan fail but their two greatest assets were captured, Sir Andrew Moray and John Crabb.⁶²

The Scots next chose Sir Archibald Douglas as their new Guardian. They elected a new Guardian, picking this time a man of uncontested loyalty with a family name that might give the English pause in their designs.⁶³ Archibald Douglas, brother to Sir James Douglas, Robert I's most loyal adherent and one of his most able generals, showed cunning and initiative right away in dealing with Balliol. Douglas half succeeded this time in contrast to the failure at Roxburgh. Douglas and Balliol arranged a truce for the moment. Sir Archibald chose this moment to strike.

Douglas scraped the bottom of the barrel for men, men of means that could aid him in his endeavor. He came up with the teen-aged Robert the Steward, nine-year old David II's heir, and the new earl of Moray, John Randolph also a teen-ager.

married one Joanna Moray of Bothwell. None as yet have determined that Joanna was a direct descendant of Andrew Moray, but it appears likely since she brought with her the lands of Bothwell as part of her dowry upon her wedding to Douglas.

⁶² Nicholson, p.127.

⁶³ This Archibald Douglas was brother to Sir James Douglas, the 'Good Sir James', the English found much cause to fear during the Scots struggle against the English under Robert I. Archibald and James father, William 'le hardi' Douglas, was also a staunch Scottish patriot, captured in 1298 by the English and left to rot in the Tower of London

"At dawn on December 17, 1332, they attacked at Annan while Balliol and his entourage still lay in bed. Balliol barely escaped, having to ride an unbridled horse in his night clothes to Carlisle ahead of Douglas' pursuit. Balliol at once sent to Edward III for help."⁶⁴ Balliol failed to appreciate the nature of his countrymen. Such trifles as a devastating defeat on the battlefield, a hasty coronation, and changes of allegiances by much of the nobility had little to do with the permanent pacification of Scotland.

Edward III decided that 1333 needed to see swift action on his part to not only legitimize his claim as the Overlord of Scotland due to Balliol's submission, but also to crush any remaining resistance to his puppet Balliol. Edward III needed a peaceful Scotland so that he might better deal with events that continued to interfere with what he viewed as his rights in his French territories. Fighting a two-front war did not appeal at all; best to eliminate Scotland early and perhaps even gain an ally. He must have considered the vast sums of money he allotted for the Scottish campaign as money well spent.

Fortunately for the Scots and unfortunately for Edward III and Balliol, the Bruce party did not simply roll over and die the way the English and the Disinherited wished. The Bruce party expelled the puppet Balliol from Scotland in a few

⁶⁴ Nicholson, p. 127.

short months, even after having lost at Dupplin Moor and made a poor showing of determination and effective resistance as Balliol sat in Perth. However, Balliol and Edward III were not to give up easily. Balliol ceded through his letters at Roxburgh a large and wealthy portion of Scotland to the English king, something Edward III was not about to lose. Therefore, Balliol pleaded for and received aid to make another foray into Scotland.

This time he directed his attention to Berwick, a very wealthy, if not the wealthiest, city in Scotland conveniently located and used as a doorway into lowland Scotland. In March 1333, Balliol left Carlisle at the head of a large army comprised of English lords and their retainers and proceeded on to Berwick, where he began to besiege. Two months later, Edward III himself joined the siege. The inhabitants of Berwick felt the pressure keenly enough to offer hostages in exchange for a truce until July 20, 1333, at which time the city would surrender if it had not been relieved.

Indecisiveness about the course of action the Scots should follow hindered their effectiveness. Too late Archibald Douglas began ravaging the English countryside in an attempt to draw off the English. Unfortunately, the attempt failed and Archibald Douglas marched off to relieve Berwick. What followed devastated the Scots leadership. Douglas approached Berwick and found the English already in place upon

a hill. In their effort to knock the English off that hill, the Scots saw their Guardian, Archibald Douglas, and five other earls, along with a host of lesser lords, fall among the slain.

One would think that after having dealt the Scots a combination of blows from Dupplin Moor to their defeat at Halidon Hill the Scots would be all but vanquished and Balliol would reign unfettered in Scotland. That could only be Balliol's dream, for the Bruce party, leaderless for the moment, began to consider its defense of Scotland with slightly different tactics. While the Scots decided on a course of action, Balliol wasted no time in establishing himself at Perth and re-inheriting the Disinherited, augmenting their holdings to add insult to injury.

Earl of Moray was added to Henry Beaumont's titles, David of Strathbogie became the Steward of Scotland as well as earl of Atholl, and one Richard Talbot became the Lord of Mar.⁶⁵ Edward III almost immediately (letters issued on February 12, 1334 at the parliament called by Balliol verify these grants) took possession of the two thousand pounds of lands he haggled out of Balliol in exchange for the king of England's support. These territories included Berwick and its sheriffdom,⁶⁶ and a host of lands on or about the borders including Ettrick

⁶⁵ Nicholson, p.129.

⁶⁶ Bain, vol.3, p. 200.

forest, Jeburgh, Roxburgh Selkirk, Peebles, Edinbrugh and Dumfries sherifffdoms and the constabularies of Linlithgow and Haddington. All were supposed to have been annexed to the crown of England forever.⁶⁷ As a further act of homage to Edward III, the Puppet issued a letter to him announcing that he, Balliol, would be only too happy to marry Joanna, Edward III's sister, and provide for David in some undisclosed manner.⁶⁸

Balliol contented himself with solidifying his hold on Scotland by issuing letters of homage to Edward III and rewards to his faithful followers. The Bruce party appeared to be on the run. For example, Robert the Steward barely escaped from his castle at Rothesay to Dumbarton castle where David III and Joanna already waited in safety. Patrick the earl of March, one of the most staunch foes of the English, swore allegiance to Edward III. Seemingly all of Scotland had turned to Balliol, excepting the five castles representing the resistance: Dumbarton, Kildrummy, Urquhart, Lochleven and Loch Doon. From a position of strength, Balliol ordered a parliament that met on February 12, 1334 at Holyrood where he made his final submission to the English king and gave away the most valuable portions of Scotland.

⁶⁷ Nicholson, Edward III and the Scots. pp. 151-62.

⁶⁸ Bain, vol.3, p.200. Apparently the fact that Joanna had already married David II escaped Balliol.

Balliol's position as king of Scotland was quite questionable. If one looks at the attendees of his parliament in 1334, one may easily see the falseness of his position. The bulk of representative attendance came from the church. Seven bishops, from Brechin, Aberdeen, Dunkeld, Glasgow, Galloway, Ross and Dunblane. Of course the Disinherited appeared, but outside of Patrick earl of March, very few other Scottish Magnates showed.⁶⁹ Earl Patrick found himself in the unenviable position of having to hand over Berwick to Edward III after Halidon Hill, at which point Edward III induced him to join the Balliol party, and therefore had to appear.

Winning at Halidon Hill had done two things for Balliol and his cause. First, it justified his invasion of Scotland with the Disinherited in his and Edward III's eyes. This led Balliol and Edward III to believe that since the Scottish Guardian's army scattered in defeat, Balliol no longer needed the large army of Englishmen that Edward III sent to Scotland for the battle: Edward III sent them home.⁷⁰ Second, it spurred Balliol to inaction. The Scots, however, had not been

⁶⁹ One may speculate as to the reasons for such a poor attendance. Certainly the Scots already had a king that had not been deposed or otherwise invalidated. In addition, Balliol gave away the best parts of the kingdom. This move could not have been very popular. He showed even less spine in the face of the English than his father had in 1296 when he finally could not allow the will of his people to be disputed and attacked the English. Attendance by the seven bishops of Scotland actually meant very little.

⁷⁰ Edward III had very little choice in the matter. The expense of keeping an army of that size in the field was enormous if there was no active conflict being fought.

idle since their defeat. In fact, a new phase of the war began and the Puppet knew nothing about it.

If Balliol had known of the unrest simmering in Scotland, he made little preparation against it. In 1334, Balliol contented himself with submitting to Edward III on June 19, 1334 at Newcastle, one week after he formally presented the English king with Balliol's hack parliament's approval of the cession of lands to his fair-weather ally. The rest of Scotland cared little for the machinations of a usurper.

David II, already in safety with his Queen Joan at Dumbarton castle, received an invitation by the French king Philip VI to live in France while the current situation in Scotland sorted itself out. John Randolph, the new Earl of Moray departed at the end of 1333 to France to help the French king remember his obligations to the Scots set out in the Treaty of Corbeil. In early spring he returned with Philip's offer to David II and began planning for a new offensive.

On March 4, 1334 not only French but also a Papal envoy sought an audience with the English king to discuss the situation and resolve it. Edward III in his characteristic overconfidence and arrogance, refused to hear any of them. He did not need the interference of an adversarial king and the pope to deal with a situation he felt he had already dealt with. Scotland, as far as Edward III was concerned, had its

rightful king in place and had duly submitted to him, giving him overlordship of Scotland forever. In addition, Edward III had just expanded his own personal realm even greater by the grant of most of lowland Scotland and scarcely needed help to resolve a situation he had already resolved.

Neither Edward III nor his puppet Balliol were prepared for the Scots next move. The leadership of the Scots cause was taken up by two young men, Robert the Steward (barely eighteen years old) and John Randolph, the earl of Moray (not yet eighteen). Both had nothing to lose and everything to gain by opposing the English. Robert had recently fled his ancestral lands in Bute and castle Rothesay in the face of an English occupying force. Randolph, infected by the patriotism of his predecessor and his unbridled youth, jumped at the chance to aggrieve the English.

When Randolph returned from France with the invitation for David II to become a guest of the French king Philip VI he also began plans to remove the English and Balliol from Scotland. Stewart and Randolph quickly joined forces and declared themselves the new Guardians of Scotland.⁷¹ Since Balliol had seen fit to give away most of lowland Scotland, the Guardian's found little resistance amongst the Scottish nobility to their plans. Immediately they embarked upon a

⁷¹ They actually declared themselves Guardians after they had liberated most of the southwest

military campaign to remove Balliol. They overran most of southwest Scotland "in short order only meeting resistance in Galloway, a region historically divided in allegiances between the king and Balliol. Galloway saw a great deal of slaughter as age old antagonisms assisted the Galwegians in mutually destroying themselves."⁷²

The new Guardians' next targets were the lands Balliol had recently given over to the English crown. Dissent grew among the disinherited over some lands that Balliol no longer had to give, in the end causing the defection to the Bruce party of Alexander and Geoffrey Mowbray. Balliol's allies offered ineffective resistance at best with little help coming from the English; they were woefully undermanned:

Gilbert Burden, the newly appointed sheriff of Peebles, commanded eight men at arms and twelve hobelars. Aso sheriff of Edinburgh John Kingston deployed ten men-at-arms and twenty hobelars. William Wessington, sheriff of Dumfries, had fifteen men-at-arms and thirty hobelars. When William Preston assumed custody of Jedburgh castle on 1 July he brought with him only ten men-at-arms and ten hobelars.⁷³

In August 1334, Balliol fled to Berwick followed by many of the English administrators. Moray and the Stewart did so well that they collected tribute from the lands newly ceded to the English. As news of their success grew, so did their support;

⁷² Nicholson, p. 130.

⁷³ Nicholson, Edward III and the Scots. p. 164. See also PRO Warrants for Issue, E.404, parcel 3 files 18, privy seal writ of June 16, 1334; PRO Issue Roll E.404/276, m. 17, Friday July 29 1334.; PRO Issue Roll e.403/282, m. 5, under May 15, 1335.

it came from all over Scotland. By the end of September on the 27th day of the month, the Bruce party gained an erstwhile ally in David of Strathbogie, the disinherited earl of Atholl that figured so keenly in Balliol's plans. Young John Randolph, the earl of Moray, chased him to Lochaber where he finally forced him to change sides. Balliol's Scotland began to look more like a fantasy with every passing day.⁷⁴

As quickly as early August, Edward III heard the news of the uprising in Scotland. He dragged his feet and did not send aid until October, and then sent pardoned felons.⁷⁵ By the time these reinforcements set out from Newcastle, the Scots held most of Edward III's new territory. Fortunately for the Scots, Edward III accomplished little other than to rebuild Roxburgh castle yet again. By February 1335, after a harsh winter, indiscriminate raiding throughout the western lowlands by Balliol and Edward III, and hunting the enemy in Peebles and Ettrick Forest, even these English troops went home ostensibly for lack of funds. What raiding the English did alienated Patrick the earl of March enough to succeed in sending him back over to the Scots where he would remain until his death.

In France, David II arrived in May, 1334, to the safety and protection of the French court. Philip VI took the

⁷⁴ Strathbogie's allegiance was never more than tenuous at best. He merely bided his time until the moment came for him to switch his allegiance yet

opportunity to taunt the English. He placed David II and his small Scottish court in exile at the castle of Chateau Gaillard.

The gift of the castle accomplished several things on an international level. First, it gave a certain legitimacy to the Scottish cause. If Philip VI gave sanctuary to David II and his court, he also sided with the Scots against Edward III and Balliol. Second, by placing David II close to himself, he perpetuated the idea that the French and the Scots cooperated closely. Third, the castle chosen had some significance for the English. Edward III's ancestor, King Richard I of England, had it constructed not only to keep an eye on the French king, but also to threaten him. It appeared now that Philip used it against the English as the English had used it against the French almost one hundred fifty years before. The impudence of such an act showed the growing contempt the French had for the English over their growing problems, of which Scotland played a small part.

With David II safely and firmly ensconced in France, the Scots renewed their efforts to win back their homeland from the Puppet and his English master. Philip VI, king of France, sent envoys to discuss a truce between the Scots and English to last from March to midsummer of 1335. Edward III readily

again. In effect, very much like the case of the earl of March in 1333.
⁷⁵ Nicholson, Edward III and the Scot, p.167.

agreed to this because it gave him enough time to proceed with his plans to invade Scotland once again. He arranged a naval blockade of Scotland during the spring and two armies of sizes for the period to assault Scotland at the expiration of the truce at midsummer. Edward III left from Carlisle at the head of a large army and Balliol left from Berwick at the head of another.

True to the formula of past success, the Scots refused to engage these forces directly. They simply let the army pass and took any target of opportunity that presented itself. For example, the Count of Namur (cousin to Edward III's queen) arrived too late to leave with Edward III's army. As he hastened to catch up, the Scots under the Guardian John Randolph, Sir William Douglas, Sir Alexander Ramsey, and Patrick, the earl of March (newly returned to the Bruce party), cornered him in the ruins of the Maidens' Castle in Edinburgh. Namur's men⁷⁶ accounted for themselves valiantly but surrendered in the end. After the Scots secured the promise of a ransom of four thousand pounds from them, Randolph agreed to escort them to the border in safety. As fortune would have it, English brigands and other base-born men attacked, captured, and sent Randolph off to rot in

⁷⁶ Bower reports that one of them was a woman. She charged a Scottish man-at-arms named Robert Shaw and they mutually skewered each other with their lances. Her gender was discovered as they pulled the armor off the dead combatants. Bower, vol. 7, p. 113.

"carceribus dire".⁷⁷ Of his companions, William Douglas escaped and his brother, James Douglas, fell to the superior numbers of the English with many other brave men.

While this may not look like a Scottish victory at first inspection, good did come of Randolph's capture. First, the removal of young Randolph from the scene worked to the Scots' long-term advantage. Ever since Randolph had secured Strathbogie's defection to the Bruce party, the earl of Atholl had done as much as possible to create tension amongst the Scottish nobility. He scarcely concealed his hatred for Randolph and William Douglas. At the parliament held by the Bruce party in Dairsie in April 1335, Earl David led a party of nobles loyal only to the Steward that created so much division that nothing was accomplished.⁷⁸ Second, the removal of Randolph from the scene allowed a much more seasoned, ruthless, and capable man to step to the fore, Sir Andrew Moray.

Sir Andrew had several attributes that sharpened the resolve of the Scots and the Bruce party against Balliol and the English. First, he had until April of 1335 been a prisoner of Edward III (who in a weak moment allowed Moray and his compatriot Sir William Douglas, to be known in the near future as the Knight of Liddesdale, to ransom themselves),

⁷⁷ Bower, vol. 7. p. 114. "terrible dungeons (prison cells)"

⁷⁸ Bower, vol. 7. p. 109.

rotting long enough in an English jail to reaffirm his desire to expel the English from Scotland. Second, Sir Andrew's wife was none other than Christian Bruce, a sister to King Robert I, making him an uncle of David II. Third, Sir Andrew had never crossed over to the other side the way so many other Scottish nobles had. Lastly, with Sir Andrew as sole Guardian there was no more worry of infighting between Guardians (which had crept up between Robert the Steward and Randolph).

After John Randolph's capture August of 1335, the English and Balliol seized the initiative and made Perth once again their headquarters for their supposed pacification of Scotland.⁷⁹ Earl David of Strathbogie, always of dubious loyalty to the Bruce party, immediately made his way to Edward III to make his peace with Balliol and him. At this time he also spoke for Robert the Steward as well as other Scottish nobles he managed to keep under his influence.⁸⁰

Strathbogie soon found himself back in the good graces of Edward III and Balliol. So much so that Balliol appointed him

⁷⁹ At this point, Edward III was more interested in keeping what he felt had been rightfully given him by Balliol than with helping Balliol pacify Scotland. But he also understood that to keep his lands he had to pacify Scotland, forcing him to continue to give the help to Balliol that he needed. Shortly however, Edward III readjusted his priorities and they did not include Scotland; he was more concerned about holding onto his ancestral lands in France than his gifted lands in Scotland (that did not really want to stay "gifted" anyway).

⁸⁰ Robert the Steward here made his first opportunistic move, that which would brand him of dubious loyalty to many Scots, including David II in later years as discussions on David's ransom and the government of Scotland during the 1360s will bear out.

his lieutenant of Scotland in the north.⁸¹ All seemed to be falling into line for Balliol; the Bruce party had lost one Guardian and the other, with many of the nobles, had sued for peace. The sheer size of the army the Edwards escorted to Perth intimidated many Scots into contemplating submission. Balliol and Edward III made it even easier by authorizing a full amnesty for all transgressions up until August 18, 1335, if the Scots would but submit.

Balliol had great hopes for his Pacification, as did Edward III. By September they were so confident that it would succeed that Edward III dismissed arbitration attempts by the pope and the French, stating that "by immense labors he had now established peace with the Scots."⁸² Earl David of Atholl returned to Edward III's peace. Action from Ireland against Robert the Steward convinced him to strike a deal with Balliol and Edward III. Through sheer persistence on the part of Edward III, Scotland came closer to total submission by the day.

It took something of magnitude to alter the course established by the young English king. Edward III busily strengthened his position; however, he also weakened it. His continued success depended on that of Balliol, now nearly impoverished after giving away nearly all the wealth he could

⁸¹ Ironic really, because there was not much left of Scotland after Balliol's gift except for the north.

lay claim. If Balliol fell, or could not help, Edward III would not succeed. The successes of 1335 for Balliol and the English paled next to the failure of Balliol's chief adherent, David of Strathbogie. As Strathbogie took to the field to bring the rest of Scotland to Balliol's feet, ironically he heralded the beginning of final victory for the Bruce party and the defeat of Balliol and Edward III.

⁸² Nicholson. The Later Middle Ages. pp. 132-33.

CHAPTER THREE: THE HEIGHT OF OCCUPATION, (1335-1341)

The year 1335 heralded great changes for the cause of David II. For the next several years, the fortunes of the Scots depended increasingly upon the French. As tensions grew between the Philip VI and Edward III, the possibility existed for the English to abandon Balliol to his own devices and take the war to French soil in Gascony. Until that time came, the English continued to plague the Scots in tried-and-true ways. Edward III ordered the reconstruction of as many castles in key areas as possible. Hard point occupation had always been the only successful strategy in holding Scottish territory. Edward III planned to do in Scotland as his grandfather had done in Wales: grind his opponents into submission. Unfortunately for Edward III, the Scots were more than up to the challenge, having faced this same strategy many times before.

Nevertheless, Edward III set about rebuilding his hard points. From 1334 to 1337, Edward III garrisoned and repaired the towns or castles at Roxburgh, Edinburgh, Jedburgh, Caerlaverock, Dunnotar, Lauriston, Kinneff, Bothwell, Leuchars, St. Andrews, Perth, Cupar, Annandale, Jedburgh Forest and Kinclaven.⁸³ Already Edward had imparted key areas to loyal stalwarts. The Percies and the Bohuns, major English

landholders in the north, took possession of the Jedburgh Forest and the vale of Annandale respectively.⁸⁴ However English tactics that might have brought a whole Scotland into submission went awry when attempting to bring a fractured Scotland to heel.

During 1334 and 1335, Edward III and Balliol or their agents sent armies rampaging through the lowlands and Galloway gathering loot. Their conduct alienated enemies and allies alike as they showed no preference in their conquest. Additionally, the Scots saw little need to submit, for Edward III had the choicest chunk of Scotland and remained just as unlikely to give it away to his enemies as had the Bruce party been likely to re-inherit the Disinherited.

Nevertheless, with the aforementioned amnesty for the Scots until August of 1335, Edward III and Balliol struck closest to home. Little could they have known that their own man David of Strathbogie, Balliol's lieutenant in the north, sealed their fate by his brutal acts of vengeance on the Scots who dared to make him change allegiance to the Bruce party. Of course he viewed all the freeholders in his path as extensions of the Bruce party and took great care in driving

⁸³ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 122-123.

⁸⁴ It is interesting to note here that the Percies spent the next sixty years fighting with Scottish Border lords (the earls of Douglas mostly) over such areas as Jedburgh forest, occasionally asserting that they had rights there, rights that stemmed back to this period and these appointments which the Scottish crown naturally ignored. Annandale one may

them all before him. Strathbogie made the critical error in the plan that might have finally allowed Edward III to assume the title of conqueror of Scotland.

At the end of November, Strathbogie began to lay siege to Kildrummy castle, held by the sister of the previous king, Robert I. She was the wife of Andrew of Moray, who until that time had resided at Bathgate and was then treating with the English. However, upon hearing Earl David threatened his wife, he promptly left the negotiations to relieve Kildrummy and his wife from Strathbogie's clutches. With him went several other prominent leaders of the resistance, Patrick the earl of March, William Douglas, Alexander Ramsay, and eight hundred picked fighting men.⁸⁵

Andrew of Moray and his party approached David of Strathbogie with all speed after he received permission to consider this action outside the boundaries set by the current truce from one of Edward III's councilor's, one lord William of Montague.⁸⁶ Strathbogie met Moray in battle in the forest Culblean on November 30, 1335. Moray overwhelmed him; Strathbogie ended his life with his back to a tree, refusing to yield a second time to the Bruce cause. Earl David's death

remember belonged to the Bruce family early during Robert the Bruce's reign and prior to that, during the reign of the English king, Edward I.

⁸⁵ The Lanercost chronicle also states that the earl of Ross accompanied him; however I was unable to corroborate that with other sources.

⁸⁶ It has been suggested by some that the policy followed here by the English in allowing sanction for the action by Moray was merely an attempt

galvanized the Scots. The English could still be defeated and Andrew of Moray was the man to do it. After relieving Kildrummy, Sir Andrew proceeded to besiege Cupar Castle, during which he called a council of the kingdom together at Dunfermline that subsequently unanimously appointed him Guardian for Scotland. With new life breathed into the Bruce cause, Sir Andrew disappeared into the north beyond the hills.⁸⁷

From early in 1336 until King David II's return in 1341, general fortune slowly favored the Scots. Even though Edward III undertook to repair Edinburgh Castle in 1336, and indeed the Scottish capital remained in the hands of the English until 1341, the Scots slowly gained ground. The English faced the war with France with growing likelihood as each year passed, and by 1337, Edward III himself left Scotland in the hands of lieutenants and turned his attention more fully upon the French. Andrew Moray returned to the style of fighting so successful for Robert I, guerrilla warfare.

By refusing to engage the English in open pitched battles, the Scots in effect made the English come to them if they wanted a fight. Moray chose his battles wisely, preferring to attack English strongholds rather than to give the English the opportunity for a stand-up fight. The success

to get the Scots to commit to another pitched battle, this time hopefully breaking the backs once and for all of the Scottish resistance.

he enjoyed in 1336 encouraged Edward III to look elsewhere for his glorious battles. From late 1336 to early 1337, Sir Andrew undid the efforts of Edward III's building project of the year before. By the end of 1336, Moray destroyed four fortresses previously manned and reinforced by the English: Dunnotar, Kinclaven, Kinneff, and Lauriston. The spring of 1337 saw the destruction of Bothwell, where Edward III had wintered not long before and directed its rebuilding, as well as St. Andrews and Leuchars.

Sir Andrew attempted to besiege the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh in the same year. Stirling's siege, lasting from April to May, 1337, Moray aborted for fear of Edward III's approaching army. By October of the same year, Moray found himself besieging Edinburgh castle and re-appointing Scottish men to local offices as in the choice of Laurence de Preston as the sheriff of Lothian. The sieges of Stirling and Edinburgh did not result in their capture; however they did serve to extend Scottish authority deep into the lands ceded by the now nearly powerless Balliol. As Moray lifted his siege, both the English and the Scots laid waste to Lothian, each to punish the other side. Due to the scarcity of food and the unceasing violence, some Scots left Scotland to settle in England or abroad.

⁸⁷ William F. Skene, editor, John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation, (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1872), pp. 351-2.

Perhaps to allow him more freedom in dealing with the French and to extricate himself from the situation and the continued blows to his honor at failing to bring Scotland to heel, Edward III appointed Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, as the leader of his army in Scotland. Unfortunately for Beauchamp, his support was erratic at best and never more than three thousand five hundred men according to N.B. Lewis in his article "The recruitment and organization of a contract army, May to November 1337". Indeed the earl of Warwick failed to keep Andrew of Moray from raiding into northern England in the fall of 1337. Moray managed to gather not only sizeable amounts of booty from the raids which he used to support his army,⁸⁸ but also burned down the manor house of the Bishop of Carlisle. Moray's success was enough to encourage one of Edward III's chief supporters and keeper of Caerlaverock Castle to desert to the Scots.⁸⁹

Beauchamp performed so abysmally that Edward III replaced him with two men at the end of 1337, Richard Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel, and William Montagu, Earl of Salisbury. To minimize their losses and maximize their success, the two joint captains had one objective: the capture of Dunbar Castle held at that time by Agnes, the wife of Patrick Earl of Dunbar.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Bower, vol. 7. p. 126-7.

⁸⁹ Lanercost Chronicle, pp.303-4.

⁹⁰ Agnes was commonly called Black Agnes, so says Pitscottie, by reason of her black skin. While this is certainly possible, she has a rather dark humor to her which no doubt added additional weight to her title.

On January 13, 1337, the siege commenced against Dunbar castle that lasted twenty-two weeks. Bower singles out this particular event for closer study. The action itself symbolized several things regarding the English campaign in Scotland. First, a win here for the English gave the illusion that they were still a viable force in Scotland. Second, the English had a vested interest in punishing the earl of Dunbar for his treachery and also in taking and holding Dunbar Castle,⁹¹ especially after having so recently lost Caerlaverock to the Scots.

The English found that they did not truly control their recent acquisitions, nor did they dampen the Scottish nationalist spirit. As Agnes defended the castle from the two earls, she took every opportunity to belittle them and their efforts. For example, the earl of Salisbury constructed a sow for the purposes of gaining entry to the castle. As he brought it forth, Agnes shouted at him, "Montagu, Montagu, beware for your sow will farrow!"⁹² At which point she caused a machine of her own to fire a large heavy stone which crushed the sow and many underneath it, destroying them both. "Those who barely escaped with their lives lost all their equipment

⁹¹ Dunbar Castle was deep in the heart of the supposedly English held Scottish lands. Yet another thorn in the side of the English, both strategically and psychologically.

⁹² Bower, vol. 7, pp. 128-129.

this way, although those inside the castle were very short of food."⁹³

Nothing worked for the earls, even bribery failed them. Bower relates the instance where the earl of Salisbury arranged to have the castle gate opened at a certain time, ensuring safe entry and victory for him and his men. However, the gatekeepers proved more loyal to the Scots than to English money; they kept their promise to open the gates at the appointed time but only after warning the garrison. When the time came for the earl to enter, one John Coupland, the same John Coupland that lost his teeth to David II eight year later at the Battle of Neville's Cross, pulled back the earl due to some sense of foreboding. He then fell through the entryway. The portcullis came crashing down, trapping only him and allowing Montague to escape.

The siege lasted about five months. By June, Edward III was getting ready for war with France. After a short stop at Whitekirk⁹⁴ to speak with Montague and Fitzalan, he ordered them to end the costly siege. Dunbar castle remained a thorn in the English side, the siege had not been successful. In fact at the price of approximately six thousand pounds and a truce with the Scots until Michaelmas 1339⁹⁵, the English could only look on this venture as a failure. For the Scots, it was

⁹³ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 128-129.

⁹⁴ Nicholson, p. 137; P.R.O. Various Accounts, E. 101, 20/25

the key piece of good fortune that allowed them to weather one of the greatest losses in their continuing struggle for the freedom of the lowlands from English control; the death of the Guardian, Sir Andrew Moray.

Sir Andrew Moray, Guardian of Scotland, never left the cause of David Bruce. While other Scottish nobles weighed the advantage of alliance, even temporary, with the English, Sir Andrew stiffened his resolve to recover Scotland from Balliol and Edward III. By the time of Sir Andrew's death, the portions which Edward III did not claim by right of the gift from Balliol recognized no lord other than David Bruce with very few exceptions, and these were mostly in Galloway. Moray harassed the lands Edward III claimed so successfully that not an enemy castle remained north of the Firth of Forth with the exceptions of Cupar and Perth. Sir Andrew pursued the policies of his brother-in-law King Robert the Bruce, destroying the land as he passed through it, making it unusable by his opponents as assuredly as Edward III maintained it against the Bruce party. Bower valued his accomplishments so much that he praised him along with Robert the Steward, who became Guardian at Sir Andrew's death, and remained so until David II's return from France four years later.

⁹⁵ Nicholson, p. 137.

Andrew Moray died during the spring of 1338 at a time when Edward III maintained a stronger interest in his French possessions. What Moray gave to the Bruce cause enabled it to continue with less able guidance until David II's eventual return from France. Moray brought a hardness of character, patriotism, and keen intelligence to the cause in the form of determined leadership. No one ever held his loyalty suspect, or had any cause to dispute his arrangement as Guardian and the success he enjoyed in driving the English out of occupied Scotland. While his methods sometimes bordered on ruthlessness, they kept alive the cause until his death and after, through a time when the cause was led by less able men.

Wynton views Edward III's distraction as fortuitous, sumizing that if Edward had put forth the effort, he could have finally and thoroughly crushed the Scots. However, even if Edward continued the level of involvement he showed during 1337, or possibly even increased it, the hopes of any real victory had already slipped out of English hands. Balliol had no native allies to speak of and hence no power to help. Edward III would have had to supply all the money and manpower from a Parliament that continued to see diminishing returns on money spent on Scotland, indeed money wasted. To make matters more difficult, England faced increasing threats from the French navy on the southern coast of England. Also, Edward III's lands in France had a much greater worth and were much

more fiscally, politically, and psychologically worthy of his time and effort. The English king, considering his circumstances, was simply unable to meet the demands of subduing Scotland, a task that had yet to be accomplished by any English king.

What Edward III and Balliol failed to achieve militarily, they also failed at diplomatically. David II, still living under the protection of Philip VI in France, rejected an agreement in 1336 that proposed a settlement to end the problem of rulership once and for all. Even the indomitable Moray supported it.⁹⁶ David's reply was a slap in the face to Balliol and Edward III. Not only did he reject the idea, but he also denied the need for further truces. Indeed the Scots initiated few truces in the coming years, a testament to the changing fortunes and accomplishments of the resistance.

The leadership of the resistance devolved to men less able at the death of Moray. Two men stood out as men of action, William Douglas, the future Knight of Liddesdale, and Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie. Both had excellent martial experience and excelled at the guerrilla warfare necessary to

⁹⁶ Balliol would have remained king and David II would have become his heir. Furthermore, David II was to leave the corrupting influence of the French and exchange it for the corrupting influence of the English. David, certainly influenced by his immediate court and Philip VI, rejected the plan. In doing so he had nothing to lose. To return to Scotland as heir to the greatly diminished Scotland resulting from Balliol's "gift" to Edward III gained nothing. The war was going better than it had since the invasion, the support of the French was unwavering, and Philip needed the added pressure on the English to keep Edward III off balance and unsure where to devote his attention.

drive the English out of Scotland. Unfortunately, neither of them had the grasp of overall strategy that graced Moray as evidenced by the general lack of action of the following year. Had they the benefit of Moray's grasp on strategy, fresh attacks on English possessions may well have coincided with the French attacks on English lands in the south of England. They also lacked the high noble status to be effective leaders as both were relatively minor nobility.

Leadership, instead, fell to Robert the Steward.

At this time, affirms the chronicler Bower, the Stewart was young in years, but old in deeds, especially against the English.⁹⁷ What these deeds were it would be hard to say: although the Steward's submission to Edward III in 1335 had not lasted long there is no sign of any activity on his part for the next few years. Under the newly appointed Guardian, the offensive slackened.⁹⁸

Robert showed little initiative until June 1339 when he besieged Perth along with William, earl of Ross; Patrick Dunbar, earl of March; and other notable knights. Sir William Douglas joined him shortly after returning from David II's court in France. Douglas received the permission of David II

⁹⁷ See Bower, vol. 7, pp. 136-137.

⁹⁸ Nicholson, p. 138. For Bower to state this, when no chronicle gives any mention to Robert the Stewart's activities in the face of the English, leads one to doubt the veracity of the source. However, when one takes into account the period during which Bower wrote, the issues become more clear. Bower wrote during the fifteenth century, an undoubtedly Stewart century. For him to paint the progenitor of the line a slacker during this patriotic period may have been impolitic in the least. In so much as the facts allowed, the simple allusion to greatness not born out by any factual support gave the Steward the seeming of greatness without having to actually give him his due. It is possible Bower had information that we do not today, however, unlikely that none of the other chroniclers did.

to hire a French pirate to aid in the siege of Perth, cutting off the English from supplies and reinforcements by the sea.⁹⁹

At this time also, the Stewart sent Douglas to speak with the keeper of Cupar castle for Balliol, one Sir William Bullock. Douglas arranged Bullock's defection to the cause of the Bruce party with the promise of lands. After delivering Cupar castle, Bullock aided the Guardian and his allies with information and men to assist in the capture of Perth. On August 17, 1339, Perth surrendered. The Guardian tore down the walls and the surviving English took what possessions they had and fled to England.

Balliol came too late to relieve the siege. On October 15, 1339, Edward III's government issued payment for the troops headed north under Balliol for the planned relief, almost two months after the castle had fallen.¹⁰⁰ Two weeks later on October 29, 1339, proceedings against the keeper of Perth, Thomas Ughtred, were suspended until the king of England could look more fully into the matter.¹⁰¹

On October 24, 1339 Perth hosted a parliament which discussed plans for an attack on Stirling that amounted to

Doubtless a product of his times, Bower does not generally take issue with Robert the Stewart unless it is necessary.

⁹⁹ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 140-141.

¹⁰⁰ Bain, vol. 3, p. 240.

¹⁰¹ Bain, vol. 3, p. 240., The timing of these events only reinforces the manner in which the original attack against Scotland by the Disinherited must have been planned. If the communication was that slow for the English, Edward III must have planned Balliol's assault with great care.

nothing.¹⁰² The Guardian, supposedly long in deeds against the English, accomplished little after his moment of action at Perth. Any action came from other men and in other places. David II himself took the field in Flanders with the kings of France, Bohemia and Navarre,¹⁰³ although he did not return to Scotland for another two years, leaving the battle to men suited to the task like John Randolph, the earl of Moray. Captured several years before while attempting to escort his captured charges to safety, he had found freedom in a prisoner exchange after the earls of Salisbury and Suffolk were captured at Lille.

Randolph's return to Scotland allowed the Scots to begin another offensive against the English (which in actuality amounted to little in comparison the efforts of Moray a scant few years earlier). Randolph worked to recover his lordship of Annandale from the Bohuns, to whom Edward III had given it when parceling out his newly acquired territories from Edward Balliol. William Douglas continued his guerilla campaign against other occupied lands along the borders.

In April of 1341, Douglas succeeded in a venture that surpassed all other men who tried it since the death of Robert I, the liberation of Edinburgh Castle. Through trickery, Sir William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, with the aid of Sir

¹⁰² The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, vol. 1, 1844, p. 512.

William Bullock, recaptured the castle of Edinburgh in the name of King David II. Disguised as merchants, they gained entrance and propped open the opened gate and called for their men to attack.¹⁰⁴ After winning the castle, the leaders of the Scottish resistance divided the defense of the borders amongst themselves. Randolph from his lands in Annandale administered the West March, Douglas the Middle March and Ramsay the East March, each where their primary landed interests lay. Scotland at last seemed free once again -- free enough, anyway, for the king to return.

David II and Queen Joan landed at Inverbervie on June 2, 1341, after an absence of over seven years.¹⁰⁵ At seventeen and already somewhat experienced at warfare, David II eagerly awaited the chance to take the Scots' struggle to the English. As David happily rode off across a liberated Scotland, the task of governing began. The years of war, from the invasion of the Disinherited to David II's return, had impoverished the country.¹⁰⁶ From bad harvests, the frequent devastation both sides visited on the countryside, bitter rivalries, to the occasionally weak leadership (primarily of Robert the

¹⁰³ Froissart, Jean. The Chronicle of Froissart. vol. 1, trans. Sir John Bouchier, (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1967), p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ Wynton. vol. vi, pp.139-145.

¹⁰⁵ Wynton. vol. vi, pp.152-155.

¹⁰⁶ George Burnett, ed., Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum: The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland. vol. 1, (Edinburgh: Neill and Company, 1878), pp. 435-468. See all accounts for the period 1334 to 1340.; Nicholson, p. 140.

Stewart), not much remained in the royal treasury.¹⁰⁷ To effect recompense for the shortfalls, David II began to re-establish strong royal government. This meant not only finding an able administrator, but also taking an accounting of what taxes were owed the government.

David found his able administrator in Sir William Bullock, who had experience in the position as he performed the same function for Edward Balliol. Bullock did a remarkable job with the resources available to him. At the height of Scotland's prosperity, in 1331 before all the trouble Balliol brought with him from England, the exchequer accounts totaled £3774, 3 shillings and 9½ pence. Bullock managed to raise £1198, 9 shillings and 4¾ pence in 1342, nearly a third of the receipts of 1331.¹⁰⁸ He did such an admirable job with a land that suffered such devastation over the previous decade that he unwittingly encouraged the envy of the nobility. As he became one of the king's most trusted advisor's, the magnates decided he must go. They convinced young David that Bullock had committed treason. The young king had little choice but to submit to his nobles' will in this matter.¹⁰⁹ David had him

¹⁰⁷ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 1, pp. 435-468.

¹⁰⁸ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 1, ppclxv-clxvi.

¹⁰⁹ Having just returned to his kingdom and being barely 18 yrs old, David must have felt the pressure Robert the Stewart and others applied to him to get rid of Bullock, ostensibly because he was too good at his job.

arrested and jailed in 1342 at Lochindorb by David Barclay, where he shortly after died of starvation.¹¹⁰

From the money Bullock raised for David II, David rewarded his faithful supporters. The eldest son of Andrew of Moray, Margaret of Moray (possibly his sister), Gilbert of Carrick, Sir William St. Clair, Ellen of Mar and her husband Sir John Menteith, all received donations or pensions from David II. However, the greatest prizes went to Sir Malcolm Fleming and Sir William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale.¹¹¹

David II wasted little time in making his presence in Scotland known. After the initial feasting upon his return,¹¹² David began a circuit of the kingdom. On June 17 he stopped in Arbroath to reaffirm the liberties of the abbey there. The next day, June 18, 1341 found David II in Dundee continuing to address the concerns of Arbroath Abbey with the inspection of charters issued by his predecessors. His primary concern at this time centered on verifying not only lands given previously to the abbey, but also rights of regality and income.

Establishing this pattern early was key to David II's success in returning to his kingdom. First, David needed the continued support of the clergy to re-legitimize his position as king. By re-affirming rights and incomes already granted

¹¹⁰ Fordun. p. 356.

¹¹¹ Although he had not picked up Liddesdale yet.

by previous kings, he accomplished much with little effort.¹¹³ By such action, he also strengthened his ties with the church, a church that had been too willing to send representatives to Balliol after Dupplin Moor.

The witnesses on these inspections included Bishop Alexander de Kininmund of Aberdeen, Bishop Adam de Moravia of Brechin, John and Adam the abbots of Cupar and Lindores abbeys respectively, Duncan, earl of Fife, Sir Malcolm Fleming and Sir John de Bonville. David inspected two other charters on June 18, 1341, with only minor changes in the witness list adding the David de Haya, the constable of Scotland.¹¹⁴

Two days later, on June 20, 1341, David and his entourage arrived at Kildrummy and produced a note on a charter to one of his faithful, Malcolm Fleming, to hold all his lands in Lenzie, Kilmarnock, and Dalziel in free warren.¹¹⁵ The bishops of Aberdeen, Moray, and Ross (all northern bishops), the king's "most dear nephew" William of Ross, Sir Philip de Meldrum, and Sir Thomas Charteris, the chancellor of Scotland witnessed. David moved very quickly into the north after his brief stop at Dundee. He or his agents covered approximately

¹¹² Bower, vol. 7. Pp. 150-51.

¹¹³ Generally, by re-affirming a donation made by a previous king, the king is simply saying that he recognizes and supports the right and privileges set forth by one of his predecessors. There is very little risk involved by doing so and great benefit for the petitioner. An inspection of their charter in modern times makes it more legitimate should any issue regarding those rights appear in the future.

¹¹⁴ Webster, pp. 74-77.

¹¹⁵ Webster, p. 78.

one hundred miles in two days.¹¹⁶ David's visits at this early stage of his return helped to consolidate the north. He used the bishops of the region to fill his witness lists to ensure everyone knew he had not only returned but also had the support of the church.

One month later, on July 18, 1341, David II rewarded one of his most important followers at Stirling.¹¹⁷ Loyal, patriotic, and cunning but certainly avaricious, William Douglas (the knight of Liddesdale) received as his reward for service the earldom of Atholl, formerly in the hands of David of Strathbogie who died fighting with his back to a tree at the battle of Culblean. Some of David's closest adherents and Douglas's allies filled the witness list that day. Duncan, earl of Fife, represented the great nobles, while David Lyndsay, lord of Crawford, Malcolm Fleming, Alexander de Seton, Philip de Meldrum, and the king's chancellor Thomas Charteris¹¹⁸ attended representing the king's own men.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ While one hundred miles in two days of travel was excessive, it was certainly not impossible. It did mean the king had to proceed at least double the normal rate of travel. Having recently arrived in Scotland to reclaim his kingdom in fact more than word must have leant some urgency to the task. Also, as there is no evidence to the contrary, there is no reason not to believe that David traveled as stated.

¹¹⁷ Peculiar place for a charter to be issued. Stirling Castle had not yet capitulated by the date of issuance. It is possible that the charter was issued from the town and that the English lacked the resources to control much more than they could see from the castle walls, something alluded to by Wynton and Bower. However one must also not disregard the possibility that the charter is dated incorrectly. Douglas does not style himself earl until a charter to the Steward in February of 1342.

¹¹⁸ A note of interest here. Thomas Charteris does not hold office after David II is captured at Durham, and does not appear in records prior to this. However one Thomas Charteris was the last Chancellor of Alexander III's reign, holding office until a year before John Balliol took over in

A month later David issued another charter to William Douglas from his stronghold of Dumbarton castle. More lands and another barony added to the already extensive holdings of the newly created earl. The witnesses attending for this charter included knights, John de Bonville, Philip de Meldrum, Maurice de Moray, Alexander Ramsey and the Chancellor Thomas Charteris. This was David's last issuance of a charter until the parliament convened in Scone the following month on September 17, 1341. Two things of significance appear when examining these charters. David's choice of witnesses and charters he issued bear some examination here. The witness lists show David's penchant for using knights to aid him. With the exception of Alexander Ramsey and the chancellor Charteris, the rest of the witnesses on this list are knights.¹²⁰

The second issue bearing examination is the lack of Robert the Steward's presence. Certainly had Robert, David's nephew and heir, been present he would have witnessed charters for his uncle. All the chronicles are silent as to his location at this time, but he certainly attended the parliament at Scone in September as supported by his presence in the witness lists of several inspections and charters issued during the session. Upon examining David's witness

1292. Certainly there is a connection between the two men but what that connection is I have been unable to ascertain by the time of writing.

lists, one notes that the great nobles of the kingdom are conspicuously absent with little exception. David learned enough in his years of exile in France to know whom to trust. Knights or minor nobles that owed their success directly to him became excellent and frequent choices for David's closest circle of advisors. One may only speculate at the thoughts the Steward had about David's return and his place in it.

The events of the next several years, ones of consolidation for David II, set the tone for the rest of David II's reign. David used his own men in positions of power. He created positions of power if he could not suitable ones available. For example, Malcolm Fleming received the earldom of Wigtown early in 1342. David created the earldom for his steadfast supporter as a reward for holding Dumbarton castle safe as a rallying point for the Bruce cause. Upon David II's return from France, Fleming owed nothing to the likes of the Steward and everything to his patron the king.

Monumental events took place during the two years immediately after David's return for both the weal and woe of the kingdom. Scotland lost the good offices of Alexander Ramsay. Robert the Steward and the newly created earl of Atholl, William Douglas,¹²¹ schemed for personal gain. William

¹¹⁹ Webster, pp. 78-79.

¹²⁰ Webster, pp. 79-80.

¹²¹ No one questioned the effectiveness of Douglas's conduct during the war and his continued actions against the English. After David returned Douglas felt his success earned him the right to act upon his own

Bullock aided the king in dealing with the kingdom's finances in arrears from the time of David's exile until his return and, as noted, died a traitor's death for it.¹²² However, the earl of Moray, John Randolph, returned from captivity. Roxburgh castle no longer remained in English hands after Alexander Ramsay captured it. Edinburgh fell to the wiles and skill of William Bullock and William Douglas. Stirling castle fell. The English had only a token force left in Scotland, and that concentrated mostly in the hands of Henry Percy, the keeper of Berwick for the English.

The next several years, in combination with the years of David's captivity, set the stage for David to rule as king in deed as well as name. To get there, however, Scotland and David went through growing pains the kingdom nearly did not survive. Beginning with the deaths of Bullock and Ramsay, Scotland had to face a different kind of adversity to retain the tenuous grasp it held on its freedom.

recognizance, an act that eventually ended with his death at the hands of his nephew.

¹²² Bullock was starved to death in Lochindorb late in 1342. Bower pp.156-157.

CHAPTER FOUR: AN EMERGING MONARCH, (1342-1346)

The four years prior to David II's capture in 1346 found the problems of a young and inexperienced king, a country not sure of its borders, and a people exhausted from nearly a decade of unceasing warfare.¹²³ Unfortunately the chronicles fail to mention much of David II's activities during this period until the Battle of Neville's Cross in 1346. One may ascertain his location by again turning to the charter records found in the Regesta Regum Scottorum. David had people to reward and a country to reclaim.

From Holyrood monastery in Edinburgh, David issued the first charters of 1342. On January 6, 1342, David granted the barony of Gorton to John Preston and to William Douglas¹²⁴ the barony of Dalkeith.¹²⁵ Patrick Dunbar, earl of March, Maurice de Moray styled by the king "our cousin," the chancellor, Thomas Charteris, and Philip Meldrum, John Bonville and Malcolm Ramsay (all three knights) witnessed both documents. William Douglas acquired the lands of the deceased John Mowbray thirteen days later on January 19, 1342.¹²⁶ In this instance Robert the Steward (seneschal of Scotland and nephew

¹²³ Longer if one includes the wars of Robert I.

¹²⁴ During this period of the fourteenth century, there were many Williams in the Douglas family. In fact the Douglas extended family was fairly large. It is unclear which William Douglas that received the barony of Dalkeith, but it seems probable that it was the Knight of Liddesdale, who was heavily rewarded during this period. The Knight's godson, William, had not yet become active on the political scene.

¹²⁵ Webster, pp. 87-88.

¹²⁶ Webster, pp. 88-89.

to the king) and John Randolph the earl of Moray witnessed the document.

The following month, the king traveled to Aberdeen for the meeting of parliament. At parliament between February 14 and 16, William Douglas (the Knight of Liddesdale) realized his landed ambitions. The council removed the lands of Liddesdale from William Douglas (son of the former Guardian Archibald Douglas killed at Halidon Hill and godson to William Douglas, the William so militarily active against the English in Scotland) and awarded them to Robert the Steward. Steward in turn granted them to William Douglas (the Knight of Liddesdale) in exchange for the earldom of Atholl.¹²⁷ At this point William began to style himself the Knight of Liddesdale.¹²⁸

A week later on February 21, 1342, still in council at Aberdeen, David turned his attention to the burgh itself. He at once confirmed the liberties given to Aberdeen by previous kings.¹²⁹ By doing so, David cemented his previous ties on Aberdeen and illustrated the illegitimacy of the English regime to the burgesses. He set an example for the rest of the burghs yet to be returned to the king's grace that they

¹²⁷ Webster, pp. 89-90.

¹²⁸ I have been calling this William the knight of Liddesdale throughout the paper so far to avoid too much confusion. It is at this point the title becomes legitimate.

¹²⁹ Webster, p. 90.

would have the same privileges they had had prior to the coming of the English.

The country and David II lacked a recent military victory with which to generate more momentum. David supplied the victory with devastating raids on Northumberland as far south as the Tyne after Henry, earl of Lancaster (who resided in Berwick at the time as a projection of English power into the region), disbanded his troops early in the month of February (February 2).¹³⁰ Not to be outdone, on March 30, 1342, Alexander Ramsay captured Roxburgh Castle and received custody of the same (an event that unfortunately shortened his life at the hands of that ambitious Scot, the Knight of Liddesdale).

From the parliament at Aberdeen, David moved to the monastery of Kinloss by the March 29, 1342, where he issued letters to his Chancellor regarding grants made by previous abbots of Lindores abbey that parliament revoked.¹³¹ After staying at Kinloss for at least a week, until April 4, 1342, David moved on to Kildrummy, one of the castles that held out against the English and Balliol during his absence. On April 14, 1342, David directed payments of royal revenues in the sheriffdoms of Banff and Aberdeen to the bishop of Aberdeen. No witnesses appear in these documents and David issued no actual charters until the end of May.

¹³⁰ Nicholson. p. 143; Gray, pp. 112-113.

¹³¹ Webster, p. 91-91.

Many of those who regularly had witnessed his acts traveled to England to treat with representatives of Edward III between March and May of 1342. Edward III issued a "safe conduct on March 20, 1342 for Adam bishop of Brechin, Patrick earl of March, William de Douglas, Thomas Charters and even William Bullock with an entourage of 100 horse and 200 other persons to treat with his commissioners on David's behalf."¹³² One possible result of this meeting may have been Edward III giving official permission for the residents of the Isle of Man to resume trade with the Scots.¹³³

For roughly the next six weeks David's location does not appear in charters or chronicles. However, on May 29, 1342, from Dundee David issued a charter that had far ranging consequences, beyond those which he could have foreseen. Hugh Douglas, until now the heir to his older brother's¹³⁴ lands and the title of lord of Douglas, resigned his lands and title in favor of his younger brother Archibald's¹³⁵ children, failing them to the Knight of Liddesdale and his heirs male, failing them to the Archibald (the natural son of James) and his legitimate male heirs, failing them to return to the heirs of

¹³² Bain, vol. 3, pp. 250-252.

¹³³ Bain, vol. 3, p. 255.

¹³⁴ The "Good Sir James" Douglas, one of the heroes of Robert I's reign.

¹³⁵ The onetime and short lived Guardian of Scotland who fell at Halidon Hill in 1333.

Hugh Douglas.¹³⁶ Several possible reasons exist for such a resignation of extensive lands.

First, prior to Hugh receiving the lands and title he acted as a church official. His administration of lands that belonged to the English during much of this time had lacked luster. Hugh did not partake in any known military adventures. Hugh's name does not appear in any charters or witness lists. He acted with such mediocrity, he earned the epithet of "the Dull" and indeed had no taste for rulership. Secondly, this may have been an attempt to placate the young William Douglas, whose godfather the Knight of Liddesdale had stolen that land from him, the rightful heir, in parliament during the month of February, 1342. Thirdly, it may also have been an attempt to place the Knight of Liddesdale in a legitimate line of succession to which he had no claim.¹³⁷

The charter had enough impact for the kingdom that it was witnessed by some very important individuals, including the bishops of Aberdeen and Brechin, Robert Steward (the seneschal and king's nephew); Duncan, earl of Fife; Patrick Dunbar, earl of March; Thomas Charteris and (his first appearance) Robert Keith, the marishal of Scotland. Several of these men sat as

¹³⁶ Webster, pp. 93-95.

¹³⁷ It is entirely possible that this last reason may be the best. The Knight's avarice in gathering to him lands on the borders is well documented at this point. The addition of the Douglas family lands would have made him incredibly powerful. And as will be seen shortly, the Knight had no restraint from marching up and removing an ally from a position he thought should belong to him.

either the principle councilors to the king, as in the case of Charteris, Keith, and possibly the earl of March, or as friends to some of the parties involved , e.g., Robert the Steward,¹³⁸ who had helped the Knight of Liddesdale acquire ownership of the Liddesdale.

As a consequence of this charter, David II made quite possibly the most powerful noble in Scotland of the fourteenth century approximately seventeen years after his death in 1371, Archibald "the Grim" Douglas, David II's future protégé. In spite of his desires, the Knight of Liddesdale did not live long enough to see any dreams of the lands reverting to him come to fruition and perhaps through these machinations aided in bringing about his own demise.¹³⁹ For the moment, however, the Knight appeared untouchable as his most infamous exploit will show.

Two days before the Knight's exploit, on June 18, 1342, David II awarded his favorite, the faithful Malcolm Fleming, land in Galloway in free barony in addition to his already vast estates that accompanied the earldom of Wigtown. Awarded from Restennet in the north of Scotland, the witness list

¹³⁸ Robert the Steward, while the seneschal of Scotland at this time I do not count as one of the king's primary councilors. David appears to use him as a necessary evil rather than a cherished nephew. While he appears prominently in witness lists as usually the first lay witness, David most of the time refers to him as his nephew, reserving phrases as 'our most cherished' for his cousins, certainly a continual "slap in the face" to the Steward.

¹³⁹ This topic will be covered later when discussing the death of the said Knight.

included many northern bishops (Aberdeen, Ross and Brechin); William, earl of Ross; Maurice Moray the king's cousin; William Douglas (the Knight of Liddesdale); and the chancellor, Thomas Charteris.¹⁴⁰

Two days later, on June 20, 1342, William Douglas (the Knight) approached Alexander Ramsay at Hawick in Teviotdale where Ramsay held his sheriff's court, abducted him and carted him off to Hermitage castle to die.¹⁴¹

Furious, David II

repeatedly sent out an armed force to seize William in person. But he, carefully avoiding traps, did not succeed in gaining the king's goodwill until the king's nephew, Robert Steward, with many interventions and explanations of how much William had suffered in David's absence for the [defense and] liberty of the kingdom, brought the king back to a peaceable and calm attitude towards him. He even entrusted William with the custody of the castle of Roxburgh and the sheriffdom of Teviotdale.¹⁴²

Robert the Steward must have exerted all of the influence at his command to get Douglas off the hook. Even so, what the chronicler's reported about Douglas apparent patriotism and hardship for the cause rang true, for much of the recent advances could not have been accomplished without the Knight. David II needed men of action with the threat of the English still not totally quelled in the Scottish countryside.

¹⁴⁰ Webster, P. 95.

¹⁴¹ Bower, pp. 152-153. Nicholson, p. 144. Wynton, pp. 164-169.

¹⁴² Bower, pp. 156-157.

However, Scotland no doubt had greater strength while Ramsay remained alive. Whatever disagreements between Ramsay and Douglas existed are not noted in the chronicles until the explanation of his death, and then only in gross generalities.

The event causes some concern for either the accuracy of chroniclers or the legitimacy of using the dates of issuance for the placing of the witnesses in the lists. Restennet, where the king issued Fleming's charter witnessed by Douglas, lay landlocked and over fifty miles away. To the chroniclers' credit, the appearance of Douglas certainly appeared abrupt. What could have prompted Douglas to take such a speedy march from Restennet to reach Teviotdale can only be speculation. Only a hard ride could have enabled Douglas to make such a trip in so short a time. The distance and the time frame for the trip make it a subject interesting for future study. Unfortunately, the chronicles do not supply any further information on the topic, making any discussion pure speculation.¹⁴³

David II then traveled to Dumbarton where on July 4, 1342, he entailed all the lands forfeited by the late Dugall Campbell to Dugall's brother, Gillespie.¹⁴⁴ At the time, this may have seemed a politic grant to make, placing the Campbells under David's patronage forever. Unfortunately for David,

events did not unfold for him this way. The Campbell's, through marriages, later allied themselves with Robert Steward, the king's nephew. When David returned from his captivity, the Steward had cemented the western portion of his power-base, which in later years he used against David.¹⁴⁵

Following his stay at Dumbarton, David II next appeared at Lindores abbey on August 20, 1342 to issue letters concerning Scone abbey's liberties.¹⁴⁶ On August 22, 1342, he inspected letters of Duncan, earl of Fife, in the matter of a boundary dispute with one John Ireland concerning the barony of Murthly.¹⁴⁷ David II, or perhaps Duncan, earl of Fife, showed considerable acumen in taking the opportunity to review documents generated during his absence concerning lands supposedly controlled by Balliol, thereby limiting the legitimacy further of Balliol's tenure in Scotland in a manner similar to David's actions for the abbeys of the north. Five days later, on August 27, 1342, David issued letters patent from Kildrummy to the sheriffs of Aberdeen and Banff concerning money owed the bishop of Aberdeen.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴³ It is unfortunate that there is no other proof of location for this trip as it may have greatly helped any discussion of charter or chronicler validity during this period.

¹⁴⁴ Webster, pp. 97-98.

¹⁴⁵ Robert the Steward may have not been much of a leader, but he certainly knew how to build power. Having lived through and seen what the English would attempt to control if they came across the border again, Robert specifically built his power in the north and west of the kingdom, insuring his position if the English should come again.

¹⁴⁶ Webster, p. 98.

¹⁴⁷ Webster, p. 98.

¹⁴⁸ Webster, pp. 98-99.

David appeared again in Kildrummy on November 28, 1342 to issue letters to his Chancellor again concerning the bishop of Aberdeen and money owed him. From Kildrummy, David proceeded to his stronghold of Dumbarton accompanied by Robert Stewart, Patrick Dunbar, Duncan, earl of Fife, Malcolm Fleming¹⁴⁹ and his chancellor, Thomas Charteris. On December 10, 1342, David issued a charter to Holyrood abbey in Edinburgh affirming its right to name a chaplain for the royal chapel.¹⁵⁰

The return of David II accomplished much for Scotland during 1342, for both the weal and woe of the kingdom. Alexander Ramsay perished at the hands of William Douglas (the Knight of Liddesdale) and a very able chamberlain in William Bullock fell to the political machinations of some unknown offended noblemen. Top advisors of David II journeyed to England to discuss a treaty with the Scots and succeeded at least in part. On April 10, 1342, Edward issued a warrant for the arrest of individuals supplying arms and victuals to the Scots, indicating that the English had a concern in this area, but the weapons smuggling also had an impact on border safety.¹⁵¹

By April 29, 1342, David's men, including William bishop of St. Andrew, Adam, bishop of Brechin, Patrick Dunbar, John Randolph and Thomas Charteris, sent a letter to Edward III

¹⁴⁹ Malcolm Fleming even though he held the title of Earl of Wigtown by now is never characterized as such in the witness lists.

referring to a truce [day] between Edward III and the king of France. The men representing David II (brother-in-law to Edward III and included in the truce), apparently sought the location, date and whether it was still to be held.¹⁵²

Considering the letters sent to discover the individuals selling arms to the Scots in northern England, and the increase of the garrison of Berwick by thirty-five men-at-arms, seventy archers, and three knights commanding them (Sir John Fauconberge, Sir Thomas de Rokeby, and Sir John de Lillebourne), Edward III must have been concerned about Scottish activity in the region.¹⁵³ The loss of Roxburgh in 1342 accentuated the losses of Edinburgh and Stirling in 1341. Edward III certainly had no desire to lose Berwick next.

The events of 1342 not only helped David consolidate Scotland, but also created several problems for historians. First, why was Bullock arrested and tossed into the dungeon to starve? Second, if Bullock was such a miscreant, why was he mentioned in the safe conduct to England at the end of March, 1342 with the rest of David's advisor's that traveled to England for a Truce day? Third, how, and why, did William Douglas (the Knight of Liddesdale) arrive at the decision to kidnap and kill Ramsay? He left the king's side, rode hard

¹⁵⁰ Webster, pp. 99-100.

¹⁵¹ Bain, vol. 3, p. 252-254.

¹⁵² Bain, vol. 3, pp. 253.

¹⁵³ Bain, vol. 3, pp. 252-255.

for approximately two days,¹⁵⁴ kidnapped Ramsay and tossed him into the tower at Hermitage castle to starve to death.

The answer to the questions concerning Bullock can only be speculation. No evidence exists from chroniclers or records as to the cause of his arrest other than the accusation of treason.¹⁵⁵ However, the possibility does exist that Bullock may not have been as innocent as he seemed. Bullock did not die until sometime after the trip David II's advisors made to England. He may have been set up either by the English as revenge for his treachery in changing sides, or by the Scottish nobles who were most affected by an accurate accounting of the kingdom finances. As an answer to the second question also, Bullock went to England as an important member of David's advisors. We don't know when he came back, but it certainly was not long after that that he found himself in chains, giving some small bit of credence to the idea that something happened on the trip to England to label him a traitor.

¹⁵⁴ If one considers that David II issued his charter during daylight hours, and that Douglas arrived in Teviotdale to kidnap Ramsay also during the day, he may have traveled less than two days...quite quickly on horse through the center of Scotland.

¹⁵⁵ Historians such as Nicholson, and chroniclers Fordun and Bower speculate that jealousy of his wealth and growing influence in Scotland was the motive. If this were the case however, why would not every person of means and growing power be a target? He certainly did not have enough personal power to challenge Robert Steward or William Douglas, even with being a hero of sorts for the Bruce party and the Chamberlain of the kingdom. He may have been able to somewhat control access to David, but the kingdom could not have been held together without the support of the nobility.

The third question, involving William Douglas, presents a similarly difficult situation with only a slightly easier answer. That Douglas had territorial ambitions on the border regions there can be no doubt.¹⁵⁶ But what possessed him to make a speedy journey from his king's side to Ramsay, arresting then imprisoning him unto death by starvation? Bower states that David had previously awarded Roxburgh to Douglas.¹⁵⁷ When Ramsay liberated the castle, David in a show of fickle behavior awarded it to him rather than Douglas. Perhaps Douglas learned about Ramsay's reward when he appeared on June 18, 1342, to witness one of David's charters. One might understand, given Douglas's nature, his reaction. One more problem, ominous for David at the time, presents itself as a result of this issue. Douglas either felt that he either had more right to determine his rewards than David, or had little or no respect for his authority. The truth, in the case of Douglas, must be in part both, a fact which did not bode well for the strength of David's future position with the nobility.

From Dunfermline at the end of 1342, David moved to Lindores by January 2, 1343.¹⁵⁸ With his "most dear cousin" John Randolph earl of Moray (lord of Annandale and the Isle of Man also), his nephew Robert Steward, Patrick, earl of March,

¹⁵⁶ Consider the effort he went to to get Liddesdale while giving up the earldom of Atholl.

his favorite Malcolm Fleming, Maurice Moray and the chancellor, Thomas Charteris, David dealt with matters at hand in the sheriffdom of Perth. He confirmed a charter from Duncan, earl of Fife, to Robert Menzies. Four days later on January 6, 1343 he confirmed a charter from Robert Bruce, a (illegitimate) brother of the king, to the same man.¹⁵⁹ Duncan, earl of Fife, appeared as a witness on this second charter.

David moved to St. Andrews by March 4, 1343, and issued letters to the abbey of Scone granting a three-year respite from answering its debts.¹⁶⁰ The next day, privy seal letters were issued to the Bishop of St. Andrews to ascertain the disposition of certain lands belonging to the abbey of Scone. Following his stay at St. Andrews, David II traveled to Aberdeen, where on April 30, 1343, he issued letters to his chancellor concerning Scone's previously mentioned respite.¹⁶¹ On May 1, 1343, David II inspected a charter from John Randolph, earl of Moray, to one John Urwell over lands entailed to him in the sheriffdom of Elgin.¹⁶² David issued a note concerning the entailing of the barony of Melfort to

¹⁵⁷ Bower, pp.153-157.

¹⁵⁸ Webster, pp. 103-106.

¹⁵⁹ Webster, pp. 105-106.

¹⁶⁰ Webster, p. 106.

¹⁶¹ Webster, pp. 107-108.

¹⁶² Webster, pp. 108-109.

Archibald Campbell of Lochaw and his heirs male on the next day, May 2, 1343.¹⁶³

On May 18, 1343, David arrived at Perth to tend to still more matters regarding Scone abbey. This time he ordered the justiciar north of Forth, along with other officials, to pay what they owed to the abbey, in this case from the profits of justice in two places, Gowrie and Perthshire.

While David spent much of his first two years after returning from France in the east and north, consolidating his position there, he did not ignore the west. On June 6, 1343, in Ayr David II inspected an ancient charter originally issued to the abbey of Holyrood during the reign of David I.¹⁶⁴ One week later, he issued one of the most important charters of this period of his reign. On June 12, 1343, David II issued a charter to John of the Isles for the islands of Islay, Gigha, Jura, Colonsay, Mull, Tiree, Coll, and Lewis. David also included the lands of Morvern, Lochaber, Duror and Glencoe together with the custody of three royal castles.¹⁶⁵ The same day David issued another charter to Reginald son of Roderick of the Isles for the islands of Uist, Barra, Eigg, and Rhum;

¹⁶³ Webster, p. 109.

¹⁶⁴ Webster, pp. 110-113.

¹⁶⁵ Webster, pp. 113-114. The royal castles were Cairn na Burgh More, Cairn na Burgh Beg, and Dun Chonnuill.

additionally he granted land in Garmoran (the home of this branch of the family).¹⁶⁶

The gifts to John and Reginald, cousins, should have cemented the allegiance of the Isles to the Bruce cause. While it may have removed them from active participation against David II in the short term, it did little to bring the Isles firmly under the control of the king.

While the Isles presented no immediate threat to his sovereignty in Scotland, David had to begin in earnest his own visibility in liberating the rest of the borders from English control. For the moment, the Scots enjoyed a truce of sorts, enabling them to recover from the double blows of losing an able administrator in William Bullock and a more-than-ardent patriot in Alexander Ramsay. As Bower and Fordun stated, "...after their deaths, sad events took place in the kingdom."¹⁶⁷ Edward III busied himself with more important problems across the Channel in France, allowing David the freedom to continue his work. David had not yet approached the point when extended forays onto English soil stood to gain him much, other than Edward III's unwanted attention, which after he received it, ended in disaster three years later.

David II remained at Ayr until at least June 30, 1343 when he inspected a grant to the Friars Preachers of Ayr from

¹⁶⁶ Webster, pp. 114-115. The lands in Garmoran were Moidart, Morar, Arisaig, and Knoydart.

his father Robert I for the hefty sum of twenty pounds per year from the area around the town of Ayr.¹⁶⁸ Robert Stewart and David at least temporarily appeared to resolve their differences. David styled Robert "seneschal of Scotland and our most dear nephew" in the witness list for the first time in over a year.¹⁶⁹ John Randolph earl of Moray attached to his title "lord of Annandale and the Isle of Man," indicating that the Scots once again controlled these areas. Edward III allowed a truce with and endorsed trade between the inhabitants of the Isle and the Scots, in all things except armor and victuals.¹⁷⁰

Until September 17, 1343, David's location remains unclear. However, on that date he issued letters to the sheriff of Perth to give sasine of Strath Gartney to one John

¹⁶⁷ Bower, vol. 7. pp. 156-157; Fordun, pp.357-358.

¹⁶⁸ Webster, pp. 115-116.

¹⁶⁹ Webster, p. 115. The last reference to Robert as "our most dear nephew" was in the charter issued at parliament, February 16, 1342 to William Douglas concerning the lands of Liddesdale. Whether this denotes David's favor or simply his fickle behavior is unknown. The nineteen year old David did not yet have as clear a picture of his true allies as he did shortly after he returned from captivity and resumed government of the kingdom in 1358.

¹⁷⁰ Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland. vol. 3, p. 255. Three years earlier, Edward III ordered the release of the vessel and goods of the Bishop of Man. The Bishop was to be brought to him at London, while the "other Scottishmen" captured with him were to be detained at Great Yarmouth. This indicates that the Bishop of Man was a Scot, and that the original capture of the Bishop's ship was an act consistent with the English war against the Scots. However the issue of suzerainty over the Isle is not an easy one to resolve. A brief discussion in the Handbook of British Chronology, 3rd ed., p. 65. Indicates the issue is as yet unresolved. However, given the letters issued by Edward concerning the Isle of Man, and the earl of Moray's insistence on using his title to ownership over the isle, it is possible that the Isle did indeed belong at least in some respect to the Scots. Edward's dealings with the Isle use the same tone he uses when discussing lands in Scotland Balliol had ceded

Logie (a man unknown to David at this time, but the father of his future bride, Dame Margaret Logie) from Dunfermline. By October 31, 1343, David had moved on to Scone where he inspected a charter of Margaret Stewart the countess of Angus to Arbroath abbey. The marischal Robert Keith makes his first appearance in witness lists. Other attendants included the bishops of Glasgow, Brechin, and St. Andrews, Robert Stewart, John Randolph, David Hay (titled the constable of Scotland), Philip Meldrum and Andrew Bothergask.¹⁷¹

David next appears on record at Middlebie on December 6, 1343. From Middlebie he proceeded to Stirling by December 24, 1343. In the former instance, he issued letters to royal officials appointing royal bailies¹⁷² in Clydesdale. In the latter he directed his foresters to provide promised stags to Coldingham priory in his last two appearances in 1343.¹⁷³ On February 13, 1344 at Edinburgh David issued a charter to a burgess of Edinburgh concerning the forfeited lands of Thomas Harper.

By parliament time at Scone, on June 10, 1344, David issued a charter to the priory of Restenneth. Early summer also brought an interesting problem for the young king.

to him but currently in Scottish hands. This matter is certainly one that bears more study.

¹⁷¹ Webster, pp. 116-118.

¹⁷² Alexander Stewart, John Tunson, and Adam Carruthers were the men appointed to hear all cases in Clydesdale concerning men of Annadale. It is curious that David styled himself the Lord of Ananndale shortly after John Randolph styled himself the lord of Annandale and the Isle of Man.

Sometime during the month of June or July, a man appeared from England

pretending to be the son of a certain burgess of Aberdeen, and concealing his own name, claimed to have been in prison for fourteen years. When a ransom had been fixed and pledges had been given for paying the money, he with the help of many tokens and clear evidence made many of the kingdom and especially the common people understand and firmly believe that he was in reality Alexander de Bruce [illegitimate son of Edward Bruce, King Robert I's brother]. After various disturbances and a number of interviews with the king and certain magnates, fearing that he might be put to death (he said) by those who occupied his land, he secretly withdrew into the region of Carrick, where he was on the king's instructions captured and taken to Ayr as an impostor and fraudster.¹⁷⁴

The impostor hanged in front of Robert Steward, Malcolm Fleming and others, but rumors persisted of his innocence, that he told the truth about his identity.¹⁷⁵ Sympathizers offered the excuse for his death as being an attempt by those who currently owned his lands to eliminate him so they might not have to surrender them. While this type of machination certainly does not appear unusual for the period and some of the players involved, there exists no evidence that Alexander Bruce did not die at Halidon Hill in 1333.¹⁷⁶

David traveled to Mouswald where on September 10, 1344, he granted lands to William Carruthers, a relative of Adam Carruthers, whom he had appointed as a royal bailie the

¹⁷³ Webster, pp. 118-120.

¹⁷⁴ Bower, pp. 157-159.

¹⁷⁵ Bower, pp. 157-159.

¹⁷⁶ Bower, p. 248. These are notes on Bower's (Fordun's) text.

previous year. He did this in his capacity as lord of Annandale. Robert Steward, David's chancellor of Annandale John Carruthers; Maurice Moray; Malcolm Fleming; John Tunnegarth, David's chamberlain of Annandale; John Stewart, Warden of the West March, William Crichton and many others witnessed the event.¹⁷⁷ One may only speculate as to the importance of this grant since David rarely served in his capacity as lord of Annandale.¹⁷⁸

By October 17, 1344, David wrote letters at Dumbarton to the chamberlain of Scotland concerning payments of certain rents to the church in Glasgow. From Stirling on November 15, 1344, he wrote more letters concerning payments to churchmen, this time in regard to the Friars Preachers of Perth. David issued more letters from Stirling on November 20, 1344, for payments to Cambuskenneth abbey.¹⁷⁹ One may surmise from all these three letters of assignment that David actively courted the favor of the Church at this time, specifically some of the districts that suffered financial or other hardship during Balliol and Edward III's more direct influence.

David began dealing with other more mundane issues also. On December 31, 1344, from Netherdale, David addressed the problem of counterfeiters and their attempts to

¹⁷⁷ Webster, pp. 120-121.

¹⁷⁸ And in this case, it is his second attempt in a year to deal not only with Annandale in general, but also the Carruthers, who appear to be important lords in the area.

¹⁷⁹ Webster, pp. 121-123.

surreptitiously alter weights and measure to their benefit. He confirmed to the burgesses of Inverness that no official other than the chamberlain had any authority over their weights and measures. This letter, in light of the economic condition of the kingdom after David's return, is hardly surprising. When Bullock audited the kingdom's finances and found them lacking, the money had to come from somewhere even if that meant falsification of trade rates to produce larger profits. David acted quickly to reassure the burgesses that only he made changes of this sort in fiscal policy.

David II does not appear again on record until March 9, 1345, at Dunfermline when he confirmed the church of Fordyce to the chapter of Aberdeen. Later that month, on March 28, 1345, he sent letters to his chamberlain, John Roxburgh, to pay back rents due to the Church of Glasgow.¹⁸⁰ The king still wisely courted the favor of the church by addressing their concerns formally when possible. In comparison, few lay members of the aristocracy received such consideration.

In April at the king's council in Edinburgh, David produced an inspection of letters, and a charter confirmation and sent letters to the sheriff of Edinburgh. On April 12, 1345, David inspected a papal bull nearly eighty years old on the approval of the Friars Preachers holding property. On April 14, 1345, he confirmed a charter from John Maxwell to

the abbey of Dryburgh. On the next day, April 15, 1345, he sent letters to the sheriff and his bailies of Haddington and Linlithgow ordering them not to interfere with the liberties of Dunfermline abbey. May 25, 1345, saw David sending from Dumbarton more letters to arrange further payments to the church of Glasgow.¹⁸¹

On July 1, 1345, he was back in Edinburgh issuing letters of pardon to the burgh of Aberdeen. Nine days later on July 10, 1345, he issued from Dumbarton a charter to William Livingstone for the barony of Callendar. Nearly two months later on September 2, 1345, from Edinburgh, David bestowed upon James Sandilands the barony of Wiston that Livingstone had previously resigned.¹⁸²

During the fall of 1345, David appears to have increased his movement throughout the kingdom.¹⁸³ From early September until the end of December, 1345, David traveled to eight different cities. He issued charters or letters on September 28 in Dumbarton, October 6 in Lanark, October 10 in Lanark, October 15 in Dunbar, October 18 in Dumbarton, November 4 in Aberdeen, November 22 in Elgin. He finally returned to Dumbarton on December 28, 1345. The king began to move more quickly than before and made more appointments to the nobility

¹⁸⁰ Webster, pp. 123-126.

¹⁸¹ Webster, pp. 125-127.

¹⁸² Webster, pp. 128-129.

during this period than to the clergy, strengthening his hold on Scotland politically with the landed nobility and filling the vacuum left by disinherited or dead enemies. With some experience under his belt, and now truly out of his minority, David surrounded himself with his loyal adherents (for the most part) and began to act like a king in deed as well as name. With his faithful followers, John Randolph, Malcolm Fleming, Philip Meldrum, Maurice Moray (recognized as the earl of Strathearne in December, 1345), his chancellor Thomas Charteris and even his nephew Robert Steward, David began his plans for more aggressive action against England.

¹⁶³ Of course it could also be that he moved around like this all the time but that we have little in the way of surviving evidence to support that theory.

CHAPTER FIVE: AFTERMATH OF NEVILLE'S CROSS, (1346-1357)

The year 1346 saw some of David's great successes and his greatest failure (not entirely of his own doing) that impacted negatively enough on his reign that it took Scotland many years to recover the freedom and prosperity it had spent the last thirteen years recovering from the English. It began much like the previous few years for David II. He issued charters, letters and inspections throughout the kingdom. David also began to desire to press his current advantage against the English to see what more he might gain. As Edward III pressed his advantage in France by laying siege to Calais, David showed interest in establishing himself internationally as a force to be reckoned with. He made plans for invading northern England not only to aid the French in their fight against the English, but also to solidify his hold on the borders so recently acquired. His great push into England took place in October of 1346 and ended at the Battle of Neville's Cross. David's activities prior to that are typically difficult to follow; little information exists to show his location or actions prior to the main event. However, charter evidence allows one to determine his location and the company he kept prior to his ill-fated foray into England.

From December 1345 to March 1346, David remains absent from any record. By March 17, 1346, however, David appeared

in Edinburgh to issue a charter to the earl of Sutherland, heretofore unmentioned in charters or chronicles.¹⁸⁴ By May 5, 1346, David occupied Dumbarton while he issued charters to Newbattle Abbey (on the 5th of May) and to one Patrick son of Michael Harper (on the 6th of May). Witnesses to both charters included Robert Steward, John Randolph (termed again earl of Moray and lord of Annandale and Man), Patrick Dunbar, Malcolm Fleming earl of Wigtown, and the chancellor Thomas Charteris.¹⁸⁵

On May 17, 1346, David issued a charter from Perth to one Gilbert of Glassary. The attendant witnesses remained the same from the earlier charters in Dumbarton two weeks prior. Two weeks later on May 28, 1346, David issued a charter to Bartholomew Loen and his wife, Philippa Mowbray, concerning a barony in the sheriffdom of Edinburgh. Robert Steward, Malcolm Fleming, and Thomas Charteris appeared as witnesses again, with the notable additions of Maurice Moray (now styled earl of Stratherne) and David Hay the constable of Scotland.¹⁸⁶ David disappeared from note again until July 1, 1346, when he surfaced at Edinburgh to issue letters patent of pardon and a grant to one Mary Stirling.¹⁸⁷

From Dumbarton on August 27, 1346, David inspected a charter with witnesses identical to the charter he issued on

¹⁸⁴ Webster, P. 134.

¹⁸⁵ Webster, pp. 134-136.

May 5, 1346.¹⁸⁸ On September 1, 1346, from Edinburgh David issued a charter to John Graham.¹⁸⁹ On September 8, 1346, David issued a charter in preparation of the campaign in England. He made Patrick Fleming sheriff of Tweeddale in fee and hereditary, including the leadership of the men in the sheriffdom.¹⁹⁰ After July when David ravaged England with his cousin John Randolph, David prepared for a more serious campaign in England. Peace, ever elusive between the Scots and English, failed to preside over the borders more so than any other part of Scotland.

Part of the absence of David's cartulary evidence may be accounted for with military action. David and Randolph had indeed probed northern England in July. As the Lanercost chronicler mentions, "David King of Scots entered England under the banner of the Earl of Moray, harrying Cumberland with slaughter and fire, and returning to Scotland with great droves of cattle without any loss to his army."¹⁹¹ Edward III left for France with an army to fight against the French at about the same time as the Scots expedition into England. This accounts for the Scots' ability to walk in, take what they wanted and leave without a scratch. It was undoubtedly

¹⁸⁶ Webster, pp. 136-137.

¹⁸⁷ Webster, p. 137.

¹⁸⁸ Webster, p. 138.

¹⁸⁹ Webster, p. 139.

¹⁹⁰ Webster, A grant of this type this early in David's reign is unusual. He did not normally grant sheriffdom's in hereditary

¹⁹¹ The Chronicle of Lanercost. Trans by Herbert Maxwell. Pp. 326-331.

this experience that encouraged David to plan another foray, this time in October.

"The strongest and best-organized expedition launched from Scotland for many years began on 7 October 1346, three days after the fall of Poitiers."¹⁹² Scotland's military strength lay in the ability of its commanders to assess the means necessary to relieve the English either of their possessions at home, or of their possessions in Scotland. When forced to battle, the Scots preferred to run away, taking everything in their path with them. They had neither the manpower nor the equipment to withstand assaults by the English that amounted to much more than normal border raiding. When they did force an issue to open battle, there had to be a matter of the utmost import or urgency. David's descent into England came as "a direct response to Edward III's campaign in France: an opportunity for plunder and revenge presented by the King's absence, and the long-delayed answer of the Scottish King to Philip VI's desperate pleas for help."¹⁹³

In attacking England, whether to aid France in her struggle or to advance Scotland's own, the young king in this instance had to aid the noble that aided him so well in the mid-1330's to the mid-1340's. William Douglas the Knight of Liddesdale held title to the land of Liddesdale, but did not

¹⁹² Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War: Trial by Battle, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), p. 550.

as yet hold the fortress of that place. David paused for three days outside the fortress to capture it and slaughter the defenders, including the commander Walter de Selby who begged for the right to confession as befit his station but was refused and immediately beheaded.¹⁹⁴

Sumption castigates David for being more courageous than wise in his command of the Scots on the campaign.¹⁹⁵ Citing as evidence the fact that the Scots stopped off to capture the fortress at Liddesdale, Sumption scorns David's lack of willingness to proceed into England where serious raiding could be done before any English could arrive. If that David's goal had been to achieve a military conquest of northern England, this surely would have been the correct path to follow. However, it is obvious that conquest was not his intention at all.

As Sumption himself points out, Carlisle reputedly had walls that barely stood of their own accord.¹⁹⁶ Should David have desired to conquer northern England, surely Carlisle was the place to start. The English put less care into the maintenance and care of this city than they did Berwick, which they took back from the Scots in the early campaigns in the 1330's. Holding Carlisle (and certainly razing it) may have

¹⁹³ Sumption, p. 550.

¹⁹⁴ Lanercost. pp. 331-332. This chronicle provides quite a colorful representation of David, as he and "the devil" (p.332) led the Scots into England.

¹⁹⁵ Sumption, p. 550.

been easier also. It sat quite close to the recently recovered Scottish Marches, able to be resupplied by several well protected Scottish strongholds along the coast and over the borders in Scotland. While Carlisle would easily have fallen and been fairly easy to resupply, David chose to take payment and pass them by. David's aim was clearly to cause as much inconvenience and fiscal damage to Edward III as he could.¹⁹⁷

This meant raiding the countryside, looting wealthy towns and monasteries. An opportunity such as this, with Edward III away in France with one of the largest armies he ever assembled, gave David nearly all the encouragement he needed to strike into England. Scottish attacks on England within the last year, most notably on October 25, 1345 and in July 1346, provided support for this view. The attack in October 1345 and its response by the English, amounted to little more than the burning of Gillesland and Penrith in Cumberland, and Dumfries in Scotland (on December 15, 1345 by the English).¹⁹⁸ But, as mentioned previously, Randolph's expedition brought back great numbers of cattle from the harrying of Cumberland and the surrounding territory, giving the illusion that England had no one left in it for defence.

¹⁹⁶ Sumption, p. 550.

¹⁹⁷ The Scots most certainly waited to set out on their expedition to hear the news from France concerning the Battle of Crecy, a devastating loss to the French on August 26, 1346.

¹⁹⁸ Lanercost, pp. 325-326.

It is not my intention to describe the Battle of Neville's Cross in any detail in this work.¹⁹⁹ However, a brief description is necessary. The numbers of the troops involved as well as the sequence of events are in dispute not only by contemporary scholarship, but also by the chroniclers of the fourteenth century. What started out as a grand undertaking by the Scottish king ending in something less than spectacular.

"On October 6 1346, the Scottish host mustered at Perth. Only two notable magnates seem to have been absent - Earl Malise of Caithness and Orkney and John of the Isles."²⁰⁰ What might have been an impressive number of Scots was greatly reduced by the Scots' inability to put aside their differences, even in the face of such an opportunity to win glory and booty for all involved. William earl of Ross used the opportunity to settle an old score with a rival, Ranald MacRuaridh²⁰¹ who had brought with him a contingent of people from the Outer Isles.²⁰² The earl ordered assassins to eliminate Ranald as Ranald quartered himself at Elcho abbey. "At this ill omen men deserted 'in gret rowtis.'²⁰³ The

¹⁹⁹ For a recent account, see Kelly DeVries, Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century. Professor DeVries describes the battle as best one may considering the ambiguity one has to deal with when using the chronicles of the period.

²⁰⁰ Nicholson, p. 146.

²⁰¹ Reginald son of Roderick mentioned previously in this work.

²⁰² Nicholson, p. 146.

²⁰³ Nicholson, p. 146.; Bower, vol. 7, pp. 253-263.; Wyntoun, vol. 6, pp. 176-179.; Lanercost, pp. 335-342.

number of men reaching the battlefield reported by the chroniclers varied greatly from two thousand to eighty thousand Scots. DeVries gives the number of English as being no more than eight thousand, but includes cavalry, infantry and archers in that figure.²⁰⁴ He also states that the Scots outnumbered the English, a fact unlikely but possible.

David and his Scots attempted to take the high ground and wait for the English to approach. However, a continuing hail of arrows convinced the Scots they had no choice but to abandon their positions and attack in an attempt to dislodge the English from their own position on high ground. To do this the Scots had to run the gauntlet of archers the English typically had flanking their infantry. By the time the Scots, those that survived the rush of arrows, reached the English, they were no match for a firmly planted, uphill opponent. Upon seeing the disaster unfold, Robert the Steward and Patrick, earl of March, abandoned their king with the bulk of the army, leaving the king and the bulk of the nobility that came with him to fend for themselves.²⁰⁵ John Coupland captured David II for the English after David knocked out two of Coupland's teeth. Nearly all of the rest of the nobility with David either died in battle or followed him into captivity. Among those killed were John Randolph earl of

²⁰⁴ DeVries. p. 181.

²⁰⁵ Nicholson, p. 147.; Lanercost, pp. 336-342.

Moray, Maurice Moray earl of Strathearne, and the constable, marshal, and chamberlain of Scotland.²⁰⁶

A disaster on this scale might seem to spell the end of the Scots, especially considering Edward III's rather martial view of Anglo-Scots relations. But the Scots had suffered through catastrophes before, such as at Halidon Hill. To be sure, the door now lay open for the English to displace the Scottish lords that managed to retrieve their lands during the previous six years of guerilla warfare, and retrieve them they did. Unfortunately for the English, the siege of Calais remained of paramount importance thereby depriving them of the opportunity to make a first-rate effort at re-establishing English administration throughout lowland Scotland. Instead, they relied on the marginally effective Edward Balliol, who in May 1347 started out for Scotland from Carlisle with an army to recover what he could. On January 26, 1347 Edward III's son Lionel engaged both Sir Henry Percy and Sir Ralph Neville to serve under Balliol for one year with accompanying men-at-arms and mounted archers.²⁰⁷ By mid-summer, the English had entered Scotland to do what damage they could.

Their raid accomplished much less than hoped for. The English recovered parts of lowland Scotland, some of which they physically held and some of which paid tribute (and/or

²⁰⁶ Fordun, p. 358.

taxes). Roxburgh went over to England again, along with parts of Teviotdale, Annandale, Nithsdale, Tweeddale, Ettrick Forest and Galloway.²⁰⁸ Other territories subject to English administration included, the sheriffdoms of Berwick, Peebles, Roxburgh and Dumfries. Jedburgh and Selkirk Forests joined Ettrick Forest as temporary English property.²⁰⁹ Still, the important castles of Edinburgh, Stirling and Dunbar, all held by the Scots, prevented the English from re-occupying all of lowland Scotland. Moreover, the English did not engage in a long drawn out campaign, the way they had in 1335, to crush the Scots once and for all and bring them to heel. Nor could they, considering the demands on manpower made by Edward's battles in France. Mostly punitive in nature, the raid by the English accomplished the task of returning some of the richest portions of the borders to English control for enough time and in enough places to nearly eliminate the Scots' desire to cross the border in force again for many years. For the rest of David II's and into Robert II's reign, the English Percy and Neville families attempted to control access to the

²⁰⁷ Bain, vol. 3, p. 269. Percy was to have one hundred of each troop type and Neville eighty.

²⁰⁸ Wynton, vol 6. pp. 186-187.

²⁰⁹ Nicholson, p. 148. It is in these areas that one may see the most activity in the years of David's captivity. Much of this land belonged to the Douglas family, who with the capture of the Knight of Liddesdale was about to gain another champion in the name of William, the future first Earl of Douglas.

borders and keep the Scots divided enough to eliminate them as an international threat.²¹⁰

David II lost his kingdom and his freedom in the aftermath of the Battle of Neville's Cross. John Copeland his captor on January 20, 1347, became a banneret and received an annuity of five hundred pounds for his efforts.²¹¹ Some other captives, including Malcolm Fleming and William Douglas the Knight of Liddesdale accompanied David from their temporary holdings of Roxburgh, Bamburgh, Newcastle-on-Tyne and Werk castles to their new lodgings in the Tower of London.²¹² Robert the Steward, who safely escaped the battle with Patrick Dunbar the earl of March, assumed the title of Lieutenant of the kingdom and attempted to put together a government in the wake of the disaster.

The first evidence of the Steward's government comes from Renfrew on June 9, 1348, where he instructed the sheriff of Dumbarton "not to levy exactions from the men of the abbey of Paisley in the sheriffdom of Lennox contrary to the agreement already made with the abbey."²¹³ Wyntoun states that after the

²¹⁰ Certainly this was not policy for these border lords, merely a by-product of their efforts to hold lands in this area given them by the English king. The Percys in particular held key areas in and around Ettrick forest, lands given to the Douglas family by the Scottish king, Robert I.

²¹¹ Bain, vol. 3, p. 269.

²¹² Bain, vol. 3, pp. 268-272. No evidence shows that these individuals traveled with the king. It, however, should be taken that they traveled at about the same time and certainly by March 7, 1347, the date of notice for payment to John Darcy the price of twenty shillings a day for their conveyance.

²¹³ Webster, p. 141.

Steward was chosen and made warden, he made sheriffs, bailies and other officials including keepers of important castles. Robert appointed one William Moray as keeper of Edinburgh Castle on his reputation as being one stout man. Unfortunately for William, great riots ensued between him and the men of the country. Thereafter when William²¹⁴ died at Dirleton, Robert appointed Sir David Lindsay who apparently caused no problems and kept the town well.

Nicholson states that David II had "no machinery to enforce his will."²¹⁵ While it may be true that absence encouraged government in the lax style of the Steward, David apparently did not remain totally out of touch. He could do little to alleviate conditions such as those that existed in Aberdeenshire

"where the sheriff was one of those appointed by the Steward ... and ... there was administrative chaos."²¹⁶ "For the sheriff did not account for any issues of his own court and asserted that there were none; he had obtained practically nothing from various lands set to ferm; his total receipts for the year 1347-8 came to only nineteen pounds seven shillings eight pence - and this sum was assigned to him for his fee."²¹⁷

However, David was not totally without recourse.

Imprisonment did not preclude David's making the occasional trip back to Scotland, presumably to attempt to

²¹⁴ Wyntoun. vol. 6, pp. 188-191.

²¹⁵ Nicholson, p. 149.

²¹⁶ Nicholson, p. 149.

²¹⁷ Nicholson, p. 149.; see also Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 1, pp. 542-544 and pp. clxxiii - clxiv.

arrange his release and ransom. The first of these came before he moved to the Tower, in December of 1346. On December 17, 1346, from Finavon (near Forfar, approximately some thirty miles north east of Dundee) David issued letters patent to his justiciars and other officials to not exact tallages or prises in the lands of the abbey of Arbroath.²¹⁸ Less than a year later on November 12, 1347, at Dundee, David issued letters ordering the new chamberlain to banish all Flemings from Scotland and to appoint a Scottish staple at Middleburg.²¹⁹

England performed well in France. Calais fell and Edward raided nearby territory using Calais as a base of operations. By September 1347, however, both the French and English operated from a standpoint of near fiscal exhaustion:

Philip VI arrived in Amiens from Point-Sainte-Maxence early in September to find the turnout poor and the war treasury empty. Morale was exceptionally low. Even in the provinces close to Calais, which were directly threatened by the invaders, recruitment had to be backed up by threats of imprisonment and forfeiture among noblemen and commoners alike. In Normandy the collection of the new hearth tax destined to pay for the new army encountered serious resistance which in some places had to be repressed by armed force. Philip put off the date of the muster by a month to 1 October 1347.²²⁰

²¹⁸ Webster, p. 139.

²¹⁹ Webster, p. 140.

²²⁰ Sumption, p. 584.

England's situation, while somewhat better due to their recent victories, suffered some unexpected jolts. From the simple mechanics of occupation, such as food and water, to the mechanics of encouraging and transporting troops to France after they had already returned home, military action became more problematic than Edward had foreseen.²²¹ Payment became an even more serious issue: "An attempt was made to anticipate it with a fresh round of forced loans, the third in six months. It was extremely badly received."²²²

Two further incidents helped the English consider the solution of a temporary truce. In September, an English force under the Earl of Warwick was caught unaware by the garrison of Saint-Omer reinforced by its citizens and put to flight.²²³ At sea, a small fleet of ten ships heading toward Calais with supplies and the wives of some of the English combatants was set upon by the French privateer, Marant, and captured in its entirety.²²⁴

All this brought the English and the French to the bargaining table with less resistance on both parts. By September 28, 1347, an agreement had been signed recognizing a temporary truce until July 7, 1348.²²⁵ The actual truce, due to the advent of the Black Death, lasted much longer. England

²²¹ Sumption, p. 584.

²²² Sumption, p. 584.

²²³ Sumption, p. 584.

²²⁴ Sumption, p. 584.

enjoyed the advantage in being allowed to maintain their current positions in all territories engaged in the conflict, including Scotland.²²⁶ Flanders preserved its independence for the moment and both sides vowed to avoid any discourse with each other's confederates and any attempt to threaten or tempt them for their own benefit.²²⁷

Philip received the worst end of the deal, since he could do nothing to punish or reconcile the traitors of 1346-47. The Flemings also gained free access to trade and travel in France. It was undoubtedly this fact that encouraged David II to expel all Flemings from Scotland when he reached Dundee in November, 1347. While David was a captive, he was neither ignorant of international events, nor totally impotent to do something about them. It was the everyday governance of the kingdom that required his continual presence, something that he could not provide even with the trips to Scotland he made during the term of his captivity.

An examination of the next eleven years of David's captivity could not be complete without discussing the terms and events around the conditions of his release. This will follow in a later chapter. The bulk of the information available about David II during this period revolves around the various deals he and others attempted to make with Edward

²²⁵ The Scots resigned themselves to the prospect of border raiding, and not even much of that until after the plague had ravaged their land in 1348-9.

III for his release. To understand the politics of his release, one must also understand the events of the period itself as well as the players in it. One common conception of David's captivity is that he spent nearly the entire captivity in an English prison. Evidence from the letters patent and charter confirmations dispute that view.

According to charter evidence, David II made regular though infrequent appearances in Scotland throughout his term of imprisonment. The letters patent banishing the Flemings from Scotland were only the first evidence attesting to a string of appearances made by the Scottish king. A charter witnessed on July 20, 1348, to the bishop and chapter of Aberdeen was issued at Forfar.²²⁸ Three months later letters to James Sandilands were sent from Edinburgh, on October 20, 1348.²²⁹ The next appearance on record took place at parliament at Dundee on May 15, 1350, nearly two years later.²³⁰ Eighteen months after that David issued letters patent to the Scottish chancellor on November 14, 1351, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, very close to the Scottish border.²³¹ The following year on February 29, 1352, David confirmed charters issued by Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus; Duncan, earl of Fife;

²²⁶ Sumption, p. 585.

²²⁷ Sumption, p. 585.

²²⁸ Webster, p. 142.

²²⁹ Webster, p. 142.

²³⁰ Webster, pp. 143-144.

²³¹ Webster, pp. 144-145.

and Robert the Steward to Robert Erskine at Scone.²³² A week later on March 5, 1352, David II issued more letters from Scone, this time forbidding fairs at Brechin, Fourdon, Coupar Abbey, the church of Alyth, Kettins, Kirriemuir and anywhere else that might damage the burgh of Dundee.²³³

On March 6, 1352, David II inspected a false charter supposedly of David I to the burgesses of Montrose.²³⁴ Over a week later, David issued letters patent to his justiciars concerning the protection of the rights of Arbroath abbey on the customs of Arbroath.²³⁵ After approximately eighteen months, on October 10, 1353, David issued letters patent at Dumbarton for the confirmation of William Meldrum.²³⁶ David stayed in Scotland for quite some time on this occasion for one finds him at Berwick on November 4, 1353, and Edinburgh on December 9, 1353.²³⁷

Of all the apparent trips to Scotland David II made, only once did the Edward III acknowledge his departure. A memo of instruction dated March 28, 1353, to his keeper at the time ordered him to allow David II freedom on good security until Pentecost. It appears David remained at large longer than that if he was in Edinburgh on December 9 of the same year.

²³² Webster, pp. 145-146.

²³³ Webster, pp. 147-150.

²³⁴ Webster, pp. 149-150.

²³⁵ Webster, p. 150.

²³⁶ Webster, p. 150.; John Maitland Thomson, ed., The Register of the Great Seal of Scotland. vol. 1. (Edinburgh: General Register House, 1912), app. 1, p. 500.

By 1354, William Douglas, the son of Archibald the Tyneman, one time Guardian and loser of the Battle of Halidon Hill, made his reappearance not only in the political machinations of the kingdom, but also in charters. David issued a charter to Douglas on February 12, 1354.²³⁸ From Brechin on February 28, 1354, the king confirmed charters from Duncan, earl of Fife, and William, lord of Douglas, to Beatrice Douglas and James Sandilands respectively.²³⁹ David issued one more charter from Brechin on March 31, 1354, to one Malcolm, son of Duncan. The next day he moved to Inverkeithing where held council with some of his chief nobles.²⁴⁰

On August 20, 1354, David appeared in Edinburgh. March 18, 1355, found him at Perth inspecting a charter of his marischal, William Kieth.²⁴¹ By April 16, 1355, the king was at Cupar. Not until September 8, 1356, did David II show up again, and this time at Perth for the inspection of a charter of one William Troup.²⁴² On January 17, 1357, the year of his

²³⁷ Webster, pp. 151-152.

²³⁸ Webster, p. 154.

²³⁹ Webster, pp. 153-154.

²⁴⁰ Webster, pp. 154-159. By looking at witness lists for this date and the inspections and confirmations performed, one finds many of the individuals who would be important in the next portion of David's reign. They include Robert the Steward, the Bishops of Aberdeen, Brechin, Saint Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane, Patrick earl of March, Malcom Fleming earl of Wigtown, William earl of Sutherland, William Livingston, Robert Erskine, John Preston and the clerk Robert of Dumbarton. (Preston and the earl of Sutherland do not feature significantly in the charter evidence in the rest of David's reign).

²⁴¹ Webster, pp. 160-164.

²⁴² Webster, pp. 166-167.

eventual release, he was present at council at Perth. David was again at Perth on July 14, 1357, long enough to issue two confirmations, one to John Sandilands and one to Newbattle abbey.²⁴³ In October with his full release imminent, David issued letters patent from Berwick directing the archdeacon of Moray to submit to the orders of the bishops of St. Andrews, Caithness, and Brechin (on October 3), and letters inspecting the treaty being drawn up for his release (on October 5).²⁴⁴ "On October 7, 1357, ... King David returned to his realm a free man."²⁴⁵

The negotiations for David II's release had been long and tortuous, encompassing eleven years, creating some ill will at home with some of David's nobles in Scotland, and had been influenced by not only the immediate parties concerned, but by international players as well.²⁴⁶ It is not my intention to discuss the ransom at this point; that discussion will be saved for a later chapter. However, one finds it necessary to discuss the problem of David's movement during his captivity and the consequences on his kingship of such sporadic attempts at government during his eleven-year internment.

The appearance of David II in Scotland on the occasions listed above creates the particular problem of either ascertaining the veracity of the places of issuance listed in

²⁴³ Webster, pp. 170-171.

²⁴⁴ Webster, pp. 172-173.

those letters or charters, or verifying David's location in England through independent sources. On at least one occasion, on 6 September 1351, Edward III issued writs to northern officials, the constable of Nottingham castle and the sheriff of York, to receive hostages for David II as he would be traveling to Scotland on matters concerning his ransom.²⁴⁷ By 14 November 1351, David had reached Newcastle, from where he sent the letters patent to the chancellor of Scotland discussed previously.²⁴⁸

David apparently returned to captivity in England sometime after his issuance of letters patent on 13 March 1352. Edward even let him stay free near Newcastle or Berwick until Whitsuntide in order to see if another arrangement might be made with the Scottish nobility, one of a less diplomatic and a more martial solution. Edward hoped to tempt those Scots resistant to the solution he desired into open rebellion against David, whereby David might enforce his will upon a successful campaign.²⁴⁹

Over the next five years, David II appeared in Scotland issuing charters and letters approximately six times.²⁵⁰ The

²⁴⁵ Nicholson. p. 163

²⁴⁶ Such as the French and the Church.

²⁴⁷ Bain, vol. 3. p. 285.

²⁴⁸ See p. 120, footnote 231.

²⁴⁹ This attempt came to naught. The Scots, led by some of the most powerful nobles, notably Robert the Steward and his faction, simply refused to endorse the solution.

²⁵⁰ This number depends on how long he was freed at any one time. Some of the periods where he appeared in Scotland only a few months apart may have been the same instance. However extended absences from the Tower would

chronicles are silent as to most of David's movements with several exceptions. Henry Knighton, the English chronicler notes his movements in 1352 and 1353, although Knighton shows particular pro-English bias.²⁵¹ English governmental documents provide some corroboration to the excursions made by David in 1352. Scottish chroniclers remain silent as to David's location during the years of his captivity. The problem of David's appearance in Scotland throughout his captivity raises some interesting questions.

We know that kings in captivity were released on occasion to see to the collection of their ransom, as were other members of the nobility. Another example during the same period is the King of France John II, who, captured at the Battle of Poitiers by the English, was released to see to his ransom for up to a year. Other nobles captured at the Battle of Neville's Cross also made an attempt to raise their own ransoms after being released temporarily for just such a purpose.²⁵²

Edward III certainly had no problem going against the wishes of his own parliament in attempting to arrange a

certainly have been noticed by more than just the king of England and may have proven problematic.

²⁵¹ G. H. Martin, ed. and trans., Knighton's Chronicle. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 120-123.

²⁵² William Douglas, notorious to the English as one of the staunchest foes made such an attempt. He was subsequently released and restored to his Scottish castle at Hermitage at the explicit orders of Edward III. In 1351 Douglas journeyed to Scotland primarily to discuss terms for David's release, but must also have attempted arrangements of his own for he was

favorable solution to the captivity of the Scottish nobility. "When the English parliament met in March 1348 it was made a condition of taxation 'that David Bruce, William Douglas, and the other chief men of Scotland, are in no manner to be set free, either for ransom or upon their word of honour.'"²⁵³ The questions remain: why was David II released as often as he appears to have been? How was his release accomplished in the instances previously outlined without the knowledge of his captors' government? And lastly, why are the chronicler's silent on this issue? It is not the purpose of this work to examine these questions, but future work must be done in this area to provide the answers to this problem.

Another problem of the period, one that cannot be overlooked, is the effect of the plague upon the Scots. Scotland suffered the plague throughout the lowlands much like any other Western country, losing up to a third of its population. At first the Scots saw the plague strike the English and sought to take advantage of their dire situation of the English. Knighton provides an interesting view:

The Scots, hearing of the cruel plague amongst the English, attributed it to the avenging hand of God, and took it up as an oath, as a common report came to English ears, and when they wished to swear they would say 'By the filthy death of England'.... And thus the Scots, believing God's dreadful

released the following year under interesting circumstances that will be discussed in a future chapter.

²⁵³ Nicholson, p. 156; Rotuli Parliamentorum ut et Petitiones et Placita in Parlamento. vol II. pp. 200-201. 1783.

judgement to have descended upon the English, gathered in the forest of Selkirk ready to overrun the whole kingdom of England. And a fierce pestilence arose and blew a sudden and monstrous death upon the Scots, and some 5,000 of them died in a short time, and the rest of them, some fit and some enfeebled, prepared to make their way home...²⁵⁴

The Scots felt the problem of rising prices and manpower shortages the same as everyone else. Europe as a whole, and Scotland, England and France in particular, canceled military plans for the next several campaigning seasons on any scale other than small raids due to the shortage of goods and manpower, especially that of the clergy. The next outbreak of plague reached Scotland in 1363 and presented challenges of a similar nature.

Scotland's political fortunes changed after 1346 to mostly reflect the character of the Lieutenant, Robert the Steward. Out of the lack of leaders another William Douglas, the godson of the knight of Liddesdale and heir to the vast Douglas lands of Sir James Douglas, his uncle,²⁵⁵ rose to assume the mantle of leadership in the war along the border with the English. For his efforts, David II made him the first earl of Douglas in 1358, shortly after his return from captivity in 1357. This Douglas also acquired the dubious

²⁵⁴ Knighton, pp. 100-103.

²⁵⁵ This is the "Good Sir James," one of the heroes of the War for Scottish Independence fought by Robert Bruce in the first quarter of the fourteenth century.

distinction of slaying the Knight of Liddesdale shortly after his release in 1352.²⁵⁶

The young lord of Douglas so pressed the borders that even Balliol in his ancestral lands of Galloway did not find enough support in order to maintain himself as king in Scotland.²⁵⁷ On January 20, 1356, Edward Balliol gave over his claim to the Scottish crown to Edward III in favor of the payment of his debts and an annuity of two thousand pounds for life.²⁵⁸ No doubt, with little advantage to keeping David II any longer, Balliol's resignation encouraged Edward III to end the unprofitable business of the Scottish king's captivity. David II returned to a much-changed Scotland with a list of friends and a short but soon-to-grow list of enemies. The heavy work of government lay ahead.

²⁵⁶ The Knight of Liddesdale did little to endear himself to David's cause in the end as he apparently sold out to become Edward III's man, even agreeing to fight for him given a months notice. See Nicholson, p.159.

²⁵⁷ By 1354 Balliol appear to have lost his birthplace of Buittle in Galloway. See Nicholson p. 161; Nicholson lists R.C. Reid, Bruce Webster, and C.A. Raleigh Radford and their corresponding articles in the Transaction of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Anitquarian Society, vol xxxv. 'Edward de Balliol', pp. 38-63; 'The English occupation of Dumfriesshire in the Fourteenth Century' pp. 64-80; 'Balliol's Manor House on Hestan Island', pp. 33-37.

²⁵⁸ Bain, vol 3, pp. 289-290.

CHAPTER SIX: THE END OF CAPTIVITY, (1356-1363)

The year 1356 saw great change in the Scots' fortunes. After Edward Balliol resigned his kingdom to Edward III of England, Edward III attempted to make the most of his new claim while he had the drive and momentum. The English king appeared at Berwick with an army at his back to relieve the town from Scottish occupation, accomplished as recently as November of 1355 by Thomas Stewart.²⁵⁹ Edward proceeded to march through Lothian destroying all he found, so impoverishing the countryside that the "common folk call that time 'The Burnt Candlemas'".²⁶⁰ He found himself deprived of the last elusive victory he so desired by stiff winds out of the north that prohibited his reinforcements and supplies from arriving in time to make the campaign feasible. As Edward III left a trail of ash behind his army on its return march to England, so also did he leave the last hope of acquiring Scotland for himself.

Later that year Edward III again stepped up his campaign in France resulting in the Battle of Poitiers and the capture of the French king, a much bigger prize than the king of

²⁵⁹ Fordun, p. 362; Knighton provides an interesting account of the capture which revolves around the Scots driving a heard of stolen cattle near the town and waylaying the townsmen that came out to gather the cattle. The next night the Scots supposedly put ladders up against the walls and broke in to the city while the guards were sleeping, killing all they found. (p. 136-7) Fordun gives an account of the Scots coming by sea, it all being carefully plotted out by Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus and Patrick Dunbar, earl of March.

²⁶⁰ Bower, pp. 290-1.

Scotland. Balliol, the one whom Edward could count on to put up at least token resistance to the Scots, gave up his cause. Edward's best hope now lay in two things. First, the natural divisiveness of the Scottish nobility, so clearly illustrated during the somewhat contemptuous guardianship of Robert the Steward; second, the rightful king of Scotland himself, David II. David and Edward had cooperated with each other several times already, though undoubtedly with different goals.²⁶¹ Regardless of the intentions of either monarch, David II re-entered a Scotland ready for a change in leadership. Robert the Steward finally decided that the return of David under conditions that he could deal with must be preferable to his return under conditions in which he might have no say, such as with a mandate and support from Edward III.²⁶²

The years immediately following David II's release showed a king eager to return to his kingdom and return it, or at least his kingship, to the glory of the days before his capture. But eleven years of captivity, during which the only role model he had (Edward III) showed him the importance of politics in attaining his desires, gave him the wisdom to

²⁶¹ David's goal was to be free at any price. Edward's goal was to free David at a high price. One might look to Edward III's ever-present financial troubles as a partial explanation for the huge ransom he set on David II, that and his probable desire to so cripples the Scots with a ransom payment, that they would be indeed unable to raise arms against him for some years even beyond the truce that accompanied the ransom treaty.

²⁶² The treaty conditions decidedly favored the Steward, since the only concession Edward III retained was one of money. The succession to the throne was never in doubt in this final treaty, and to the most powerful

reward the faithful. Being true to their Scottish heritage, the "faithful" were not necessarily faithful to David II, but rather in resisting the English. Within the first two years of his return, David rewarded the most significant of the nobility with important titles or lands. Perhaps the most important of these rewards went to William Douglas, now heir to all the Douglas lands heritable from his father, Archibald Douglas (the former Guardian at Halidon Hill), and from his uncle the "Good Sir James."

This presentation placed the bulk of the control of the borders into the hands of William Douglas. Furthermore, David went even further in rewarding the lord of Douglas when early in 1358, David made him the first earl of Douglas, unknowingly tying the royal house and the Douglas family together until the destruction of the Douglasses in the sixteenth century. Other individuals also received great rewards, including a small group of lesser nobles that enabled David to rule, and not the Steward and his adherents. One may discern the individuals most keenly rewarded by an examination of the charter evidence, as well as determining David II's location during the early years after his return.

On November 10, 1357, in parliament at Scone, David issued letters patent allowing the abbey of Melrose to retain

noble of the kingdom at the time, hostages and money meant not nearly so much as a possible ascension to the throne.

their Scottish lands for they were under control of the English through no fault of their own.²⁶³ On the following day, November 11, 1357, he issued privy seal letters to the sheriff and bailies of Aberdeen concerning the rights of the abbey of Arbroath in the face of one Laurence of Garvock.²⁶⁴ Right away one can see that David did not forget the clergy, settling the two most serious problems they had before doing anything else. Two days later on November 13, 1357, one may see in his first lay charter in the witness list some of the stalwarts that supported David with increasing regularity and also who might be in a likely position to bully him.²⁶⁵ His second charter on the same day contains the same witnesses with the addition of William Douglas, listed as lord of Douglas.²⁶⁶

Churchmen represented themselves well at this first issuance of charters as they had when David returned from France so long before. Three bishops attended him on those days: Bishop William of St. Andrews, William bishop of Glasgow, and Patrick the bishop of Brechin. These men, especially the bishop of Brechin, supported David with their presence for many of his remaining years. Other important individuals appear here also, most notably Robert Erskine, a man from the lesser nobility who worked his way into David

²⁶³ Webster, p. 191.

²⁶⁴ Webster, p. 191.

II's confidence through his ability and loyalty to the king. Another man from the lesser nobility found not infrequently in David II's witness lists was William Livingston. Though his role was somewhat limited upon David's return from captivity, Livingston served the king at Stirling in 1342, as well as held several positions of sheriff, one in Haddington in 1341 and one in Lanark in 1358.²⁶⁷ His inclusion here shows a desire by David to associate with the stalwarts of his past and possibly those whose loyalties he need not question, such as Erskine and a few others.

For the greater nobles, their representation needs none other than Robert the Steward (titled earl of Strathearne) and Patrick Dunbar, earl of March (and Moray at this time).²⁶⁸ These two noblemen held the bulk of the power in the kingdom at the time of David's return. The Steward controlled much of western and northern Scotland, while Dunbar controlled the eastern marches and some territory in northern Scotland also, especially with the addition of the earldom of Moray. Add to this pair the soon to be made new earl of Douglas, William Douglas, and one may include in the power block the central border and some of the western borders, as well as some lands in the central lowlands of Lothian. With these three

²⁶⁵ Webster, pp. 192-194.

²⁶⁶ Webster, pp. 192-194.

²⁶⁷ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 1, pp. 472, 513, 581.

individuals supporting the king, none dared to attempt to foil his purposes. Conversely, so recently returned from his captivity, David could scarcely afford to alienate any of these men at this time, his own power base having eroded during his absence.

David II had three issues to contend with upon his return to Scotland. The first and foremost in the mind of the Scots was of course how the immense sum of his ransom, one hundred thousand marks, could be afforded by so poor a kingdom. Second, David had to restore his influence throughout the kingdom and reinstate the authority of the crown that waned during the years of Robert Stewart's lieutenancy. Third, eleven years in captivity taught the Scottish king one thing if nothing else, that trusting his powerful nobles would make him no king in reality but another puppet to replace Balliol, albeit with a different master. David's ransom will be discussed in the following chapters in detail. Therefore, let us turn to the second problem, which coincided with the third problem interconnecting the two in question and in resolution.

Asserting royal power in the early days of his return proved to be somewhat easier than it might have been. The Scots had the monumental task of restructuring their economy in the face of over twenty-five years of near continuous

²⁶⁶ It is not my intention to go into in-depth discussions of the marital politics of the period to determine the veracity of a title at a particular

warfare and raiding, on top of the ravages the plague left behind when it finally passed from Scotland in the early 1350s. David's first solution to the immediate task of reasserting his authority came with rewarding the faithful, his favorites and the powerful; the second came with making himself visible throughout the land.²⁶⁹

David II did not only reward the nobility, he also ensured that important burgesses received recognition. For example, Adam Torrie (Tore) received the wardenship for the Exchange for the whole realm of Scotland by charter on December 26, 1357.²⁷⁰ This Adam Torrie also took an important role in trade in 1347, shortly after David II's capture, when the king appointed a Scottish staple at Middleburg and banished all Flemings from Scotland.²⁷¹ In 1348, this same Adam traveled to Bruges to settle the differences between them.²⁷²

Others benefited from David's generosity as well, especially members of the minor nobility. One John Preston received lands forfeited by Joachim of Kinbuck and John Marshal, in spite of the fact that all grants of forfeited

time. Should one desire to find this information, check the Scots Peerage.
²⁶⁹ This was probably not a conscious effort since it was quite typical for David to travel throughout his kingdom while issuing charters and letters, something quite typical of medieval kings in general.

²⁷⁰ Webster, p. 195.

²⁷¹ Webster, pp. 140-141.

²⁷² M. P. Rooseboom, The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1910), pp. 4-5.

lands had been revoked by the last assembly of estates.²⁷³ This effort on David's part showed his attempt at asserting himself in the face of his council. Shortly after his return, in early November of 1357, the council mandated that the king should live of his own means and not place unnecessary taxation upon the shoulders of an already suffering country.

"David was authorized to revoke into his own possession all grants he had previously made of lands, rents or customs revenues, and what was thus revoked was not to be regranted save upon 'mature counsel.'"²⁷⁴ Efforts at establishing a mechanism for repayment of the ransom immediately upon his return aimed primarily at lesser landholders, the Church, towns and burgesses, the places that David found his most willing allies in the years to come. The fact that he chose to ignore and even defy the will of the council in this instance should have given a warning that he would rule and not be ruled.²⁷⁵

The king's progression through the country began after the council meeting at Scone on November 13, 1357.²⁷⁶ From Scone, David II traveled to Lanark on December 13, 1357 to

²⁷³ Webster, pp. 195-198.

²⁷⁴ Nicholson, p. 164.

²⁷⁵ In fact, the last charter listed that has any indication about the aforementioned revocation was associated again with John Preston on January 4, 1358, at Edinburgh. Either David chose to ignore the seeming desire of the council to place the entire burden of the ransom on anyone but themselves, or he counted on the accounting of the kingdom he ordered upon his return (which will be more fully discussed in the next chapter when I discuss the issue of the ransom in detail).

²⁷⁶ Webster, p. 192.

inspect a charter of Donald earl of Lennox. From Lanark, the king traveled to Stirling on December 26, 1357, where he presented a charter to Adam Torrie, wardenship of the Exchange for the realm previously mentioned. By January 4, 1338, David resided in Edinburgh for his grants to John Preston. One week later, he issued a charter from Dumbarton to one Malcolm Fleming of Biggar (presumably not the same Malcolm Fleming that was the earl of Wigtown) on January 11, 1357.

David traveled to Perth to inspect another charter by the earl of Lennox on January 15, 1358. From January 18, 1358 until March 6, 1358 he stayed at Edinburgh to conduct the business of the realm.²⁷⁷ The witness lists appear almost identical throughout this early period of activity after David II's return from England. Only minor variations exist, including William Douglas as lord of Douglas after David confirmed him in the position by charter. The chancellor, Patrick, bishop of Brechin appears first on the witness list before Robert the Steward, whom the king at this point did not ignore as he had before his capture at Neville's Cross. Patrick earl of March and Moray, William (newly made) earl of Douglas, Sir William Livingston and Sir Robert Erskine complete the list.

Principals of the charters issued include earls, lesser noblemen and abbeys. The subject matter of the charters most

frequently reinforced prior grants of land, confirmed charters of land to and from great lords, and reassigned lands previously held by other individuals. On January 18, 1358, David confirmed one John Kennedy in all his lands acquired up to the date of the grant.²⁷⁸ Two days later on January 20, 1358, David II confirmed charters from Duncan, earl of Fife, to Beatrice Douglas (wife of Archibald the Guardian at Halidon Hill), and from William, lord of Douglas (soon to be earl), to James Sandilands and Eleanor Bruce (Sandilands wife).

David attempted to cement his loyalties also. He granted to John of Lorne all the possessions of Alexander of Lorne, including the castles in the possession of the independent-minded John of the Isles in an attempt to gain favor in the eyes of Lorne and the "Highland Party" that evolved while the king was imprisoned.²⁷⁹ Two days later on January 25, 1358, David granted to Gillespie Campbell the lands of his father owing to the forfeiture of those lands by his brother Dugal Campbell.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ Webster, pp. 200-210.

²⁷⁸ Webster, p. 200.

²⁷⁹ Webster, pp. 202-203. The kings of Scotland traditionally had poor relations with the Lord of the Isles and the men who held the territory of the western isles for Scotland. John of the Isles, for example, spent much of his life coolly indifferent to the overtures of both David II and the king of England.

²⁸⁰ Webster, pp. 203-204. This series of grants is interesting due to the fact that Campbell, John of Lorne, John of the Isles, William, earl of Ross, and Robert the Steward all comprised what Nicholson has termed a "Highland party". Certainly in these early days after his return David II not only rewarded those whom he desired, but also those whom he had to, namely the Steward and his cronies. One can see this demonstrated in the charters issued after his return: to John of Lorne, William Douglas

David issued charters to the abbey of Melrose on January 27 and 28, 1358. He sent letters patent to Melrose abbey on January 20 and to Arbroath abbey on February 6, 1358, in council again in spite of parliament's revocation of grants of lands and fees.²⁸¹ On February 4, 1358, he made William Douglas the first earl of Douglas, thereby adding greater strength to alliance the Steward organized to dull the effects of royal power upon David's return. However, David did not return to Scotland in order to be ruled by others, as his defiance of the order of parliament suggests. He also used the men he knew to be faithful to him to witness as he rewarded others. David used William Ramsay and David Anand²⁸² to testify in the case of a parcel of land surrendered by William Bisset and re-granted to William Sinclair on February 11, 1358, at Edinburgh.²⁸³

The character of these charters changed little in the remaining month David remained at Edinburgh. He issued a charter to John Murray on March 6, 1358, which included Walter Haliburton, John Preston, and William Ramsay in the witness lists. The same day David issued a charter to Walter

(Robert's ally), Gillespie Campbell, and Thomas Stewart (one of Robert's sons). David indeed walked a fine line between advancing his chosen few and rewarding those he must due to politics.

²⁸¹ Webster, pp. 208-209.

²⁸² David Anand shows up frequently in witness lists in the early days after David's return. William Ramsay was probably the same William Ramsay that saved Archibald Douglas, another of David's protégés, from capture at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356.

²⁸³ Webster, pp. 209-210.

Haliburton for the barony of Bolton.²⁸⁴ By March 12, 1358, David arrived at Perth. The language he began using in the witness lists toward his heir appears conciliatory or even deprecating in nature. Once again David terms Robert "nepote nostro karissimo". One may surmise by the sheer amount of grants to the Steward and his allies during this period that David stood little chance of governing on his own. For the first two years after his return, from 1358 to 1360, this certainly appears to be the case. Such grants that do not benefit the "Highland Party" appear to benefit lesser noblemen for the most part, and seemingly (to the Steward's eyes) unimportant ones at that.

The remarkable aspect of the next several years of David's kingship comes not so much from who the charters are to, but who witnesses them. It is in the witness lists that one may find evidence of the politics played from each end of the spectrum, both noble and royal. The great lords may have some control over who gets what grant of land but none over who witnesses these grants or who has access to the king.

Robert the Steward counted for long on the strength of his alliance in being able to control (or not control as evidenced by his weakness both before David's release and after his death) the crown even though he no longer had the bulk of the power in his very hands. One may also determine

²⁸⁴ Webster, p. 210.; Register of the Great Seal of Scotland., p. 490.

from the absence of individuals in the witness lists something of the favor they held in the eyes of the king. For example, one may notice the near total absence from the witness lists of anyone from the western isles and highlands that resided in Steward-friendly territory, outside of the Steward himself.²⁸⁵ David spent much of his time in or near Edinburgh and Scone during 1358, leaving the west alone for the most part at this time.

David II left Perth sometime after March 16, 1358, when he inspected a charter to the abbey of Coupar.²⁸⁶ From Perth David traveled to St. Andrews and confirmed a charter issued by Robert I, his father. The witness list of this particular charter included the bishop of St. Andrews (naturally); William (Ramsay), earl of Fife; David Annand and John Preston.²⁸⁷ By April 2, 1358, David II had arrived back in Edinburgh and confirmed a charter to one John Gray with William, earl of Fife, replacing Thomas, earl of Mar. David issued a charter on April 5 and April 14 from Edinburgh, concerning lands in Argyll and an order to his chamberlain to pay the Friars Preachers their due.²⁸⁸

On May 3, 1358, at Dumbarton David issued a charter concerning lands in Perth. By May 14, however, he was in Arbroath issuing letters protecting the abbey of Arbroath

²⁸⁵ See Regesta and Register of the Great Seal witness lists.

²⁸⁶ Webster, pp. 211-213.

against unwarranted fees on lands held exempt.²⁸⁹ He appears in Edinburgh less than a week later on May 20, 1358, issuing another charter concerning lands in Argyle. David seems to have stayed in Edinburgh throughout the rest of May and June. From Dundee he issued another charter on August 18, and from Perth on August 20, 1358. From August 31 through at least October 1, 1358, David stayed in Edinburgh issuing charters and letters.²⁹⁰

David proceeded to parliament at Scone around November 10, 1358, on which day he issued a charter to Alexander Cockburn.²⁹¹ On November 12, 1358, David inspected a charter from Thomas, earl of Mar, to Robert Erskine and his wife for lands in the lordship of Garioch, Thomas's own lands awarded to him by David II earlier in the year. Witnessing this charter were several men loyal to David II, including William Cuninghame, William Livingstone, and Hugh Eglinton, of whom Livingstone had served as a temporary hostage for David on one of his trips back to Scotland during his captivity in England.²⁹² David stayed in Scone through November 18, 1358, when he issued letters prohibiting visits to Orkney from the sheriff and bailies of Inverness and the coroner of Caithness,

²⁸⁷ Webster, p. 213.

²⁸⁸ Webster, pp. 214-215.

²⁸⁹ Webster, pp. 215-216.

²⁹⁰ Webster, pp. 224-227.

²⁹¹ Thomson, pp. 54-55.

²⁹² Bain, p. 459.

but was in Perth on November 22, 1358, to inspect a charter from the earl of Mar to a canon of Aberdeen.²⁹³

By December 15, 1358, David arrived again in Edinburgh with the regular core of witnesses in attendance, the Bishops of St. Andrews and Brechin, Robert Steward, William Douglas, Robert Erskine and John Preston. He also inspected another charter on the following day, December 16, 1358.²⁹⁴ Following that inspection, David traveled to London where he next appears on record issuing signet letters from Friars Preachers of London on February 21, 1359, concerning the repayment of his ransom.²⁹⁵ David informed Edward III that the respite granted him, arranged by his wife, Queen Joan (Edward's sister), for the payment of the first installment of his ransom, did not invalidate Edward's rights under the treaty.²⁹⁶ Queen Joan from this time stayed in England where she died a short four years later. David had replaced her in his affections with his mistress Katherine Mortimer earlier when he returned from his captivity in England.

One week after David's meeting in London, he appeared in Scone, in February 28, 1359. Two weeks later on March 15, David induced Thomas, earl of Mar, to surrender the barony of Terregles in the sheriffdom of Dumfries to one John Herries

²⁹³ Webster, p. 233. This may be an excellent example of David's hands-off policy of the western isles at the time, which also included the northeastern Isle of Orkney.

²⁹⁴ Webster, pp. 233-237.

²⁹⁵ Webster, pp. 237-239.

(another knight favored by David).²⁹⁷ David arrived at Dundee for council, where he also issued a charter of entail to Henry, duke of Lancaster, for the lands of the earldom of Moray in the sheriffdom of Inverness.²⁹⁸ Interestingly enough, while Robert Steward did witness this charter, Patrick Dunbar, who at this time styled himself earl of Moray, did not appear in the list. The same day in council David issued letters patent to John Menteith restoring him to certain lands despite a grant of the same to one John Logie.²⁹⁹ On April 8, 1359, while still at Dundee David inspected a charter to another of his faithful, William Meldrum. William, earl of Fife, took the earl of March's place in the witness list, while David added John de Lisle (keeper of Edinburgh castle in 1360).³⁰⁰

By May 3, 1359, David had returned to Edinburgh where he probably stayed through June 5, 1359. On May 3, David inspected two charters from Thomas Moray of Bothwell, one to Robert Steward and one to Robert Erskine.³⁰¹ The Steward received a barony in the sheriffdom of Clackmannan, while Erskine received a barony in the sheriffdom of Lanark, each to his own influence--the Steward in the west and Erskine in the

²⁹⁶ Bain, vol. 4, p. 8.

²⁹⁷ Webster, pp. 239-240.

²⁹⁸ Webster, pp. 240-241; Bain, p. 3. ; The Calendar makes this date in the year 1358. However we know by the regnal year and the start of the regnal year that this date should be 1359.

²⁹⁹ Webster, pp. 241-242.; This is the same John Logie married to Dame Margaret Logie, whom David II married in 1363 after his Queen Joan died in England.

³⁰⁰ Webster, pp. 243-244. Rotuli Scacarrii, vol. 2, pp. 50.

³⁰¹ Webster, pp. 246-248.

mid lowlands near the king. During the summer of 1359, Erskine was absent from the witness lists of David's charters. This corresponds with a mission David sent him on with Norman Leslie as "trusted envoys" to France.³⁰² Erskine and Leslie were to inquire of the pope about the possibility of a tenth of all ecclesiastical incomes, which he granted for the following three years.³⁰³ They also spoke with the French about the same subject.

In 1359 they informed the Dauphin Charles (regent for the captured King John) that David, while a prisoner, 'was never minded to abandon the French alliance, even although, if he had done so, the king of England would have released him more easily from prison.'³⁰⁴ The envoys proposed that the Scots would renew the war on the English if the French would pay King David's ransom. The French were unenthusiastic: the most they could offer was 50,000 marks to be paid at Bruges on 5 April 1360 on condition that the Scots renewed the old alliance and sooner or later made war on the English.³⁰⁵

During the same summer David moved from Glasgow on June 10 to Perth on July 2 where he stayed through at least July 4, 1359.³⁰⁶ From Elgin on August 12, 1359, David issued letters to the bishop of Moray authorizing him to "proceed with ecclesiastical censures with those who interfered with the possessions of the church in Moray."³⁰⁷ David attended parliament at Scone on October 3, 1359, where he demanded of

³⁰² Nicholson, p. 167.

³⁰³ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 312-313.

³⁰⁴ See R. Delachenal, *Histoire de Charles V.* (Paris, 1909-1931). vol II. pp. 103-5.

³⁰⁵ Nicholson, p. 167.

³⁰⁶ Webster, pp. 248-250.

all his "royal officials not to interfere within the regality of the abbey of Abroath."³⁰⁸ He remained there in parliament through October 26, 1359.

A summation of the charters and grants David made in his first two years shows several things. First, David initially rewarded those great nobles he knew he could not function without, namely Douglas and the Steward (including members of his faction and family). Second, David increased his use of lesser noblemen when there were certainly plenty of greater noblemen around to aid in the running of the kingdom should he have chosen. Third, he occasionally required of some of the greater nobles, Thomas, earl of Mar, for example, to resign certain lands in favor of his own men, such as Robert Erskine. Lastly, David made certain he did not alienate the burgesses and clergy. He regranted rights to abbeys and protected them from royal officials and noblemen who would have liked to have seen some abbeys lose certain of their lands and incomes.³⁰⁹

David unwittingly set himself up for a demonstration of the growing dissatisfaction of the Steward, Douglas and Dunbar, as they realized that David did not need them specifically to retain control of the kingdom, no matter how powerful they were. The fact that they were present with the

³⁰⁷ Webster, p. 250.

³⁰⁸ Webster, pp. 251-252.

³⁰⁹ For a more detailed view of this, see the character of the charters represented in the Regesta during this period. Obviously, not all abbeys or their holdings were affected.

king indicates their general importance to be sure, but did not limit the king to acting only in their interests. In fact, they needed David more than he needed them. While there could only be one king, anyone could own land or an earldom at the king's whim, especially considering the blank check given to David by his parliament in revoking any and all grants of land and customs he had previously awarded. This meant to the nobility, that largess in the future came from one man, the King David II of Scotland. While certainly they were not without recourse, resisting the man many had worked so long to liberate would prove difficult in the extreme.

The new year saw David II at Restenneth on January 2, 1360. From there he proceeded to Edinburgh where he resided on January 10 and 11, 1360, inspecting charters from William, earl of Douglas, and that of his father, Robert I.³¹⁰ In this new year one begins to find Walter Haliburton³¹¹ added to some of the witness lists. Haliburton, long a supporter of his king, only added to David's apparent determination to not rely on the great lords for permission to govern. David traveled to Perth from Edinburgh by January 20, 1360, where he issued a charter to the burgesses of Dundee. David was joined by William, earl of Douglas, at Dundee. One may also find in the

³¹⁰ Webster, pp. 255-257.

³¹¹ Walter Haliburton was captured with David II at the Battle of Neville's Cross. He spent almost the same amount of time interred as did the king. See Calendar, vol. 3, index for a brief description and location of his appearances.

document the first mention of his lay chamberlain, Walter Biggar.³¹²

From Perth on January 26, David traveled to Forfar on January 31, where he inspected a charter from the earl of Atholl to one Roger Mortimer, and back to Edinburgh by February 15, 1360 where John Preston rejoined him. David reached Stirling by March 23, 1360, where he issued a charter of a portion of the royal income to Robert Erskine. Of particular note is the addition of Roger Mortimer to landed reward (even if it came from the earl of Atholl) and to the witness list.³¹³ While no specific connection exists between Roger Mortimer and the mistress of the king, Katherine Mortimer, there may be a familial connection.³¹⁴

³¹² Webster, pp. 258-260.

³¹³ Webster, pp. 260-262.

³¹⁴ Mark W. Ormrod, "Katharine Mortimer's Death at Soutra," in Sharp Practice, 4: Fourth Report on Researches into the Medieval Hospital at Soutra, Lothian/Borders Region, Scotland, ed. Brian Moffat (Edinburgh: Soutra Hospital Archaeoethnopharmacological Research Project, 1992), 110-120. Ormrod suggests that Katharine belongs to a mercantile family in London at the time and cites several examples of families listed with that surname in London in the latter fourteenth century. He also asserts that she could have been part of Queen Joan's entourage as a lady-in-waiting. In support of this view is David II's own actions. Later in his reign after his marriage to Margaret Logie, he provides land for her son from her previous husband. If this instance correlates in type to the gift to Logie's son, then it is possible that Katharine was a relative of this Roger Mortimer from Ballandro in the sheriffdom of Mearns. If this were the case than Katharine would be Scottish, thus lending more credence to the theory that she was part of some entourage that came from Scotland while he was imprisoned. She may not necessarily have been in Queen Joan's since Joan did not actually come to England for many years after his capture, and other noblemen began travelling back and forth as soon as the negotiations for the ransom began.

Alternatively, his arguments for her not being noble born are also compelling. It merely provided more reason for the distress of the Scottish nobility that David II had taken up with the daughter of a simple burgess. While it remains possible that Katharine was related to the infamous noble Mortimers of England, it seems more likely that either

A full council, which David II attended, met in Perth on or about April 12, 1360.³¹⁵ On May 5, 1360, David made his way to Sweetheart Abbey where he inspected a charter to the abbey by Dervorgilla. From there he journeyed back to Edinburgh by May 26, 1360, where he issued yet another charter in spite of the revocation of grants authorized by parliament. It is difficult to determine the exact act that apparently enraged the great lords enough to plot the murder of the king's mistress in the coming months, but perhaps this act, again in defiance of parliaments, contributed to it.³¹⁶ From Edinburgh David next appeared on record in Perth from approximately July 5, 1360, through July 22, after which he removed himself to Edinburgh by August 20, 1360.

This late charter represents a significant departure in policy for the king, albeit viewed with the benefit of hindsight. Archibald Douglas witnessed his first charter for David II on August 20, 1360, although it was merely a

Ormrod's connection with the London nobility is correct, or that she was a member of a Scottish entourage and related to the Roger from Ballandro. The fact that David was housed in London for several years before being moved to Odiham supports Ormrod's London nobility theory. David's inspection of the Ballandro charter seems to support the Scottish option.

For yet another option, Katharine could have been part of Queen Philippa's (Edward III's wife) household as Edward III's mistress, Alice Perrers, was. It seems even more likely considering that Odiham belonged to Philippa throughout David's imprisonment there. Since David's contacts with the outside were strictly regulated by Edward III, she would almost have to have been at either the Tower of London or Odiham castle in some capacity other than that of a simple domestic servant. Unfortunately, no other records of Katharine exist to date, leaving her origins a mystery at this time.

³¹⁵ Webster, pp. 263-264.

confirmation of a charter issued by one Roger Aulton. Walter Haliburton, another loyal supporter of David II's as well as Robert Erskine, also witnessed.³¹⁷ Robert Stewart and William Douglas attended also, as usual, but their appearance with the growing number of lesser noblemen must have created a certain amount of unease. One probable explanation for the increase of lesser noblemen in attendance upon the king is as a response to the murder of his mistress, Katherine Mortimer, during the summer of 1360. The suspected culprit and instigator, Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus, had not yet been apprehended.³¹⁸

For the rest of 1360, David moved around to several places. On September 14 he was in Aberdeen, on October 20 back in Perth, on October 26 and 27 at Scone in parliament, on October 28 he arrived in Perth, and ended his year on record at Edinburgh on November 20, 1360.³¹⁹ At this parliament in particular, David made it obvious to the great lords that he could and would rule without their permission. He not only included in his closest councils lesser noblemen, such as John Preston, Robert Erskine, Hugh Eglinton, William Livingston,

³¹⁶ Webster, pp. 264-268. Walter Moigne ends up holding the castle of Kildrummy for David after David captured it the following year, indicating hid favor in David's eyes.

³¹⁷ Webster, pp. 270-271.

³¹⁸ This must have been a trying time for Robert, Thomas's relative. One may further conjecture that Robert may have been behind the plan in the beginning, although little evidence to support that position exists other than his eventual uprising against the king during the winter of 1362-1363.

³¹⁹ Webster, pp. 270-280.

and the new-comer John Danielston (keeper of Dumbarton castle),³²⁰ but he also granted further rights to the burgesses of the realm.³²¹

The death of David's mistress did not cripple the king as his enemies probably hoped. Instead, it appeared to galvanize him against their encroachment upon his royal prerogative. He more openly supported those not of the great nobility and turned more frequently to them for support in an increasing number of avenues from financial to diplomatic, and eventually for military support.

For the year 1361 we have comparatively little on record for David's movements about the kingdom. From Linlithgow on January 12, 1361, David proceeded to Edinburgh by the fourteenth at the latest. He remained at Edinburgh through April 14, 1361, focusing his interests mainly on the abbey of Melrose and Arbroath, and on letters and charters awarding various parcels of land to one James Douglas, cousin to William the earl of Douglas.³²² From Edinburgh David moved to Perth where he stayed through May 2, 1361. On May 7, 1361, David confirmed or inspected at least three charters for the Carmelite Friars of Aberdeen (one inspection contained eight charters within it).³²³

³²⁰ Rotuli Scacarri, vol. 2. pp. 50-51.

³²¹ Webster, pp. 272-277.

³²² Webster, pp. 280-284.

³²³ Webster, pp. 286-295.

For witnesses during this period, one finds Walter Moigne twice; Patrick, earl of March; once; William Ramsay; and one David son of lord Walter. With the exception of the one time addition of Patrick Dunbar, the greater nobles witnessing did not alter beyond the typical configuration. While the variation of the great lords is practically nil, indicating both ensconced positions and David's lack of desire to gather other noble counsel, the king continued to add more lesser nobleman to his closest councils.

Records for the rest of 1361 are few. One finds David at Edinburgh on June 16, at Dumbarton on September 18, Edinburgh again on October 6, Scone on November 12, and finishing out the year at Edinburgh again on December 5 and 6, 1361.³²⁴ David added another official to his witness lists on December 5, 1361, at Edinburgh in a charter to one William Leith of lands and fisheries on the sheriffdom of Aberdeen:³²⁵ William Keith the marischal of Scotland.³²⁶

Throughout all of 1361, Robert Steward and William, earl of Douglas, scarcely left the king's side and were nearly always in the witness lists. No other great nobles enjoyed such frequency in the lists. Patrick Dunbar, earl of March, came closer than any others, but still lacked much

³²⁴ Webster, pp. 295-299.

³²⁵ Webster, pp. 297-298.

³²⁶ Yet another minor noblemen placed in an important position in Scottish government. Keith actually was marischal prior to David's release from captivity and witnessed only a scattered few charters prior to this time.

representation throughout 1361. However, as noted previously, David increased the number and frequency of members of the lesser nobility in attendance upon him. While Douglas and Steward enjoyed their positions of prominence, their decreasing influence on their king must (and indeed later one will see how much) have bothered them. David's personal power increased to the point that he arrested Thomas Stewart, the earl of Angus, sometime during 1361 and let him rot in Dumbarton Castle for a year where he died sometime midsummer 1362.³²⁷

In the year 1362, David II issued nearly twenty charters, inspections, letters, and conformations. He began at Arbroath on January 6 and ended at Kinloss on December 24, 1362. From Arbroath on January 6 he proceeded to Ardross on February 3, then to Edinburgh on April 6 where he remained until near May 12 when he appeared at Scone inspecting a charter to William earl of Ross.³²⁸ David traveled to Stirling by May 24 and does not reappear again until he issued a grant at the castle of Kildrummy on September 7, 1362. David exerted his power during the summer months and brought down Thomas earl of Mar's castle at Kildrummy, ostensibly because he had sworn allegiance to the king of England back in 1359.³²⁹ David

³²⁷ Bower. vol. 7. pp. 318-319.

³²⁸ Webster, pp. 300-308.

³²⁹ Nicholson. p. 168.; Rotuli Scotiae in turri londinensi et in domo capitulari westmonasteriensi asservati, vol. 1, (London: G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1814-1819), p. 836.

immediately handed Kildrummy over to trusted followers, Sir Walter Moigne and Ingram de Wynton rather than one of his great lords, probably further alienating them.³³⁰ The beginning of David's campaign against the earl of Mar may have convinced the earls of March and Douglas, with Robert Steward and his faction's support, that David could no longer be controlled in a manner they thought fit.

On May 1, 1362, David issued a charter from Edinburgh that contained the last documented presence of William, earl of Douglas, and Patrick Dunbar, earl of March, with the king. From that point until June 5, 1363, Patrick Dunbar remains absent from the witness lists entirely. Douglas does not reappear until July 16, 1363. Both of these men rebelled against David II at the very end of 1362 or early 1363 and did not reconcile until at least May of 1363 when David took his new bride, Dame Margaret Logie.³³¹ This topic will be more thoroughly examined in a following chapter.

From Kildrummy, David pressed on to Aberdeen by September 7, 1362, where he gathered a council and stayed through September 14, 1362. From Aberdeen he returned to Kildrummy where he issued two charters, one on September 19, 1362, to a son of an Edinburgh burgess, and one to William Livingston on October 13, 1362. From November 1 through November 16 he

³³⁰ Bower. pp. 318-319.

³³¹ Webster, pp. 306-331.

resided in Aberdeen again, where on the sixteenth of the month he confirmed a charter from Thomas, earl of Mar, to one John Ross. From Aberdeen he traveled to the Forest of Kintore by November 23, 1362, then on to Spynie from November 28 through December 3, 1362.³³²

From Spynie David went to Mouswald where he issued a charter in his capacity of lord of Annandale to one John Carruthers and by December 24, he was in Kinloss for the holiday. It must have been here that David uncovered the first whisperings of the plot against him. The major players had been absent from his presence for quite some time. Robert Steward, hedging his bets as always, had stayed close to the king, probably to better discern the rebels' chance of success and where he might end up in the aftermath. The year 1363 became a banner year for David II. It defined the rest of his reign and the relationship he held with his nobility both greater and lesser. By the end of 1363, no one could dispute the fact that David ruled Scotland through his own wit and will at the sufferance of no one.

³³² Webster, pp. 308-314.

CHAPTER SEVEN: A KINGDOM TO RULE, (1363-1371)

If David II has been accused of being a weak king in the past, surely those scholars looked little past 1363 and the rest of his reign. To be sure, David spent the first two-thirds of his reign either in exile or in prison, but one must not overlook his activities after he returned to Scotland from captivity more of a king than the rest of the Scots dared to admit. Those who thought he could be easily manipulated, namely the Steward and Douglas, he proved wrong. The events that gave David II the opportunity to be such a strong king came in 1363.

If one examines the chronicle and cartulary evidence for the early part of the year, David II appeared to do little different than he previously had. Certainly the absence at his close councils of Douglas and Dunbar created some speculation, but nothing else untoward happened, that is until everything came about in the month of May. Even David's movements offer little clue as to his impending crisis. From Spynie on January 5, 1363, David traveled to Edinburgh on January 9 and proceeded to Aberdeen where he stayed from January 15 through January 20, 1363. By January 25, 1363, he had returned to Edinburgh where he issued a charter to one John Riddell. Three days later on January 28, David sent privy seal letters to the sheriffs of Perth and Forfar

concerning the abbey of Scone. By February 4, 1363, David had returned to Edinburgh where he remained until sometime after April 7, 1363.³³³

The general nature of the recipients of these charters fell along the lines of the church and minor nobility. Subjects of the charters and letters ranged from the Friars Preachers of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Aberdeen to men such as William Keith (marshall of Scotland), John Hay, Gilbert of Glencarnie, John Riddell and John Peebles (themselves minor nobility or laymen) to name a few. David II only dealt with the great nobles when it suited him, such as when confirming a charter from one of them to a lesser nobleman.³³⁴ Many charters during this period lack witness lists so it is difficult to determine who was closest to the king during this entire period. However, those that figure most prominently among the witnesses include Robert Erskine, William Keith, Archibald Douglas, Walter Moigne, John Danielston, and David Anand. Robert Steward also witnessed in his capacity as "senescallo Scocie comite de Stratherne nepote nostro", as well as the king's chancellor Patrick bishop of Brechin.³³⁵

On April 24, 1363 David inspected a charter in St. Andrews which Robert Erskine, Archibald Douglas and William Keith witnessed. Robert Steward also witnessed, staying close

³³³ Webster, pp. 315-321.

³³⁴ Webster, pp. 315-321.

to David II while his allies gathered their forces.

Meanwhile,

...a great seditious conspiracy was planned in the kingdom by the magnates. For the leading important men were agreed against their lord the king, and formed a plan among themselves either to persuade him to return to their point of view or to drive him out of the kingdom. And in case any of them backed out from this plan, indentures were formally drawn up, securely reinforced by seals added by all the parties. But as an immediate demonstration of the purpose they had planned ... in their actions, they arose cruelly in an armed band in serious numbers to achieve their aim by force and fear.³³⁶

To meet this threat, David assembled men loyal to him, chief among them Archibald Douglas, Robert Erskine, and John Danielston (this last perhaps not the greatest but he held the important post of keeper of Dumbarton castle, a key royal strongpoint and presence in western Scotland) to crush the rebels.³³⁷ "The said king marched by night from Edinburgh, and very nearly surprised the said Earl of Douglas at Lanark, where he had lain at night, but he escaped with difficulty, some of his people being taken."³³⁸ By early May at the latest the conspirators felt they had little chance of success and sent an envoy to David to sue for peace.³³⁹

On May 12, 1363, from Dundee David continued his practice of rewarding burgesses by giving to the burgesses of Dundee more land as an addition to a grant made previously by Robert

³³⁵ Webster, pp. 315-321.

³³⁶ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 324-325.

³³⁷ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 2, pp. 130-220.

³³⁸ Gray, p. 174.

I for a tollbooth.³⁴⁰ From Dundee he passed on to Perth on May 26 where he stayed through the 28th of the month. From Perth David moved back to Edinburgh by June 4, 1363, where he stayed throughout the summer, until September 27 when he returned again briefly to Perth.³⁴¹ From this period through to the end of David's reign, one rarely finds David without at least two of his steadfast supporters, most often Robert Erskine and Archibald Douglas but also including John Danielston, John Preston, John Lisle, William Keith, William Dishington, Walter Haliburton, and John Herries.³⁴²

Patrick Dunbar returned to David's favor on July 3, 1363, when he received a grant from the king. He once again began witnessing charters³⁴³ for the king on July 16 along with William, earl of Douglas. David certainly had the ability to punish the conspirators should he have desired it. However, Douglas and Dunbar controlling the borders made significant contributions to the safety of the region, as well as kept the appropriate amount of pressure on the English. They continued reacquiring land the English formerly occupied while not

³³⁹ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 326-327.

³⁴⁰ Webster, pp. 322-323.

³⁴¹ Webster, pp. 328-336.

³⁴² Several other nobles appear also, namely William Ramsay, Alexander and David Lindsay, and James Douglas of Dalkeith. These others I do not necessarily exclude from the list above; however they have family power of their own, and while they may be supporters of David, they did not necessarily need his largess for success.

³⁴³ Aside from that, David could certainly not trust Robert Steward with those lands, or the responsibility they carried. And he could not enfeoff one of his favorites without seeming to validate the Steward's fears. As

incurring England's wrath and distracting Edward III's attention so keenly focused on France. David knew that Scotland was better off with a subdued March and Douglas rather than two broken and impotent earls.

From Perth on September 27, David proceeded to Dunfermline by October 1, then back to Edinburgh by October 13, where he remained through October 24, 1363.³⁴⁴ David issued two charters from Melrose on October 27 and 28, and one from Perth on November 20. He undoubtedly spent the New Year at Edinburgh, as he inspected letters there in January 1, 1364. Robert Steward is absent from the witness lists of these inspections; the earl of Douglas occupies the prominent position of first witness. Others include Robert Erskine, Master Walter Wardlaw (secretary to the king and archdeacon of Laudon), Master Gilbert Armstrong preceptor at St. Andrews, John Herries and James Douglas (possibly the son of the earl of Douglas, or the James Douglas of Dalkeith).³⁴⁵

No charters exist for David for over two months. On March 8, 1364, David was at Scone in parliament where he issued at least two charters and discussed the question of the succession and his ransom. Sometime after March 10 he proceeded to Perth where he resided through April 12. The following day he went to St. Andrews (twenty some miles - a

long as Douglas and March were willing to submit, the situation turned into a win-win for all parties involved, except of course Robert Steward.

long journey for one day) and by the end of the month David again resided at Edinburgh.³⁴⁶ From April 30 to June 8, 1364, no record exists of David II's location. However, David again traveled to Perth from June 28 through July 4, 1364.³⁴⁷ On July 5, David had already moved on to Stirling where he issued more letters in favor of the abbey of Scone. By July 14, 1364 David had returned to Edinburgh.³⁴⁸

From Edinburgh David traveled to Ayr on July 20 and Dumfries on July 27, then back to Edinburgh by August 6, 1364. On August 6 he rewarded Robert Erskine and his wife Cristiana Keith (the king's "most dear cousin") with the lands of Alloa and Gaberston and the isle of Inch and part of the king's park at Clackmannan.³⁴⁹ David made an effort to reward his faithful when possible. This grant was simply one of many Erskine received throughout the last years of David's reign.

From Edinburgh, David went to Perth by September 10, back to Edinburgh from September 17 through 26 and back to Perth from November 1 through November 17. He went back to Edinburgh on November 29 and ended his year at Linlithgow on December 10 issuing letters to Malcolm Fleming, sheriff of Dumbarton to cease interfering with the men and property of

³⁴⁴ Webster, pp. 336-342.

³⁴⁵ Webster, pp. 342-343.

³⁴⁶ Webster, pp. 348-350.

³⁴⁷ Webster, pp. 350-352.

³⁴⁸ Webster, p. 356.

the abbey of Paisley.³⁵⁰ By January 12, 1365 David had returned to Perth. Within two weeks, on January 25, David had returned to Edinburgh where he inspected a charter from Thomas Fleming, earl of Wigtown, to Robert Erskine.³⁵¹ David remained at Edinburgh until at least very early summer when on June 22, 1365 he issued a charter to an Edinburgh burgess, one Robert Multrer.³⁵² The king made the journey to Perth around July 24 for a council to discuss the conditions of the current truce and ransom treaty.

The fall of the year brought about an increase of movement by David II, when he moved very quickly between places, sometimes visiting more than one location in a day. From Edinburgh David moved to Lindores abbey on August 3, 1365, where he stayed until at least August 7; by August 13 he had returned to Edinburgh for a short while. David remained at Edinburgh through the August 17. By August 25, he had reached Perth once again and from there to Kildrummy on September 9, Dundee on September 20, then back to Edinburgh by October 2 through the end of the year.³⁵³

³⁴⁹ Webster, pp. 357-358.; Cristiana may have been related to William Keith the marshal of Scotland. However, David never refers to him as his 'most dear cousin'.

³⁵⁰ Webster, pp. 362-363.; This was certainly not the Malcolm Fleming also earl of Wigtown.

³⁵¹ Webster, pp. 363-365.; Thomas was the son and heir of Malcolm, whom David made the first earl of Wigtown upon his return from exile in France, back in 1342.

³⁵² Webster, pp. 365-377.

³⁵³ Webster, pp. 378-382.

During this period, David issued several charters in favor of the church. On August 25 at Perth he granted the abbey of Cambuskenneth an annual rent of ten pounds from the lands of Plean in the sheriffdom of Stirling. He gave to the bishop of Moray, on September 9, 1365, the power to punish crimes committed by his tenants in the locations of Strathspey and Badenoch without the interference of royal justices.³⁵⁴ This last charter is distinctive because of the nature of the king giving over his power to administer justice in a part of his kingdom to the owner of the land itself. The practice itself was not unknown at this time in Scotland, but it was certainly exceptional, especially since the bishop of Moray appears so infrequently in any of the charters or letters issued by David. Alexander (bishop of Moray) represented some measure of control over the region that David desired to reinforce.³⁵⁵ By giving him the power to punish crimes committed by his tenants, David removed not only the royal official, but also any influence the earl of Moray (at this time still Patrick Dunbar) may exert over events of this nature in the area.

David also continued sharing out rewards to his faithful inner circle, including John Herries on October 17, Alan Erskine (probably related to Robert Erskine) on October 2, and

³⁵⁴ Webster, p. 379.

his cousin Robert Bruce³⁵⁶ on October 20.³⁵⁷ The king also issued another charter to the burgesses of Edinburgh for more land for their tollbooth on December 3, 1365. Witnesses for these charters conformed mainly to the by-now regular attendants upon David II. However, one individual that increased the frequency of his presence in the charters throughout 1364 and 1365 was Archibald Douglas, cousin to the earl of Douglas and illegitimate son of Sir James Douglas, the hero of Robert I's war for Scottish Independence. Archibald Douglas became more than a trusted minor official for David by the time David II died in 1371 and was at this time learning all he could from his mentor David II that would stand him in good stead in the future.

Back in Perth for the beginning of his next year of travels, David II confirmed a charter for the Kennedy family on January 22, 1366. He remained there through at least the 26 of the month. February 18 found David back in Edinburgh issuing yet another charter to one of his favorites, this time to William Dishington. On February 25 he confirmed a charter of Alice Randalston to Walter Spital and then moved on to Montrose by March 31 and stayed there until April 2 when he issued letters to his chamberlain concerning one David

³⁵⁵ This is certainly not surprising since some of the members of Robert Steward's previous alliance held lands in the province of Moray, not to mention the earl of Moray himself.

³⁵⁶ David acknowledged him as his cousin in the text of the grant, but he may in fact have been an illegitimate son of Robert I.

Falconer.³⁵⁸ From Montrose David proceeded to Perth on April 6, then Arbroath on April 7 and 8, and back to Perth again by April 10, where he stayed until at least April 17, 1366.

The confirmation David issued on April 10 was for the burgesses of Perth. Originally issued by William I and re-issued by Robert I, it gave permission for the burgesses to form a guild and gave them various privileges.³⁵⁹ One interesting note concerning this confirmation rests at the end of the witness list. Immediately after "Robert de Erskyne et Archibaldo de Douglas militibus" comes the phrase "nostris consilariis,"³⁶⁰ for a little salt applied liberally into the wounds of the only great nobleman witnessing, Robert Steward. David made sure his heir knew that his lesser nobleman were his counselors also, especially when it came time to provide something for some of his other non-noble allies, the burgesses of Perth.

By May 8, 1366 David resided again in Edinburgh where he issued and confirmed charters through July 5, 1366. On July 19, David was in Stirling issuing letters to one Brice Wyche, a lesser nobleman who had lent David money previously.³⁶¹ Parliament that year was held at Scone, during the week of July 26, when David settled vast estates in Annandale on John

³⁵⁷ Webster, pp. 376-380; Thomson, vol. 1, pp. 56-66.

³⁵⁸ Webster, p. 382.

³⁵⁹ Webster, pp. 383-384.

³⁶⁰ Webster, pp. 383-384.

³⁶¹ Regets. p. 385.; Register. p. 86.; Rotuli Scaccarii. p. 174.

Logie, son of David II's new queen, Margaret Logie.³⁶² From Dundee on July 30, David issued lands to William, earl of Sutherland, in free barony, one of the very few such assignments to a great noble during his reign. David remained at Dundee at least one more day. By August 17, 1366, David had passed on to Aberdeen where he remained through September 4, 1366.³⁶³

On September 6, 1366, David was in Arbroath inspecting a charter issued during his captivity. From Arbroath he moved to Perth on September 13, then finally to Edinburgh on October 26 where he remained until December 13, 1366 (his representatives went to London to discuss the terms of the division of the profits acquired from Annandale with the earl of Hereford)³⁶⁴. Again David issued lands in free barony, this time to his supporter William Dishington on November 27 from Edinburgh.³⁶⁵ As his last recorded action that year, on December 14th, David inspected two charters at Drumelzier.³⁶⁶

Throughout 1366 the general make up of the witness lists stayed similar. David continued to use lesser noblemen such as Robert Erskine, Archibald Douglas, John Preston, Walter Haliburton and William Dishington. The great nobles that

³⁶² Webster, pp. 385-386.

³⁶³ Webster, pp. 388-390.

³⁶⁴ Webster, pp. 393-396; The Scots continued to slowly recover territory on the borders throughout this period. It is this reason that David could legitimize the collection of profits from Annandale, important not only as his ancestral lands but as a gateway into Scotland itself.

³⁶⁵ Webster, pp. 394-395.

attended him continued to be Robert the Steward, William, earl of Douglas, and Patrick, earl of March and Moray.³⁶⁷ Steward had long ceased to earn the appellation of "nostro karissimo" in the witness lists.

Once in the list of charters is there a conflict with dates and places. December 14, 1366 is a date that David appears to be in two places at once, Edinburgh and Drumelzier. It is unlikely that David made the trip in a single day. One possible solution may be that one or other of the charters was begun on a previous day and either finished on the day at the location, or started on that day and finished at a separate location. I suspect the latter, and that Drumelzier to be his correct location on that date. Another possible solution, and indeed the more probable, is that the charter issued in Edinburgh (actually an inspection of a charter) was recorded or copied incorrectly. Webster, in his examination of the charter, provides evidence that the charter is certainly a copy as no seals or slits for the tags were found in the paper of the charter itself. Additionally, the fact that the hand is unidentified and that it was found in the Morton Muniments rather than in the Register of the Great Seal create some

³⁶⁶ Webster, pp. 398-399.

³⁶⁷ And of course his chancellor Patrick the bishop of Brechin. William Keith the marshall of Scotland witnessed acts although not as frequently as the other lesser noblemen on the list.

doubt as to the veracity of the document's date.³⁶⁸ A third solution may be that it is a forgery, which Webster doubts.³⁶⁹

The next year brought new opportunities for strife and discord from the Steward. Robert again grew increasingly dissatisfied with his lot in life as David continued in his near fanatical quest to provide himself with an heir other than the Steward. David began to doubt that his current queen would provide him with the heir he desired. Within another three years, David would attempt to discard Dame Logie, and attempt once again to marry in hopes of siring an heir. Meanwhile, Robert had to maintain his support of his uncle in public, while David awarded choice bits of land and privilege to his own followers in preference to the Steward's choices.

David began 1367 in Perth inspecting a charter for Alexander Cockburn on January 13. He remained at Perth through January 20 when he restored Malcolm Fleming's heir, Thomas Fleming, to the earldom of Wigtown without however the rights of regality Malcolm had enjoyed.³⁷⁰ From Perth David returned to Edinburgh by February 10 where he inspected

³⁶⁸ Webster, p. 398.

³⁶⁹ Webster, p. 398.; I consider this option a bit more seriously than Webster for the following reasons. The Douglasses of later centuries, indeed William Douglas of Liddesdael himself, for whom the original charter was written, were not above forging a document for their own personal gain. Also, if one inspects the witness lists of charters issued before and after this inspection, Hugh Eglinton does not appear in those lists. Considering the placement of the lands that Eglinton owned, which fell under the rubric of the Steward, I suspect that he was not David's man, but Robert the Steward's. This is of course all conjectural as there is little other than circumstantial proof for any of these statements.

³⁷⁰ Webster, pp. 399-400.

charters on the 10 and 11 of the month.³⁷¹ By April 11, 1367, David issued letters at Aberdeen to his officials (sheriff and bailies) protecting the rights of the bishop of Brechin (his chancellor) concerning the market of Brechin. By April 20, David traveled to northern town of Elgin in order to stop the depredations of Robert son of Duncan of Atholl in the area of Glencarnie.³⁷² The event apparently ended satisfactorily, for David returned to Edinburgh by May 10, 1367, to inspect a charter from Alexander II to the burgh of Ayr.³⁷³

David bestowed the lands of the earldom of Atholl on John Stewart, and his wife Annabella Drummond, from Perth on May 31, 1367. Robert Stewart resigned these lands in favor of his son John, continuing to spread Stewart influence throughout the north.³⁷⁴ The king returned to Edinburgh by June 6, 1367, when he granted John Herries the rights of free regality in the barony of Terregles in the sheriffdom of Dumfries.³⁷⁵ From June 6 until June 15 David stayed at Edinburgh. However we have no record of him again until he appeared at Montrose on August 8, 1367.³⁷⁶

Less than a week later, David rode to Dundee where on August 8, 1367 he issued charters to John Craigie and John Crichton. He returned to Edinburgh by August 22 and remained

³⁷¹ Webster, p. 401.

³⁷² Webster, pp. 401-402.

³⁷³ Webster, pp. 402-403.

³⁷⁴ Webster, p. 404.

³⁷⁵ Webster, pp. 404-405.

there through September 20 until parliament around September 28 when he appeared at Scone and remained through the end of parliament until October 7, 1367. By the end of October, on the 24, he had returned to Edinburgh where he remained for the rest of the year.³⁷⁷

At the parliament at Scone in October 1367, another act of revocation was passed.³⁷⁸ However, this act did not appear to have the wide reaching consequences feared by the nobility from the first act. David used this version mostly as a bargaining tool. Nicholson suggests that it was not put into effect unless it was to achieve a desired effect with several magnates he had trouble with, most notably those belonging to the "Highland party" to which the Steward belonged.³⁷⁹ Only one formal revocation from the parliament exists. David sent letters to Scone Abbey revoking all pensions that had been granted without royal consent.³⁸⁰ To warrant such an action by the king, the pensions must have been either large or numerous or both. The king did not make a habit of denying Scotland's abbeys much, if anything at all. Just the opposite, he championed them along with his other source of non-traditional support, the burgesses.

³⁷⁶ Webster, pp. 406-408.

³⁷⁷ Webster, pp. 408-418.

³⁷⁸ Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, vol. 1, 1841, pp. 501-503, 527-529.

³⁷⁹ Nicholson. p. 178.

³⁸⁰ Webster, p. 414-415.

Whatever the cause of this particular revocation, it certainly precipitated a widespread movement to repress the power of the abbeys. Just five days previous, on September 28, 1367, at Scone, David sent letters to the abbey of Newbattle granting it the rights of free forest in its lands in the Vale of Leithen. An action such as this hardly appears to be the action of someone attempting to control the power of the abbeys, especially when he faced significant opposition in his kingdom from his heir and others of the "Highland party" should he allow them the freedom to view him as weak.

David left Edinburgh to be at Strathord around January 18, 1368, where he issued a charter to Duncan Fraser and his wife, Cristiana, for lands that had been resigned by Margaret Gilliebrand, the wife of Lawrence Gilliebrand.³⁸¹ The next day David moved to Perth where he sent letters to the sheriff and bailies of Fife, canceling the liberties and regalities enjoyed by the burgh of Cupar since the death of Robert I as ordained by the parliament of 1367.³⁸² What these specific liberties were was not mentioned and the reason behind it is obscure. However, by this revocation and others like it,

³⁸¹ Webster, pp. 418-419.; It is interesting that during David's reign not an insignificant number of women resign their claims to certain lands. The landholding practices of women during the fourteenth century is an area of study that has received no attention and is an area that should be examined in detail. At first glance, women do not appear to be at a disadvantage or under any more pressure than men who resign their lands are. However, this would be difficult to tell by the language of the charter, since by this time most charter writing is formulaic in nature.

³⁸² Webster, pp. 419-420.

David showed the strength of his position. He need not fear even his allies the burgesses should the cause be just, as it appears to have been by the lack of response from Cupar.

By February 17, 1368, David had returned to Edinburgh where he remained until March 4 when he inspected a charter at Stirling from Robert Stewart "of Senbothy" to Duncan Wallace (knight) and Eleanor Bruce (the countess of Carrick), Duncan's wife. Four days later, David issued a charter to Stewart "of Senbothy" from Perth (on March 8, 1368).³⁸³ No more indications of David's location exist until May 10, 1368, when he confirmed a charter in Elgin. On May 13, he issued letters to his chamberlain and the sheriff and bailies of Inverness from Forres. David traveled to Inverness by May 19 where his presence assured the commands of his letter were followed.³⁸⁴ By June 12, however, he left the area and issued a charter to John Herries from Dunfermline.³⁸⁵

Within two days, by June 14, 1368, David arrived at Scone where he stayed for parliament through at least June 25, 1368. It was at this parliament that David bestowed upon Robert Stewart's eldest son, John (and later king Robert III) the earldom of Carrick with the approval of the three estates.³⁸⁶ Witnesses for the charter include the bishops of Saint Andrews, Dunblane and Brechin (the chancellor); Thomas earl of

³⁸³ Webster, pp. 420-422.

³⁸⁴ Webster, pp. 424-425.

Mar; William Keith (the marshal); Robert Erskine; Archibald Douglas; Hugh Eglinton and William Dischington. Robert Steward and William, earl of Douglas, while certainly present at parliament, do not appear on the witness list for this document (probably as a matter of propriety).

The presence of the earl of Mar, however, is interesting. Thomas last witnessed a charter back in 1366 and before that back in 1363. This current charter was also to be his last in David II's reign. Had Thomas moved back into favor with the king? Probably not. Most likely, Thomas simply was there when the king needed a member of the greater nobility to add to the witness list of John Steward's charter that was not John's father. Why the earl of Douglas did not witness this particular charter remains a mystery. The remaining witnesses all owe their allegiance to David II and legitimized the grant not only the eyes of David's enemies, but also with his supporters. David must have certainly been aware by this point in his life that his chances of conceiving an heir grew more slim as the years passed. By endowing John Steward with the earldom of Carrick, David fixed the succession in the event that he had no legitimate issue of his own.

David II repeated his performance from the first revocation in that he yet again set out to provide his favored

³⁸⁵ Webster, pp. 425-426.

³⁸⁶ Webster, pp. 428-429.

abbey's and allies with lands and privileges in the face of the revocation sponsored by parliament. At Scone on June 25, for example, he sent letters to the sheriff and bailies of Perth concerning the abbey of Scone's rights in some lands in the sheriffdom of Perth.³⁸⁷ On July 4, 1368, he issued a charter of entail to Robert Erskine and his wife, some lands in the sheriffdom of Clackmannan which had reverted to the crown under the revocation.³⁸⁸

Another charter of land in the king's hand by the revocation was also issued from Stirling to John Lyon on July 9. He received lands in the sheriffdom of Aberdeen. On July 10 one Gilbert of Dun received a charter of entail for lands in the sheriffdom of Banff, interestingly enough with feudal obligation, the service of one soldier in the king's army.³⁸⁹ On July 25 at Stirling, George Dunbar received (as heir of Patrick Dunbar earl of March) land in three sheriffdoms, Ayr, Lanark and Dumfries, setting the early stages for the soon-to-be powerful lord.³⁹⁰

By July 26, 1368, David had returned to Edinburgh where he stayed through August 24. David attempted to placate his queen by granting to her son John the lands of Logy in Perth resigned by Robert the Steward. No further charters were issued until November 12, 1368, from Perth. By November 26,

³⁸⁷ Webster, p. 429.

³⁸⁸ Webster, pp. 429-431.

David was in Arbroath and moving quickly, in Dundee on November 28, 1368.³⁹¹ He stayed in Dundee until December 2, 1368, when he moved on to Perth, which he reached by December 7 of that year. In Perth on December 10, he wrote letters to certain justiciars ordering them to hold an inquest of mortancestor for James Douglas, the nephew of the Knight of Liddesdale.³⁹² By December 24, David arrived at Lindores where he stayed most likely through the end of the year. On January 5, 1369, he was in Perth issuing letters to James Douglas permitting him to repair the castle of Dalkeith, which became James' primary residence and the appellation at the end of his name, James Douglas of Dalkeith.³⁹³

As the end of David II's reign approached, some of the problems that plagued his early reign began to appear as nothing but a distant memory. Instead, he allowed himself to deal with the problems most serious to him: providing a successor for himself other than his nephew Robert; securing the inner peace of the kingdom; and pretending the issue of the ransom vanished with the last treaty established with Edward III.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁹ Webster, pp. 432-434.

³⁹⁰ Thomson, p. 103.

³⁹¹ Webster, pp. 433-440.

³⁹² Webster, pp. 442-443.

³⁹³ Webster, p. 445.

³⁹⁴ This treaty which will be discussed in a later chapter reduced the fiscal burden on the Scots to a very manageable level. David had the luxury of being able to maintain the fiscal reforms he and parliament initiated to pay the ransom, thereby enriching his coffers as well.

The most serious issue for the king, that of producing a non-Steward heir, led to growing but intermittent contention between David and Robert Steward. Steward certainly had his allies in the "Highland Party" that could exert some pressure on David when necessary. Mostly, their effectiveness came with their seeming indifference to royal administration, their absence from parliament, and their tacit refusal to obey royal officials. Being so far from Edinburgh had its advantages. However, not only the king noticed their less-than-honorable attitude. Parliament discussed it in open session in 1366.³⁹⁵ At that time the worst offenders consisted of John of the Isles, John of Lorne, William, earl of Ross, Hugh de Ross and John Hay.³⁹⁶ David's power increased as his reign continued, so much so that he could imprison the Steward and his sons for a slight upon his queen,³⁹⁷ and demand obeisance from the earl of Mar, the earl of Ross, John of Lorne, and Gillespie Campbell at parliament on March 6, 1369.³⁹⁸

At times during a king's reign there occur years that define their rule, whether through action or non-action, peace or war, treaties or declarations. For David II, 1369 was such a year. To all appearances, he had finally quelled the

³⁹⁵ Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland. pp. 498-99.

³⁹⁶ Acts. p. 498.

³⁹⁷ Bower. pp. 358-359; Their imprisonment, if it happened at all, must have been very short indeed. Robert is always present at the charters issued during the winter of 1368-1369 with the exception of from December 9, 1368, to January 17, 1369.

³⁹⁸ Acts. pp. 506-507.

rebellious spirits of his wayward nobility and, brought prosperity to his country, and encouraged a nascent representative government with his continual support of the burgesses and church in spite of the feudal nobility.

Even though the king developed other governmental options during his reign, he could still not do without the nobility in Scotland. To check their power was enough for the moment. Increasing the influence of certain minor nobles in fact made them great, perhaps none more so than Archibald Douglas, illegitimate son of the "Good Sir James" Douglas, hero of the War for Independence successfully won by David's father, Robert (I) Bruce. So as David's year began at Perth, January 5, no one had a complete enough picture of what would happen as to see it coming, and thereby forestall it.

From Perth David moved quickly to Dundee on January 6, then on to Montrose by January 17 and back to Perth by January 20. By January 27, 1369, David arrived in Edinburgh where he stayed through February 23, 1369.³⁹⁹ Parliament, which David naturally attended, began in early March at Perth. The aforementioned submission of John of Lorne and others was all but a sealed bargain by Lorne and Campbell's attendance at parliament. In fact, their submission allowed David to make the fact that they once again enjoyed royal favor known by issuing charters in their favor. John of Lorne and his wife

received theirs on March 12 while Campbell received confirmation of a large number of lands in Argyll (and others also) on March 15, 1369.⁴⁰⁰ As assurances, David had his loyal corps of men witness the charters, including Archibald Douglas, Walter Haliburton, and William Dischington. Robert Steward, William earl of Douglas and Robert Erskine also witnessed.⁴⁰¹

Sometime after March 17, 1369, David removed himself to Edinburgh where he issued letters on April 10 to one John Lyon (probably the king's secretary in 1371 and auditor of the exchequer⁴⁰²), awarding him ten marks from each justice ayre north of Forth for life.⁴⁰³ David remained at Edinburgh until at least April 22, 1369.⁴⁰⁴ Some time shortly after that he left for England to discuss the establishment of a new ransom treaty (negotiated in good faith on both sides) and a truce which actually held up better than anticipated.

From Westminster, on June 18, 1369, David issued letters agreeing to a truce with England for fourteen years as well as the payment of the balance of the king's ransom.⁴⁰⁵ By July 14 he had returned to Scone and from there to Edinburgh four days later. The king remained at Edinburgh through September 29,

³⁹⁹ Webster, pp. 450-452.

⁴⁰⁰ Webster, pp. 453.; Register p. 78.

⁴⁰¹ Webster, pp. 454-455.

⁴⁰² Webster, p. 12.

⁴⁰³ Webster, p. 456.

⁴⁰⁴ Webster, pp. 456-464.

⁴⁰⁵ Webster, pp. 464-466.

1369, issuing a host of charters and letters. However on September 18, 1369, he issued a charter that unwittingly set the stage for the ascendance of not only one of the most powerful nobles of the fourteenth century (probably the most powerful), but also what would become one of the most powerful families among the Scots nobility in the fifteenth century, the Black Douglases.⁴⁰⁶

With this charter, Archibald acquired all royal lands between the Nith and Cree rivers in Galloway in free barony. The price of this grant was a single white rose delivered to the castle at Dumfries on the feast of Saint Peter.⁴⁰⁷ Granting these lands to Douglas accomplished several things for David II. First, it put one of his favorites, indeed his protégé, in a position to counter the power and influence of his internal enemies in the region. Second, it enabled him to better protect the western marches from possible incursions from the English. Third, Galloway, an area that historically provided either great weal or woe to the reigning monarch, continued to unsettle the king. The earl of Wigtown had so many problems that within a year after David II's death, Robert II bestowed upon Douglas the lands of the earldom that

⁴⁰⁶ Webster, pp. 475-476.

⁴⁰⁷ Webster, p. 475.

had been resigned by Thomas Fleming.⁴⁰⁸ This enabled Douglas to secure Galloway.

As he moved through Scotland, David had continued his policy of placing his supporters in key places, as evidenced most strongly by the grant to Douglas. On October 4 he issued a charter from Stirling, moved quickly back to Edinburgh by October 6, then to Perth on the 19, Montrose by the 23, and Aberdeen by October 27, 1369. By this point he most certainly had begun to move his forces north to meet and deal with John of the Isles once and for all.

"On 15 November 1369 an indenture was sealed in which [John] acknowledged that 'my redoubtable lord David, by the grace of God, illustrious King of the Scots, has been moved against my person by reason of certain negligences committed by me...'.⁴⁰⁹ John agreed to obey royal officials and pay contributions; in exchange David demanded only the security of hostages. David used his established attitude toward the intransigent lords, also forcing William, earl of Ross, to grant lands to Walter Leslie, about which he complained to Robert II shortly after David II's death.⁴¹⁰ The king had established himself so well by this time that his magnates,

⁴⁰⁸ This indicates several things. First that Galloway was not trouble free and needed a strong hand to settle it. Second, that Robert II respected Douglas and his ability to project his influence in the region. Third that Douglas had by this time become an integral part of the government.

⁴⁰⁹ Nicholson. p. 179.; Acts. vol xii. pp. 16-17.

⁴¹⁰ Nicholson. p. 179.; Aberdeen-Banff Illustrations, vol. 2, pp. 387-389.

including the great earls and the Lord of the Isles, dared not rouse his anger.

From Inverness where he took John's submission, he issued letters the following day then moved down to Aberdeen by December 4. He issued letters to his officials reminding them not to compel services from the lands of the bishopric of Moray, despite the recent revocation of parliament.⁴¹¹ From Aberdeen he traveled to Montrose by December 8, where on December 9 he issued a charter of entail to James Douglas of the barony and castle of Dalkeith, for which he would ever after be known.⁴¹² He left Montrose and arrived at Dundee by December 11 where he wrote letters to his officials confirming the rights and privileges of the abbey of Scone, as he had done with the lands of the bishopric of Moray earlier.⁴¹³

After Dundee he moved on to Perth by December 15, then ended the year at Edinburgh, where he remained until at least February 8, 1370. The year 1369 had great significance for David II. He established a final treaty for his ransom with the English, along with a fourteen-year truce. Steward's "Highland Party," apparently crushed for the time being, gave him no reason to re-assert his authority in that direction (with the exception of William earl of Ross in 1370). David also attempted to rid himself of his non-reproductive queen

⁴¹¹ Webster, pp. 479.

⁴¹² Webster, pp. 479-483.

(who traveled to France to take her case to the papal court). He succeeded in taking the first step in creating what would be one of the most powerful Scottish magnates of the fourteenth century, who had started with nothing and thanks to loyal service to David II, was rewarded with lands in Galloway. The last full year of David II's reign saw no decrease or slowing down of the king's plans. In fact, David acted as if he would outlive his heir, Robert Steward. Perhaps in retrospect, it would have been better if he had.

From Edinburgh at the start of the year, David performed his yearly tasks. Nothing distinguished this year as significantly different from any other. He continued supporting those he chose, and tightening the reins on those he perceived as less than enthusiastic about his rule. Patrick, earl of March, had died, probably sometime in 1369. His heir, George Dunbar, proved more loyal to the king than Patrick.⁴¹⁴ David remained at Edinburgh until February 8, then moved to Perth through March 3 and back to Edinburgh through April 7, 1370.⁴¹⁵ By April 16 he was in Stirling where he issued charters and letters to several Erskines, including Thomas and Robert. Patrick, bishop of Brechin, was replaced as chancellor sometime between March 3 and April 4, 1370. By

⁴¹³ Webster, pp. 483-484.

⁴¹⁴ George was very loyal to the Scottish crown until the end of the century when Robert III went back on a deal concerning the marriage of his daughter into the royal house.

⁴¹⁵ Webster, pp. 485-489.

April 7, John Stewart, son and heir of Robert Stewart, began witnessing charters as well as his father. Also from that date, with the exception of an excursion to London on June 4 where David wrote promissory letters to Edward III concerning his ransom (and on September 9, David was in Melrose to confirm a charter of William, earl of Douglas, to one Laurence Govan). David II remained at Edinburgh until near October 18, when he attended parliament at Perth.⁴¹⁶

In Perth until October 27, David moved to Dundee by November 1 then returned to Perth briefly on November 9. By December 31 he had returned to Edinburgh where he issued one letter, inspected one charter, and issued two others before his death on February 22, 1371. Three instances of note occurred during David's last year. First, David imprisoned the earl of Mar at Bass Rock,⁴¹⁷ which shows David's strength of David's position as a ruler. Second, at parliament he dealt with the evasive William, earl of Ross, by making him resign "his lands and receive it back under conditions of a tailzie in favor of Sir Walter Leslie."⁴¹⁸ Third, David found another prospect for getting himself an heir in Agnes Dunbar. One of his last acts included letters to Agnes concerning the

⁴¹⁶ Webster, pp. 489-495;.

⁴¹⁷ Rotulii Scaccarii. vol. 2, p. 357.

⁴¹⁸ Nicholson, p. 179.; Acts. vol 1, pp. 537-538.; Thomson, pp. 124-125.

one thousand marks per year she would be collecting as a pension, a kind of wedding present in advance.⁴¹⁹

Even though David had managed to control his nobility and strengthen relations with England, especially concerning the complicated issue of the ransom, some issues remained unresolved for some of the participants. When David demanded the earl of Ross resign his lands only to receive them back under a talzie to another, other great nobles, Robert Steward included, must have considered the fact that the same could happen to them. With David's imprisonment of the earl of Mar at Bass Rock, this feeling must have been amplified. Finally, as David prepared yet again to produce an heir, perhaps this too struck a sour note with his enemies. Unfortunately for David, less than "eleven days later...[he]...unexpectedly died in Edinburgh. The long-suffering Steward at last secured his royal heritage."⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁹ Webster, pp. 498-499.

⁴²⁰ Nicholson, p. 183.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ANALYSIS

As John Coupland led David away into captivity after the Battle of Neville's Cross in the fall of 1346, the Steward, David II's heir, effectively stood by and watched it happen. From that point on, the relationship the nobility had with the king affected not only the king's treatment of the nobles, but also the relationship the Scots developed in the succeeding years with the English. So much revolved around this relationship that it at times effectively masked the accomplishments of David's reign. Many scholars and chroniclers, from the writer of the Lanercost Chronicle down to the present day including E. W. F. Balfour-Melville (a Scottish historian writing in the 1950s)⁴²¹ and G. W. S. Barrow (currently active), saw David not only as a weak king, but also as ineffective in dealing with the problems that faced him.

The issues most important to the reign of David II are three. Frequently the first issue discussed concerns his ransom and the arrangements made to its repayment.⁴²² This topic, and Scotland's role (or lack of it) in the Hundred Years War, revolve around the heart of Scoto-English relations

⁴²¹ Both of these men were and are practically giants in the field of Scottish history.

⁴²² It is not my intention to discuss what was precisely paid, how and when, but to focus instead on the arrangements themselves and whether or not

during the mid-fourteenth century. Second, and only infrequently discussed, is the style of David's government and relationship with his nobles during his absence and after his return. Last is actually a subset of David's relationship with the nobility; the rebellion perpetrated by the Steward and his allies, including its causes and effects later in David's reign.

One may briefly look at these issues and see their importance to the period. To be sure, the issue that existed the longest concerned David and his relationship with the nobility. Because of the fractious circumstances of his early kingship, including David spending the formative years of his life at Chateau Gaillard in France, the situation Robert I (David's father and predecessor) enjoyed with his nobility lasted only so long as David remained in the country. Once he moved his court to France for safety, other men, men of action, led the Scots through the darkest years of the fourteenth century. These circumstances set up a unique situation in Scottish history, one that had not occurred before, and resulted in a change in government that ultimately led to the establishment of the Scottish equivalent of a Divine Right kingship, though not for many years to come.

payments had been made, not necessarily the time and place and circumstances of the payment.

The ransom and the negotiations surrounding David's release were initially exceedingly important with respect to foreign affairs. However, by David's death, it becomes clear indeed that more impact was felt on domestic policies than on foreign policy. Indeed, by 1370, foreign relations amounted to little more than border relations between Scotland and England, with France occasionally voicing its support of Scotland and its desire to continue in some fashion the "Auld Alliance" with the Scots.

Rebellion, or more appropriately "uprising" was no stranger to Scotland and did not cease to be so after David's death. However, the rebellion of 1363 contained several unique characteristics that many others lacked. First, the prime element appeared to be the Steward, the king's heir. Second, with the exception of the earls of Douglas and March, the extent of the Steward's power rested mainly in the west and the isles. Third, the west and the isles played little if any role in the actual rebellion, including the men of the Steward himself. Fourth, resistance to David's rule did not end with the submission of the offending parties; it merely slept, apparently powerless against the growing power of the king.

These issues not only taint David II's reign, but also define it. For example, the issue of the ransom reached nearly all areas of Scottish politics and policies, from

domestic to foreign, from trade to fiscal. One must examine these issues closely to gain an accurate picture of David II's influence over those he governed, and their influence over him. Therefore, let us step back and study the issue of the ransom first, for by looking at the ransom, other issues will become more clear when in turn they are inspected.

By the end of October, 1346, Scotland found itself in the midst of profound changes. The king they so recently welcomed back home followed behind the toothless John Coupland to an English prison.⁴²³ Robert Steward and the earl of March, Patrick Dunbar, led their troops back home after abandoning David on the field of battle. Considering all that later, and indeed previously, befell the Steward, one may conjecture that he was not altogether unhappy about the capture of his uncle and king. Edward III had no intention of letting his prizes go without gaining the maximum amount of benefit from them he could. He had several outstanding issues.

First and foremost, Edward III had a far more lucrative and important war to fight with France. French lands represented a significant increase in income as opposed to the land to the north in Scotland. They were also much more conveniently located should he decide to project his power and

⁴²³ Initially, David was taken to Bamburgh with many other prisoners until arrangements could be made for their transport into more secure quarters elsewhere in England. David had to remain at Bamburgh under the care of Lord Percy for some time until his wounds from the battle healed. He reputedly took an arrow in the face. See Knighton. Pp. 72-73..

influence elsewhere on the continent. Second, his war with France continued to cost him great sums of money, money which he did not have. The windfall of ransom from his Scottish prisoners had the potential of going a long way to paying off those expenses. Third, his candidate for the Scottish throne, Edward Balliol, looked to have a real chance at regaining control of the kingdom with David and a large number of the Scots nobility out of the picture. With Balliol in charge, Edward III was guaranteed not only a calm border to his north, but allies when he needed them, and most of lowland Scotland, as granted to him by Balliol in 1334 at Roxburgh.

So the ransom of David II and his nobles became of paramount importance, at least initially, to Edward III. However, holding David II also served his purpose, since he had his own candidate for the Scottish throne, Edward Balliol (the Pretender). No real discussion of the size of the ransom began in earnest until after the summer of 1347. Coincidentally, the initial amounts may have been based off the price the Scots paid to procure a truce with Balliol as he attempted to take advantage of the disadvantaged Scots in the spring and summer of 1347.

Balliol entered Scotland with nearly three thousand three hundred sixty troops,⁴²⁴ while Lord Percy came from Berwick with a smaller force.⁴²⁵ As he approached the Firth of Forth, the Scots desired to end his depredations and purchased a truce for nine thousand pounds. As Balliol headed off to Galloway, Percy and the English departed for France to join Edward III at Calais.⁴²⁶ Other than David II being marched off into captivity at the end of the battle of Neville's Cross to heal his wounds at Bamburgh Castle, no further mention is made of him or his location by the chronicler's that recorded the event. To discuss most accurately the issue of the ransom, one must first discuss the actually physical location of the King of Scotland, which until this time has not been in dispute.

Up until now, scholars studying this issue agreed that David sat in an English jail, not wanting for much but also closely guarded.⁴²⁷ The two authors most familiar with his imprisonment, Balfour-Melville and Nicholson, offer similar ideas and accounts of David II's confinement. In short, David sat in one of several sites for his incarceration, and traveled back to Scotland twice during his eleven years of

⁴²⁴ Rotuli Scotiae. vol. 1. pp. 691-692.; Nicholson. p. 148. Knighton quotes his figures of Balliol's invasion force at 300,000, which hardly seems reasonable.

⁴²⁵ Knighton, pp. 76-79.

⁴²⁶ Knighton, pp. 76-79.; Wyntoun, vol. 6, pp. 188-189.

⁴²⁷ See 'Papers relating to the Captivity and Release of David II', ed. E.W.M. Balfour-Melville. S.H.S. Misc. IX, pp. 1-56.

captivity to attempt to more quickly effect his release. While the terms of the agreements can not be disputed, the view that David spent nearly his entire captivity in England I have already shown to be worth further consideration. Quite clearly, David is found issuing charters and letters at various places in Scotland while he was supposedly serving his time in England (see chapter 5). However, Bruce Webster, in discussing the charters at the beginning of his volume of David II's acts, makes no mention as to the irregularity of the place names of letters and charters during David's captivity.⁴²⁸

The first instance, at Finavon in December 1346, most certainly occurred prior to his transport deeper into England for permanent holding. One explanation for the listed location in the letters and charters could be that they were the locations where the documents were received from the king. However, this appears highly unlikely. A continuation of that pattern certainly did not occur after David returned. Therefore, I must discount that explanation as not valid. It is possible the documents were incorrectly copied, but then one would have to discount the accuracy of all but the original documents themselves (although one can cast aspersions upon the accuracy of originals also—but these

⁴²⁸ Webster, pp. 1-52.

doubts approach the absurd). Moreover the formulaic manner of the charters argues against inaccurate copies.

Perhaps the best argument rests in the claim that David did not issue the documents at all, that they came from his council instead. However, the Steward did not shrink from attaching his name to any documents when he issued them in later years during David's absence. Also, at least two of these instances can be corroborated by documents concerning safe conducts from England to Scotland and Edward III's secret plans for the Scottish succession.⁴²⁹ Certainly a more detailed inspection must be performed should additional documents establishing David's location be found. However, until that time, one must consider the fact that David may indeed have been in Scotland on several occasions not noticed by historians utilizing the currently known documents relevant to the topic.

If David II were in Scotland during the time periods I have indicated in this work, what effect did he have on the situation in Scotland at the time, and why was he there? Judging from the documents he issued, the business he engaged in appears to be nothing more than the common undertakings of a king and his government. The scarcity of these documents

⁴²⁹ Bain, vol. 3, p. 285, 287.

may indicate that either few survive today⁴³⁰ or that David issued relatively few on these trips. Strictly speaking, the Steward maintained control unless David actually attended a parliament in person. Even then, his position is one much like a supplicant rather than a king commanding his people. In reality, David had little effect on the situation at home in Scotland whether he went there or not. Everyone knew the king would not be returned quickly. For that reason, the Steward held the majority of the real power during these periods. Why was David II there? Undoubtedly to encourage those things necessary to expedite his release.

Ostensibly the control of the kingdom lay with the Steward while David served out his term of imprisonment. David II issued no documents during a council during any of the instances he was in Scotland during times that have not been corroborated by other documents. However, in Webster's introduction to the Regesta, he cites a list of petitions to the Papacy on behalf of David II.⁴³¹ On the list of petitions, there exist instances when David II and his Queen, Joan (Edward III's sister), or simply David II himself, sent petitions to the papacy dated within a few months, either before or after one of the alleged visits.

⁴³⁰ Most probable since we have this problem during the fourteenth century in general.

⁴³¹ Webster, pp. 43-48

Certainly the petitions sent by David II could have been sent from anywhere. The petitions that include Queen Joan as one of the petitioners, however, may indicate further support for David II being in Scotland during these periods and not in the Tower of London. Unfortunately, until Scottish historians explore this topic further, an accurate consensus appears beyond present scholarship. David certainly did not live in the squalor of a Tower dungeon chained to a wall like some common criminal. He received a daily stipend of thirteen shillings four pence, received new clothing and fabric from which it would be made, arranged by his captures.⁴³² He also had access to not only his personal chaplain, Richard de Gretham (in 1352), but a confessor in Friar Adam of Lanark (1356), a secretary in Robert Dunbretan, a valet in one Hector Leche, and a mistress in one Katherine Mortimer.⁴³³ Considering the location of David II can no longer be ascertained with certainty, current views of how royal and noble prisoners are held during ransom negotiations should be revisited.

The subject of the ransom and the negotiations for it pervade any discussion on the success of David II's kingship. Ironically, the subject he had the least control over

⁴³² Frederick Devon, Issues of the Exchequer: Henry III to Henry VI Inclusive, (London: John Murray, 50, Albemarle Street, 1837), pp. 157, 163.; Bain, vol. 3, p. 293.

⁴³³ Bain, vol. 3, p. 293.; There are no sources that indicate David has a mistress during his captivity. However, when David returns to Scotland, Wynton indicates that Queen Joan left due to David's mistress as mentioned

determines his apparent efficiency as a king. Even so, one must look at the negotiations as an integral part of his kingship as they reveal David's grasp on the current politics both within and without Scotland. For the sake of efficiency, I have divided David's captivity into three parts. First from capture to the first attempt at negotiations to the failed efforts of 1352 involving William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, second from that point until his eventual release in 1357, and third from his release until the final agreement arranged with Edward III shortly before David II's death.

The initial efforts at releasing David came not from the Scottish government, which Robert Stewart ran in David's absence, but rather from Edward III and David II. Edward III remained true to his character in that he cared little about the dictates of parliament unless money for his war with France was affected, and even then he engaged in secret negotiations to suit his own purposes.⁴³⁴

Edward considered the likelihood of a relatively quick settlement a possibility. Balliol worked through 1347 to re-acquire some portions of Scotland with the help of the English, which in and of itself gave Edward III more bargaining power with David II and the Scots nobility. By

previously in this work. It is unlikely that he procured his mistress on the trip north back home to Scotland.

⁴³⁴ C. Johnston. "Negotiations for the Ransom of David Bruce in 1349," in The English Historical Review, ed. by G. N. Clark, . vol. xxxvi. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1921), pp. 57-58.

this time, everyone knew that the Scots would never settle for Balliol as their king. Even Balliol probably understood this.⁴³⁵ What Edward III stood to gain by dealing with David II far outweighed what he had already received from Balliol during the previous fifteen years. However, Balliol apparently had had enough of the machinations of Edward III as his reluctance to aid the English king in his negotiations indicates.⁴³⁶ Perhaps Balliol found some progress in his attempts to win the Scots during his campaigns of 1347, or perhaps, like his father John, he could not simply sit idly by and give away everything he had bargained for thus far. Whatever the reason, Balliol ended any hope of progress on an early release for David II.

The reason the treaty took so long to resolve had to do not only with economics, but also with acquisition and security. Edward III held out until the last possible moment (figuratively) with hopes of gaining through negotiation and guile what he failed to acquire through force (and guile). Edward III's primary objective was to pacify his northern border, preferably permanently. Acceptable methods to the English became stumbling blocks to the Scots, no matter what David II desired. David II's main goal throughout his years

⁴³⁵ The proof lies in the fact that Balliol had trouble holding what he had retaken, that there was no mass conciliatory effort by the Scots to curry Balliol's favor, and that Balliol had a difficult time even operating in safety in areas that he ostensibly held sway (namely Galloway).

⁴³⁶ Johnston, pp. 57-58.

of imprisonment was his release and return to the governance of Scotland.

Balliol's goal can only be guessed at. He attempted little in the way of conciliation to the Scots nobility and courted practically no nobleman's favor. What Balliol appeared to do best was only occasionally make a show of being active in Scotland as an extension of Edward III's intentions there. Outside of the campaign of 1347,⁴³⁷ Balliol showed little success or ambition in holding or recovering "his" Scotland and rather more success in arranging pardons for his hunting companions found poaching on the king of England's lands.⁴³⁸

Nevertheless, early negotiations for David II's release revolved less around money and more around concessions in the way of control over Scotland. One finds corroboration of this in a petition sent by David II to Pope Clement VI:

This petition, which was dealt with in Avignon on 7 August 1350, began by recalling to the pope's notice the adverse fortune that had befallen David and his fellow prisoners. The pope was asked to afford help and counsel, and to write to the King of France

⁴³⁷ The last truly concerted effort to return to England what they believed rightfully theirs was only partially successful. While much of lowland Scotland now paid homage to Edward III once again, the English lacked the strong-points of Edinburgh, Stirling and Dunbar castles, without which any permanent occupation of lowland Scotland would prove to be at best extremely problematic and at worst, impossible. Those four castles controlled the passage from northern Scotland into southern lowland Scotland. While the border territories of Roxburgh, Jedburgh and the like were key to holding the borders and gaining access to Scotland from England, they did nothing to prevent the Scots from operating from safety and with relative impunity against the English from central and northern Scotland.

⁴³⁸ Bain, vol. 3, pp. 495-496.

urging that the release of David and his fellow captives should be made a condition of any peace or long truce between the French and the English. Then without any explanatory preamble, David volunteered information on the terms that Edward III was alleged to be demanding - homage, military service against the French, attendance at English parliaments, the restoration of the Disinherited, recognition of the King of England as David's heir if the latter should die childless, custody of Scottish castles as surety for fulfillment of these terms. David gave no indication whatever that he was ready to accept any of these demands, nor did he commit himself to rejecting them. The real nature of the appeal of 1350 was an attempt to put pressure on the French king to take action for David's release. Clement duly ordered that 'opportune letters' should be directed to the King of France - but to no avail.⁴³⁹

Another individual that figured highly in the early demands for ransom was William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale and the best guerilla fighter Scotland had during the middle of the fourteenth century. Douglas, as I have shown previously, certainly did not run from a fight or give up a claim to something he felt rightfully belong to him.⁴⁴⁰ Indeed, the English parliament feared him enough to include him in their list of individuals, along with David II, who should not be set free for any reason.⁴⁴¹ Edward III thought enough of him and his power on the borders to include him in

⁴³⁹ Nicholson, p. 157.; E. W. M. Balfour-Melville, "David II's Appeal to the Pope" in The Scottish Historical Review, vol. 41., no. 131. April 1962. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1962), p. 86.; Balfour-Melville printed the relevant portion of the passage and the reason for the mistranslation that has led other scholars to reach the conclusion that he was all too willing an accomplice of Edward III's in the matter of the succession. He also cites other examples of mistranslation in the Calendar of Papal Registers.

⁴⁴⁰ This can be seen most clearly in his machinations for the valley of Liddesdale and his abduction and subsequent murder of Alexander Ramsay, in spite of David II's quite specific support of Ramsay at the time.

the discussions with David II when negotiating terms for David's release. William Douglas so desired to be free of his English prison and carried such influence back in Scotland (so Edward III thought) that he became an important player in succeeding negotiations.

Edward III granted a safe conduct for William Douglas after being careful to exact promises of cooperation from him and retaining a bond of five hundred marks against his behavior from Sirs Walter Haliburton and David Anand.⁴⁴² Douglas set off to Scotland to discuss with the Scots the terms of David's release and did so quickly as he had to return before February 9, 1351.⁴⁴³ The conditions of David's release were at the same time generous and harsh. Edward III had no problem allowing David II to return to Scotland (thereby totally selling out Edward Balliol) in exchange for payment in installments of the relatively small sum of forty thousand pounds. Edward even promised to relinquish "the Scottish castles and territories that he controlled."⁴⁴⁴ David and the Scots had only to agree to one small item: should David die childless, the throne of Scotland would go to one of Edward III's younger sons.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴¹ Johnston, pp. 57-58.; Nicholson. p. 156.

⁴⁴² Bain, vol. 3, p. 283.

⁴⁴³ Rotuli Scotiae, vol. 1, pp. 737-738.

⁴⁴⁴ Nicholson, p. 157.

⁴⁴⁵ Balfour-Melville, S.H.S. Miscellany IX, p 37.

Of all of the conditions that Edward III put forth throughout the nearly twenty years of negotiations for David's ransom, the latter reason proved too bitter a pill to swallow for the Scots. Never would an Englishman sit on the Scottish throne, especially when the events of the first half of the century rested so clearly in the mind of the Scottish nobility. Robert Steward, at the time the most powerful noble in Scotland and heir to the throne, certainly had no desire to see his chance of kingship given away to an Englishman or anyone else for that matter.

It stands to reason that Edward III had a reason for offering such generous terms to the Scots. Certainly forty thousand pounds did not seem like a fortune compared to the ransom of over six hundred thousand pounds that Edward would ask for the King of France (John) when he fell into English hands at the Battle of Poitiers in 1356. At first glance the proposal held out much that David found attractive; a modest ransom, the return of all English-held lands without one drop of blood spilled, and the removal of the Steward from the line of succession, permanently.⁴⁴⁶

Two things about the demand for an English succession by Edward III made the chances of its acceptance tenuous at best. First, it seems likely that Edward III knew or strongly

suspected something about David's fertility that David did not. Why would he continue to seemingly set the bulk of his hopes on this one issue for only a chance of success?⁴⁴⁷ David spent the rest of his reign in a vain attempt to find someone that could beget his child and thus provide him with an heir. Second, the Steward remained in Scotland while David sat in an English jail. In Scotland at the time, Robert Steward held the most personal power and had no desire to see his status as heir to the crown revoked. He therefore had little reason to arrange for David's release, nor did he desire David to replace him with his own heir, much less an English one.

When David II himself came to Scotland to attempt his own arrangements for release, parliament responded "with one voice" that they in no way desired to be subject to an English king.⁴⁴⁸ However, the issue did not die there. David, along with Douglas, remained in the north to see what support they might have for a less amicable settlement (meant to include

⁴⁴⁶ After the performance of the Steward at the Battle of Neville's Cross where David was captured, David had little love for his nephew as events after his return from captivity show.

⁴⁴⁷ The concessions that Edward proposed initially all for the chance of having one of his sons succeed to the Scottish throne were extraordinarily generous. Certainly the Scots could afford 40,000 pds if the burgesses could afford 9,000 pds for a truce in 1347. The return of all English held lands and Castles represented a further landslide for the Scots, safety, security and income all at the same time. If Edward were to gamble all this away on the mere chance that David II would not conceive a child, it would be woefully out of character as Edward proved beyond a doubt a very calculating man. I find it likely, although un-provable, that Edward III knew that David II would not conceive, perhaps through whatever tenuous contact through his sister or his agents in Scotland he was able to maintain.

⁴⁴⁸ Knighton, pp. 112-113.

armed conflict between Douglas and David II and other nobility unwilling to comply with Douglas', and presumably David II's, wishes) with the Scottish nobles.⁴⁴⁹ Douglas showed himself all too eager to be back in Scotland and willing to consider a deal with Edward III to get him there. Neither he nor David II showed any recorded initiative in agitating the populace in favor of the English king's demands over those of the estates of the realm. Nevertheless, Douglas could stand the confines of his captivity no more and sold his allegiance to Edward III for the repossession of what he had prior to Neville's Cross, and free passage for the English into Scotland through his lands of Liddesdale.⁴⁵⁰ Douglas enjoyed his freedom for less than a year before his godson, William Douglas, lord of Douglas (heir to the vast Douglas family estates earned by the "Good Sir James"), attacked and killed his godfather in Ettrick forest in August 1353.⁴⁵¹ David II went back to Odiham castle to wait for the negotiations to begin in earnest.

⁴⁴⁹ Rotuli Scotiae, vol. 1, pp. 748 - 750. There is an interesting disparity of views over this point, and herein lies the bulk of the dispute over the quality of David II's kingship. Twentieth century scholars such as Balfour-Melville and G.W.S. Barrow have decided that this means that David was only too eager to sell out the Scots in exchange for his freedom. Nicholson argues that David II at no time seriously considered the total sell-out to the English that the latter two scholars indicate. Webster does not touch the issue other than to indicate that David II is probably not the bad king other scholars think he is. The truth is probably somewhere in between. We have no direct evidence to indicate David II's feelings one way or another concerning this issue. However, considering his past, including his exile in France, I believe it is doubtful that he seriously considered most of Edward III's alternatives.

⁴⁵⁰ Rotuli Scotiae, vol. 1, p. 753.

⁴⁵¹ Scots Peerage, vol. 6, p. 341. There has been much speculation about why the nephew killed the uncle. Some indicate that the dispute was over land that the elder had cheated the younger out of. Others including

Two more years passed until another treaty progressed far enough to give David hope of returning home. On July 13, 1354, an agreement was reached. English and Scottish commissioners set

the ransom of Sir David de Bruis for 90,000 marks sterling, payable in 9 years, during which time there was to be a truce, including Sir Edward de Balliol and all the other allies and adherents of the K. of England. Twent hostages to be given for payment, viz., the sons and heirs of the Earls of Sutherland and March, the heir of the Earl of Wigton, the heir or brother of Sir William de Conyngham, the sons and heirs of Sir William More and Sir David de Graham, William son of Sir William de Levynghston, the sons and heirs of Sir Robert de Erskyn, of Sir Thomas Somervyle, of Sir John Danielston, of Sir Thomas Bysett, of Sir Andrew de Valence, of Sir Adam de Foulertone, of Sir John Steward of Derneley, and of Sir Roger de Kyrkpatrik; John Gray, of Sir David de Wemys, and of Sir William del Hay lord of Lochorwart.⁴⁵²

As late as November 10, 1354, Edward III still acted in good faith as though the deal had gone through. He confirmed that one John le Taillour of Carlisle, "a late adherent of the Scots," received "...the pardon granted in his name on 11 July last by Thomas de Lucy lord of Cokermuthe, warden of the March of Carlisle, under his commission to receive to peace all Scots or English in arms against him."⁴⁵³ Unfortunately for David II, the return so longed for had to wait even longer,

Wynton maintain, that the younger Douglas murdered the elder in revenge for the elder Douglas murder of Alexander Ramsay and Sir David Barclay in prior years. Considering the level of concern both Douglases held for their landed wealth, I am inclined to believe the reasoning including the land dispute.

⁴⁵² Bain, vol. 3, p. 288.

⁴⁵³ Bain, vol. 3, p. 289.

this time due to decisions made by his own nobles and his allies, the French.

The French, so unwilling to provide the necessary funds to ransom David II previously, found the token aid the Scots needed to give them a stronger backbone for resistance. More pointedly, by insuring that certain Scots received monetary and some small military aid, they managed to doom David II to more years of imprisonment and keep the English fighting a two-front war with them and the Scots. As the Scots struggled to find the money for their first installment (or perhaps intentionally stalled paying) of ten thousand marks in a war-torn and nearly leaderless country⁴⁵⁴, the French Royal Council met and agreed to send money and men under Yon de Garencieres (Chamberlain of the Dauphin's household) to help bolster Scottish resolve.⁴⁵⁵

Money, especially in the right hands, accomplished what pleading could not. By the end of February 1355 when the first installment of the ransom was supposed to have been paid, the English suspected there would be no payment. By the end of March, David had been moved to Odiham, away from the border where he had waited for his release. By the end of March, Garencieres arrived with approximately sixty men and a

⁴⁵⁴ The receipts for income during the Stewards leadership while David was incarcerated amounted to practically nothing. See the Rotuli Scacarii, vol. 1, pp. 542-546.

⁴⁵⁵ Jonathan Sumption, The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 152-153.

bag full of money.⁴⁵⁶ Near November 1355, Garenquieres joined the earls of March and Angus in capturing and looting the town of Berwick. Their victory was short-lived however. Edward III put together an army to relieve the town quickly. He returned from Calais, and by January 13, 1356, had received the keys of the town and watched the Scots withdraw. Garenquieres had already departed the month before shortly after the town fell, his mission accomplished.⁴⁵⁷ The Scots stayed in the war, at least for a while longer until the French king also earned an extended stay in the Tower of London as a result of an unfavorable outcome of the Battle of Poitiers.

Edward Balliol arrived at Roxburgh shortly after Edward III received Berwick back from the Scots. They met on January 20, 1356. Balliol resigned any claim to the kingdom of Scotland in favor of Edward III by the symbolic gesture of handing over a handful of dirt and his crown to him to "make of it what he could."⁴⁵⁸ "Edward III paid off Balliol's debts and saved his dignity with a pension of £2,000 from the English Treasury. Balliol retired to Yorkshire where he lived on in peaceful obscurity until 1364."⁴⁵⁹ With Balliol gone from the scene permanently, Edward III had a choice to make:

⁴⁵⁶ Sumption, The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire, pp. 152-153.

⁴⁵⁷ Sumption, The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire, pp. 174, 188.

⁴⁵⁸ Nicholson, p. 161.

⁴⁵⁹ Sumption, The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire, p. 188.

press his claim personally or deal with the Scots and accept David II. He chose both.

As William Douglas and the many other Scots nobles arrived at Roxburgh, as if to seek an audience with Edward III to submit to him, they quietly moved their goods over the Firth of Forth. At this point, Douglas sent letters to Edward informing him that none of the Scots cared to come to his peace. On January 26, 1356 Edward promptly took his army in three battalions north to Edinburgh and laid waste the countryside for eight leagues around, burning everything he could find, creating such devastation as to earn that period the title of the "Burnt Candlemas."⁴⁶⁰

Following so-often successful guerilla war tactics, the Scots removed all food and water from the vicinity of the English, forcing them to drink nothing but rainwater for a fortnight. As the English attempted to send out foragers, none returned, with or without food. The English had nothing left to do but retreat, thereby ending Edward III's last attempt at taking Scotland for his own.⁴⁶¹ All of his schemes having come to nothing, Edward III had no choice but to rethink his dealings with David II. War with France, always a more pressing issue, heated up once again and required Edward

⁴⁶⁰ Knighton, pp. 138-139.

⁴⁶¹ Knighton, pp. 138-139.

III's attention. The forthcoming Battle of Poitiers changed the landscape for a final peace dramatically.

Edward III needed money.⁴⁶² War with France and Scotland did not come cheap, and at times he spared no expense to get what he wanted. As the war dragged on and the French obliged him by losing battles frequently, more noblemen found themselves having to arrange for ransom money should they desire a return home. With David II Edward hit the proverbial gold mine. A king's ransom should be weighty indeed and might possibly pay off some of his creditors. As his ambitions with Scotland dwindled, however, the monetary value of the Scottish king increased. When King John of France fell into English hands at Poitiers on September 19, 1356, Edward could not have been happier. Now, no matter what political conditions were in Scotland, Edward could afford to be generous with terms for David II's release. He no longer needed to hold David II as a means to keep the Scots out of the war with France; he had the king of France (which would keep the French at the bargaining table, at least for a while). France saw more benefit in keeping the peace than keeping the Scots at war with the English, and so did not sabotage the next round of negotiations.

⁴⁶² Knighton, pp. 138-139.; Edward III was rousting the clergy for a hefty sum, only part of which they granted.

Finally on January 17, 1357, Robert Steward moved to gather an embassy for the express purpose of David II's release. William Landallis, bishop of St. Andrews and one who figured prominently in international politics for Scotland, led the embassy to London where they discussed terms for David II's release on May 8, 1357.⁴⁶³ By September 26, 1357, another session of council was held at Edinburgh where the treaty was certainly discussed. By September 28, 1357, David II had arrived at Berwick where the final negotiations were being held, in preparation for his return home.⁴⁶⁴

On October 7, 1357, David II returned home to Scotland finally free to rule his kingdom again. The treaty appeared iron-clad. Scotland owed the sum of 100,000 marks to be paid in installments of 10,000 marks each over a period of ten years without any exception for David's death, should that happen before the payments had been made in full. A truce was to be maintained until the treaty was fulfilled and twenty hostages from some of Scotland's leading families would stay as honored guests in England until all payments had been made. Three additional hostages from nobles such as the Steward, the lord of Douglas, the earl of March and others comprised the ultimate security of the treaty.⁴⁶⁵ When the Scottish council

⁴⁶³ Bain, vol. 3, pp. 296, 301; Acts, vol. 1, p. 515.

⁴⁶⁴ Act, vol. 1. pp. 515-518.; Bain, vol. 3, pp. 296, 298-302.; Nicholson, p. 163.

⁴⁶⁵ Rotuli Scotiae, vol. 1, p. 810-814.; Acts, vol. 1, pp. 518-521.

met at Scone on November 6, 1357, they ratified the treaty.⁴⁶⁶ Scotland then had to decide how to deal with the enormous burden the ransom placed on the community of the realm.

Several methods of raising money for the ransom were introduced throughout the rest of David II's reign, some more successful than others. Parliament granted the king not only an increase in the export duties on wool, but also wool requisitions, whereby he would purchase the wool at a low standard price and use the profit for the ransom.⁴⁶⁷ Another method for raising the ransom consisted of an accurate reporting of the true value of land, goods and services in Scotland.⁴⁶⁸ Also, in order that the king not place any further undo burden upon the populace for living expenses, the community authorized a revocation of lands, rents and customs revenues.⁴⁶⁹ This latter means, while mentioned in some of David's charters of the period, was the least used and particularly unsuccessful. It was, however, well thought of enough to have another revocation authorized on September 27, 1367.⁴⁷⁰

Lastly, in 1367 David II reluctantly ordered the debasement of the currency in order to increase the money

⁴⁶⁶ Acts, vol. 1, pp. 518-521. Webster, pp. 173-191.

⁴⁶⁷ Acts, vol. 1, pp. 491-492.; Webster, pp. 173-191.

⁴⁶⁸ Acts, vol. 1, pp. 491-492. Services meaning that even craftsmen had their names listed.

⁴⁶⁹ Webster, pp. 195-196.

⁴⁷⁰ Acts, vol. 1, pp. 501-502.

supply for the ransom.⁴⁷¹ For the first ten years after his return, David attempted to keep Scottish currency on par with English. However, faced with increasing pressure to pay more ransom he had little choice but to debase the coinage. From the standard in 1358 of 352d pence to the pound as it was in England, Scotland struck 320 pence.⁴⁷²

For every pound of silver of appropriate fineness the Scottish mints paid 27 shillings 9 pence, having deducted 7 pence seignorage, 11 pence for the master moneyer, and 1 pence for the warden, for the 29 shillings 4 pence actually made from each pound. This adjustment can be seen as an attempt to bring the intrinsic value of the Scottish coinage more closely in line with the true market price for silver. ... [It was] seen in bullionist terms as an attempt to restrict the outflow of silver...⁴⁷³

and provide more income for the king. Along the same vein, David raised the export duties on wool by three times the previous rate, four times in 1368.⁴⁷⁴ Indeed all great customs were targeted for the payment of David's ransom.⁴⁷⁵

From the first treaty, the Scots made two payments.⁴⁷⁶ They attempted to get the French to pay David's ransom for them, in return of which they promised to renew war against the English. Unfortunately for the Scots, Edward III's renewed war with France eliminated that possibility because of the financial problems the French encountered while trying to

⁴⁷¹ Elizabeth Gemmill, Nicholas Mayhew. Changing Values in Medieval Scotland: A study of prices, money and weights and measures. Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. 1995. pp. 116-117.

⁴⁷² Gemill and Mayhew, p. 116.

⁴⁷³ Gemill and Mayhew, pp. 116-117.

⁴⁷⁴ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 2. pp. xl-xli.

⁴⁷⁵ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 2. p. 7.

finance their portion of the war.⁴⁷⁷ Nevertheless, David II initiated a pattern of savvy fiscal behavior when it came to paying his ransom. He waited until the last possible moment and paid only when he had to for the rest of his reign. A fresh plague outbreak in the early 1360s (1362) probably bought the Scots some time for payment as everyone suffered with the same problem.

Edward III made little trouble concerning the ransom until 1363 when events dictated a meeting in November at Westminster between the two kings and their respective privy councils.⁴⁷⁸ Two memoranda resulted on November 27, 1363. Edward III again offered to eliminate further ransom payments, return occupied territory including Berwick, release the Scottish hostages, pay off the remaining Disinherited, and return to the Scottish king any land they historically held in England (requiring homage only for the English lands and not for Scotland).⁴⁷⁹ In short, anything the Scots could possibly have desired or hoped for, under one condition. Yet again, Edward III desired either himself or one of his sons to succeed a childless David II. He even conceded that should this come to pass, the two kingdoms would forever remain

⁴⁷⁶ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 2. pp. 54-56.

⁴⁷⁷ Sumption, The Hundred Years War II: Trial by Fire, pp. 422-425.

⁴⁷⁸ Nicholson, p. 170.

⁴⁷⁹ Bain, vol. 4, pp. 21-22.

separate. To attempt to insure his success, Edward III even resorted to small-scale bribery.⁴⁶⁰

To all appearances, the deal the English king offered could not have been more sweet, at least that is how it appeared. David still had faith that he would reproduce, especially since his recent (May of that year) marriage to the already proven fertile Margaret Logie. The fact that the Scots rejected the deal shows two things in particular: the Steward's unwillingness to even consider the chance of losing his inheritance and/or the Scots generally extreme hatred of the author of the Burnt Candlemas six years previously. At the March parliament in 1364 at Scone, the three estates had their opportunity to decide and rejected Edward III's proposals once and for all. Edward's reaction was punitive to say the least.

Since the Scots chose not to agree to his preferred conditions, Edward III increased his demands. In an agreement ratified by David II on June 12, 1365, at Edinburgh, Edward ignored all previous payments and increased the ransom to £100,000 paid in £4,000 yearly installments beginning February 2, 1366. Only a four year truce was agreed to after which either side could re-start the war, an act which would cancel the agreement but still bind the Scots to the remaining 80,000

⁴⁶⁰ Bain, vol. 4, pp. 22-23.; Edward III commissioned gifts for several of the council members and other members of David's household.

marks of the original treaty agreed to in 1357 (Treaty of Berwick).⁴⁸¹

Such an agreement represented a large step backwards in the relationship David had been working on developing with England, but also an important step forward at home. To his credit, he could have forced, or at least attempted to force more serious consideration of the easy terms outlined by Edward III. He had greater prestige after putting down the rebellion and had sufficiently cowed the rest of the nobility into accepting his will when it mattered. That he did not do this infers reluctance on his part to accept Edward's conditions. However David did not give up his diplomatic efforts. The result of his continuing efforts until 1369 was a combination of patience, strength of will, luck and perseverance.

When the agreement of 1365 was made, the Scots were at a distinct disadvantage. Edward III had the upper hand in that the Scots defaulted on payments several years before, the consequences of which they were unwilling to pay. Their traditional ally France was found to be of little help, especially after they signed a Treaty of Bretigny with the English in 1360 abandoning their Scottish allies.⁴⁸² However,

⁴⁸¹ Bain, vol. 4, p. 25.; Rotuli Scotiae, vol. 1, pp. 894-895.

⁴⁸² Gray, p. 203.; Nicholson. p. 167.

as war threatened to resume with France in the late 1360s, David found himself in a greater position to bargain.

David's new bargaining power allowed him to make a new treaty in June, 1369.⁴⁸³ This treaty, the final one to deal with David II's ransom, concluded over twenty years of diplomacy with terms both sides viewed as generous. The original fee of 100,000 marks with all payments already applied was recognized. Future payments of 4,000 marks annually were to be made at Berwick or Bamburgh. No provisions for an English succession colored the Scottish victory of diplomacy. Territorial concessions promised earlier by Edward III meant little as David encouraged his March Wardens (one of whom was Archibald Douglas) to continue taking back small pieces of English-held territory.

By 1360 David received revenue from all of the formerly English-held sheriffdoms⁴⁸⁴ and made arrangements in 1366 to split in half the receipts from Annandale, and the sheriffdom of Roxburgh in 1369⁴⁸⁵. The re-assessment of the kingdom's assets he ordered in 1366, the *Verus Valor*⁴⁸⁶ accurately surveyed Scotland's wealth and allowed David and his advisors a realistic look at the income potential and relative worth of

⁴⁸³ Bain, vol. 4, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁸⁴ Rotuli Scaccarii. vol. 2, pp. 34-43.

⁴⁸⁵ Bain, vol. 4, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁸⁶ Acts, vol. 1, pp. 499-501.

the kingdom, a vast difference from the administration of the Steward during David's captivity.⁴⁸⁷

"It is incongruous that at a time when David's revenues were more flourishing than they had ever been, the ransom installment was reduced to a lower figure than ever."⁴⁸⁸ David II died leaving behind a Scotland more fiscally secure and financially sound than at any other time during the fourteenth century. A firm and well-defined relationship with his nobles helped him control Scotland and re-impose his will after his long absence (and the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1363). David developed the machinery necessary to make his kingship uniquely successful, not only in the fourteenth century but throughout the middle ages.

⁴⁸⁷ Rotuli Scaccarii, vol. 1, pp. 542-544.

⁴⁸⁸ Nicholson, p. 173.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

What is the value of a king to his country? Can it be quantified in concrete terms such as money, or success in war, or as a great benefactor or doer of deeds? The debate that these questions inspire will never cease. So how does one indicate how good or bad a king is for his country? Merely reporting the facts and allowing the reader to decide may be one way, but I believe it is essentially flawed. As historians, we have a duty to portray events as clear and unsullied with personal opinion as possible. However, we also fail if we do not interpret these events to some degree without altering the factual representation of events and life. Coming full circle, one must examine the question again, but perhaps from a different perspective.

Who was David II? Why was he seen by so many historians over time as a failure at worst or a mediocrity at best? And finally, what is his story? Answering these questions is the real purpose of this work. Other scholars have written about David II as if they knew all about him, including what must have been the motivations for the things he did. They have neglected or refused to examine the more obscure points of his reign and the conclusions one may reach regarding them.

Over the intervening centuries since David II's death, those few scholars that wrote about him did so with an air of

disdain until the latter portion of this century. Two authors other than myself have examined David II in detail and come to conclusions that differ radically from most other authors on the topic and offer a more accurate portrayal of David's reign. Bruce Webster, the editor of the compilation of charters and letters specific to David II, in the Regesta Regum Scottorum series, and Ranald Nicholson, author of Scotland: The Later Middle Ages, both viewed the evidence available and have brought David II's reign to life, albeit from different directions. Once again, what kind of king was David II?

David II did not have a spectacular career, nor did he have the best political situation within or outside Scotland to help make his reign successful. He became king as a small boy and almost immediately had to leave Scotland for exile while he grew up and Scotland fell under the control of Edward III and the pretender Edward Balliol. The brief period in the early to mid 1340s when he returned and attempted to rule a weakened and still divided land led to the disaster at Neville's Cross. After spending the next eleven years in and out of Scotland, but mostly in prison, he returned to find that while his actual power base may have dwindled while he lay in prison. Other sources of as yet un-tapped potential power lay open to him, sources of which he made very effective use.

Therefore, I maintain that instead of dwelling on the periods of his reign over which he had little if any control, one must examine most closely the period during which he had control, from 1357 to his death in 1371, to determine effectively what kind of king he made. One may argue that the entire reign belongs to him, and that one must view it as a whole to give an accurate picture. That may be somewhat true of his reign, but not overly pertinent to David as king. One must separate the events from the man to a certain extent. For example, how can David II be blamed for the occupation of lowland Scotland throughout the 1330s and early 1340s? Simply put, he cannot. Nevertheless an examination of both king and kingship are possible from the material presented in this paper. Let us examine first David II's kingship.

David's kingship divides itself neatly into several sections: occupation, return, imprisonment, and rule. During the occupation of much of Scotland by Edward III throughout the latter half of the 1330s and very early 1340s, the Scots continued the war begun by Robert the Bruce in 1306. They fought this campaign from a slightly different perspective, one fought almost entirely on their own soil with vast amounts of territory occupied by the enemy. Edward Balliol arranged to have himself crowned king in the power vacuum that he created after the Scots' military defeats at Dupplin Moor in 1332 and Halidon hill in 1333. After Halidon Hill, nine-year-

old David fled to France for safety and Balliol's conquest seemed assured of completion. David was not old enough to have much of any say in the planning and execution of the war of resistance, but he did have staunch supporters. Some acted out of patriotism, such as Andrew Moray, while others acted out of a sort of self-preservation like the young Robert the Steward.

The occupation had little to do with the king and more to do with Edward Balliol the Pretender, Edward III king of England, and the handful of Scottish patriots that did most of the fighting for Scotland. How did the invasion itself take place, and why? The answer revolves around the Disinherited and Edward III.

After the English signed the Treaty of Northampton (1328) and recognized the independence of Scotland, a rather large and influential group of Anglo-Scottish lords lost their Scottish inheritance. This group never ceased to complain to Edward III about their condition. However very little could actually be done until Edward III wrested power from his mother-regent and took things into his own hands. France did not yet have his attention, so he could afford to spend the bulk of his efforts on subduing the Scots whom he felt had humiliated the English and himself personally. The emergence of an adult and vengeful Edward III, combined with the loss of nearly all of the Scots' respected, feared, and competent

leaders, created a condition that Edward III found much to his liking and the Scots found untenable.

No doubt exists that Edward III plotted carefully the events that led to the invasion of the Disinherited. From the convenient death of Thomas Randolph due to poison, to the likelihood of Donald of Mar, a known English sympathizer, being selected to replace Randolph as Guardian, to the arrival of the Disinherited and their army at the best of possible times, the sequence of events followed too exact a timetable to have been accidental. While some scholars suggest that Edward III was surprised at these good turns of fortune, the fact that he manipulated and engineered these events to his best advantage is clearly undeniable given the information presented in this work. He conveniently ignored his brother-in-law and set Balliol up to take his place, also conveniently ignoring that John Balliol had resigned all claim to the crown of Scotland by 1296.

Repeated invasions, support of Balliol, and the Disinheriteds' cause enabled Edward III to demand a high price for his help, one that gave him the key to a subdued Scotland,⁴⁸⁹ nearly all of the Lowlands. David II had very little choice but to escape to France. Throughout the 1330s, only words of encouragement for his faithful came from his

⁴⁸⁹ The key to subduing Scotland permanently lay in controlling the lowlands in their entirety. From there, one could eventually dissolve resistance in

court in exile. He had no money with which to finance a massive restorative effort; any resources came sparingly from the French. While the Scots sat nearly leaderless, the Lowlands were doomed to be mere possessions of the English. However, when the great guerrilla leaders appeared and took charge of the recovery effort, Scotland had hope and purpose. Andrew Moray, John Randolph (heir to Thomas Randolph), Alexander Ramsay, William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, and later William Douglas, lord of Douglas (and eventually earl of Douglas after 1357), all proved more than capable leaders. They were ruthless when necessary and always chose where and when to fight instead of allowing the English to dictate time and place to them.

When David II returned from his exile in France in June, 1341, much of the groundwork for his return had been done by not only the guerrilla leadership operating in his absence but also by the change of attitude in Edward III. With his sights set on France and Philip VI of France growing increasingly bold and belligerent towards Edward's idea of claiming the French crown for himself, Edward III found less money and time available to aid Balliol with Scotland. Investment in holding his French territories would ultimately pay off much better than Scotland; his lands in France were much more

the Highlands, much as the early Scottish kings did themselves when attempting to hold a unified kingdom together.

extensive and provided a great deal more income. Holding a Scotland that did not want to be held had become a very difficult proposition, especially after the return of David II. Time and money spent had much greater returns when spent on France rather than Scotland. The Scots had little ability to threaten seriously the borders of England. France threatened not only Edward's lands in Gascony, but also the English coastal towns as well. In addition, the French had considerable influence over the medieval Church while it headquartered at Avignon.

As Edward III turned his attention to the more pressing matters on the continent, David II returned and began re-establishing authority throughout Scotland with the help of his most stalwart followers. Even the Steward supported him in this endeavor. No question of an heir for David II yet plagued Robert since David was still quite young. Until 1346, David rewarded those nobles that maintained a strict adherence to the Bruce cause during the occupation. Some men who had been lesser nobles and who had performed particularly well in David II's eyes received great rewards during the period. Even at this stage of his career David recognized the importance of securing troublesome areas, which is why he elevated Malcolm Fleming, who had been the keeper of Dumbarton castle for him during the occupation, to the rank of a new earldom, that of Wigtown. Along with the earldom came the

task of quieting Galloway, perhaps the only area left where Balliol the Pretender had any sway.

Throughout the five years David spent in Scotland, from his return in 1341 to his capture in 1346, he continued to reward his faithful that helped make it possible for Scotland to be free once again. However, David did not possess the authority he would wield after his return from captivity in England. The irascible and unrepentant Knight of Liddesdale felt secure enough in his position as premier guerrilla leader of the Borders to march down and remove (and eventually let starve to death in prison) Alexander Ramsay from a post in Roxburgh awarded to Ramsay by David II himself.

While David II found the act unforgivable and ordered Douglas's immediate arrest, cooler heads prevailed upon David to see that the Scots truly did need the Knight alive more than dead or in jail. Eventually, David forgave and even officially sanctioned Douglas's act by handing the post over to Douglas formerly. By 1346 when David II marched into northern England to cause what mayhem he could, Douglas scouted the way. The Knight proved steadfast enough to stand by David II as he was captured by the English. Sir William even went to prison along with his king.

As the length of David's absence increased, he lost ever more influence with the nobility in Scotland. Balliol, accompanied by the earl of Northumberland, attempted a brief

foray into Scotland but netted himself nothing, only succeeding in recovering for Edward III some of the territory Balliol had ceded to him in their agreement back in 1334. A change had come over the political climate in Scotland as a result of David II's capture. Robert Steward now headed the government, supposedly ruling in David II's stead.

The record the Steward left behind of his accomplishments was abysmal. He exercised almost no authority except in his own lands. Any recovery of territory or resistance to the English was achieved by other leaders, notably (the other) William Douglas, lord of Douglas,⁴⁹⁰ who took over his uncle's (the Knight of Liddesdale's) position of guerrilla leader on the Borders. Steward's abandonment of David on the battlefield at Neville's Cross had negated whatever respect he earned from previous efforts in behalf of the Crown. Central authority during the period of his Lieutenancy was nearly non-existent. Having to plead with the royal officials to behave, or to turn in the appropriate financial accounts, phased him not at all. His personal power on his own lands suffered little, if any. Content to "lead" Scotland, Robert Steward made little attempt to retrieve David II from captivity until his own interests required it.

⁴⁹⁰ The young Douglas had plenty of reason to fight since nearly all of his lands lay in English hands. He also had reason to dislike the elder Douglas since he spent much of his political power in the mid 1340s arranging for the control of some of the lands that belonged to the younger

David II could do little to help himself, considering his current position. Even with numerous trips back to Scotland throughout his imprisonment, only in 1349 and 1351 do we find no other corroborating evidence of David II actually being in Scotland, if only for a short time.⁴⁹¹ However, while these trips allowed David some access to the machinery of his government, they did not constitute a strong enough presence there to counteract the Steward's apparent incompetence. David used the time allowed him to settle either rather mundane issues or international issues that only the king could deal with.⁴⁹²

Gradual and growing frustration with the lack of cooperation of his nobility allowed Edward III to advance several solutions to the problem of the ransom that he liked. The major sticking point in the conditions was the appointing of either Edward III or one of his sons as the heir to the Scottish throne.⁴⁹³ This one condition, even had it not been vilified by Robert Steward, made any of the other conditions so unpalatable that negotiations always broke down. Only during periods when the French threatened the English did the

Douglas. The Knight even arranged for himself to succeed to all of the Douglas estates should young William's line fail.

⁴⁹¹ In 1351, David was found in Newcastle, very close to the Scottish border.

⁴⁹² The Scottish parliament was not powerful enough to treat solely for all of Scotland when dealing with international issues.

⁴⁹³ Edward III made similar demands of the French at the time. Whether Edward's strategy was complex in that he actually expected success in France and hoped for it in Scotland; or whether it was simplistic in that

Scots succeed in gaining any concessions. Even then, in 1354 when the Scots finally received favorable terms that had nothing to do with the succession, the French undermined any chance of success by encouraging the Scots to attack the English, thereby eliminating that chance at recovering King David. France could not have taken the chance that Edward III would be allowed peace at home and be able to concentrate all of his strength on the continent.

Only after John II of France fell into English hands and the prospect of a much larger ransom than the comparatively small amount demanded of the Scots became a reality did the English allow David II to go free. Balliol had resigned his claim, and Edward III knew that he might take portions of Scotland but could not hold them, at least not hold them and actually receive an income from them. Also, by agreeing to a ransom arrangement, the English bound the Scots to a truce to last until Edward III received his final payment. Border conflict aside, which neither side truly considered a serious enough violation of the truce to warrant a cancellation or annulment of the ransom treaty, relative peace between the two countries did indeed come to pass.

Most of the "nibbling away" at English controlled Scotland had been accomplished prior to the ratification of

he merely asked the same of both countries he was currently bullying is the topic for another work.

the first ransom treaty. Any further incursions, such as David II's advances into Annandale and Roxburgh, happened so gradually, that Edward III must have considered them merely the normal course of relations on the Border and the private arrangements made for their administration to be largely a local, not international, matter. It was well known that the Borders were nearly a separate entity in and of themselves, complete with their own customs and laws. To adjudicate infractions by both the Scots and English in the Borders, "March Days" were set up and attended by Wardens of the March for both Scotland and England, who would then decide together the outcome of the issues.⁴⁹⁴

"Intensive government," a term used by Ranald Nicholson in the title of one of his chapters on the reign of David II, aptly describes David II's reign after his final return. David correctly determined throughout the eleven years he spent in captivity that he could not trust his greater nobility. Also, he had to develop quickly the means to enforce his will upon the rest of Scotland or risk the same type of lack of respect that faced Robert Stewart when he tried to govern. David was bound and determined not to prove to be a "do-nothing" king. To accomplish this, he needed

⁴⁹⁴ Much more serious incursions across the borders began at the end of the fourteen year long truce agreed upon in the last ransom treaty ratified in 1370.

allies. He found them in the church, burgesses, and lesser nobility.⁴⁹⁵

When David returned from captivity he rewarded those that did Scotland great service in his absence (such as the young William Douglas, lord of Douglas, whom he then made first earl of Douglas) and mollified certain great lords with rewards to reassure them as to their position in his government (e.g., when David gave the Steward the earldom of Strathearne). He also rewarded those (such as the abbey, bishoprics, and burgesses of Scotland - some of the wealthiest men, greatest landowners and wielders of enormous political clout) who immediately lent him political clout by merely accepting him as their sovereign ruler.

After establishing himself as their ruler, David set about building a government in earnest. In order to accomplish his goals, he knew he could make broad sweeping changes overnight, and so began the process of slowly appointing men from the lesser nobility into key positions of power, control and influence throughout the kingdom. For example, David exercised his prerogative of choice in establishing his own picked men in the very important positions of keeper of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Stirling castles, as well as sheriffs in key places throughout the

⁴⁹⁵ While previous Scottish kings used these same assets, David relied more on them, and to greater effect, to successfully counter the ever-growing

kingdom such as Teviotdale, Roxburghshire, Edinburgh, Aberdeenshire and so on. The men he chose made up a relatively short list. They included Robert Erskine, Archibald Douglas, John Herries, John Danielston, Walter Haliburton, William Livingston, William Ramsay, John Preston, and even the burgess Adam Torrie (whom he appointed Warden of the Exchange for Scotland, basically responsible for Scotland's condition and supply of money). As the early years passed, more and more often some or all of these men figured in David's councils in a larger role.

The most powerful nobles of the day - Robert Steward, earl of Strathearne and heir to the throne; William Douglas, earl of Douglas; and Patrick Dunbar, earl of March - found little to their liking in this new arrangement. Other nobles, such as Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus, joined them in their feelings. By 1360, some of them, the earl of Angus in particular, had had enough and arranged for Katherine Mortimer, David II's mistress at the time, to die on the road to Soutra. This accomplished two things. First, it told David II that he could either rule or be ruled by his nobility. Second, that he could trust none of those great nobles of the kingdom that had (finally) helped arrange and provided support for his release from captivity.

power of the greater nobility.

David II's response came in two parts. Initially, he further cemented his power base by continuing to reward those lesser noblemen that supported him with land and influence in his councils as attested to by their continual presence in his charter witness lists. Second, he arrested the earl of Angus and made an example out of him. By 1362, the earl starved to death (or died of plague), wasted away in much the same manner the Knight of Liddesdale used on Alexander Ramsay nearly twenty years prior.

However, the great lords viewed this threat to their power only as an obstacle to overcome. One more event pushed the Steward over the edge into action. David II decided to remarry and make another attempt to produce his own heir.

When David II returned from prison in England with his mistress in accompaniment, Queen Joan left for England, ostensibly to pursue the arrangements of a final peace with her brother Edward III. By 1362, she had died, of what the chronicles do not definitively say but perhaps from a fresh outbreak of the plague that circulated through the country at that time. Within a year, David, free to marry again, chose to marry Dame Margaret Logie, someone whose fertility had been proven through the birth of a child in a previous marriage. If the Steward wished to remain the heir to the throne, he could not allow the marriage to take place. To ensure his position as heir, the Steward formulated a plan.

Robert Steward arranged a rebellion with the earls of Douglas and March to take place in the spring of 1363. Robert stayed close to David II while Douglas and March prepared their forces. David II discovered the plot and put his own machinery to work, machinery that depended in no way upon the benefices of the great lords. In short order, David crushed the rebellion and forced the abject submission of the three lords at his wedding in May 1363. The Steward he allowed back into his presence more quickly than either Douglas or March, probably due to influence the Steward had in the Highlands. David's authority was not yet as secure in that area as it would eventually become.

Internationally, the Scots failed to find that final peace with England, preferably one that required little if any money. Scotland had lapsed in its payments to the English and by 1364 Edward III started to take exception. To make matters worse, the death of King John II of France removed the likelihood that Edward III would be collecting any ransom for him. Pressure once again fell upon the Scots to assume the financial burden alone. They needed a new treaty quickly. Ten thousand marks annually amounted to more than the Scots could comfortably produce, and resulted in the cessation of the installments all together. By the 1365 Edward III and David II concluded a new treaty, one more burdensome in the long term to the Scots. All previous payments were ignored.

The total ransom, while only necessary to pay in amounts of six thousand marks annually, was increased to £100,000. French ransom money for a dead king became permanently elusive, a fact the Scots felt most keenly.

To meet this increased fiscal burden, David took action. He required a survey of the kingdom's wealth, known as the Verus Valor, to compare against the last survey known as the Antiquatio Taxatio. Customs on exported wool were raised again, to four times their original level in 1357. And parliament authorized yet another revocation of royal assets (which included lands rents and fees) so that David might maintain himself without any additional monetary requirements from his people. The last step David took involved devaluing the currency, thereby increasing the amount of money produced from a fixed amount of silver. While the difference in value between the English and Scottish pound remained small for the moment, after David's death Robert II (Robert the Steward) followed David's example and devalued the currency several times.⁴⁹⁶

For four years David paid under those terms while continually pushing for a new treaty, which he arranged in 1369. The payments dropped to four thousand marks annually to be paid over fourteen years. All previous payments made were

applied to the original sum of one hundred thousand marks. Both sides agreed to a truce for the remaining fourteen years left in the payment schedule, guaranteeing relative peace between the two countries until the early 1380s. Through intense diplomatic negotiations as well as a bit of luck, David managed to finally end the ransom question on terms fair to everyone, with the side benefit of making his kingdom financially sound. In the fourteen years he ruled after his return from captivity, he increased the kingdom's receipts by approximately sixty percent. That combined with the fact that the ransom payment amounted to much less than the annual receipts provided fiscal strength for the King of Scots.

David broke new ground in other areas as well. His use of lesser noblemen for his personal power base is slightly reminiscent of the Holy Roman Emperor's use of *ministeriales* in previous centuries, and may in fact have been developed from his exposure to Edward III using a similar practice in England. He gathered close to him those he could trust, not the greater nobility. Perhaps the basic groundwork for the idea began when he returned from exile in France, though with imperfect execution.

In 1342, David II rewarded one of his faithful, one Malcolm Fleming, with the newly created earldom of Wigtown

⁴⁹⁶ So much so that by the 1380s, England would only accept Scottish coinage at a rate of two to one even though Robert had not actually devalued his

located in south central Galloway along the coast, most certainly to help erode what power his enemies had there. Galloway as it turned out became a central theme in David's firmly establishing his authority. At that time, in the mid 1340s, the Balliol name still counted for something. Another family, the Comyns who were old enemies of the Bruce family back before the days of even his father Robert Bruce, also had some influence in the area. Unfortunately, Fleming did not prove up to the task. Aside from being captured along with David II at Neville's Cross, the Galwegians proved too troublesome for the earl of Wigtown. Eventually, he returned the earldom to David II after David's return from captivity.

The problem remained the same however and did not end with Galloway. Five geographical areas in Scotland corresponded to established bases of power: the Highlands, the Lowlands, Galloway, the Borders, and the Isles.⁴⁹⁷ Robert Stewart and his allies⁴⁹⁸ dominated the Highlands and had several areas of influence throughout the Lowlands. Patrick Dunbar, the earl of March, and William Douglas dominated the Border region. John of Lorne and John of the Isles dominated the Isles along with the Campbells. Balliol and what was left

currency quite that much.

⁴⁹⁷ The nobles that had established themselves caused comparatively little trouble and for the most part chose to separate themselves from the rest of Scottish governmental ties. This is what brought David II to march eventually on the Lord of the Isles with troops in 1369 to demand, and receive, his submission.

of the Comyn clan had influence in Galloway. The Lowlands were a mixed bag indeed with many people having pockets of influence scattered throughout.

David II had royal lands everywhere throughout the kingdom, enough to keep an eye on his neighbors but none close enough together to dominate an entire region. He had royal castles scattered in key positions throughout the kingdom that mainly controlled access to important cities and other points of access. Places like Stirling, Edinburgh, and Dumbarton imposed his presence pointedly even when his neighbors controlled the countryside. After his return from England in 1357, David embarked on a new plan for re-asserting his authority throughout Scotland.

The greatest allies the king could hope for were men who had nothing to lose and everything to gain by following him. That description fit the lesser nobility and burgesses (or common folk as the great lords saw them) exactly. Great lords like the earls of Angus, March, Mar, Lennox, and others saw little benefit from consorting too much with these classes, just the opposite to them appeared true; by using them too frequently one's own power might diminish. David used them to great effect. Perhaps his greatest achievements rested in two men: Sir Archibald Douglas and Sir Robert Erskine.

⁴⁹² Erstwhile allies at best, John of Lorne, Gillespic Campbell and John of the Isles (Lord of the Isles).

Both men frequently appeared in David's charters. Erskine became David's chamberlain shortly after his return from captivity and so was nearly always present at the witnessing of any charter since he almost never left the king's side. David established Douglas more slowly, but in the end far more effectively for the purposes of projecting his influence. During the rebellion of 1363, both men proved invaluable. By that time, Erskine had received the greater portion of the territorial rewards David handed out. Douglas contented himself with assuming the positions of sheriff of certain Lowland shires and Keeper of Edinburgh castle. These positions put the two men (along with others from among David's list of chosen favorites) in key positions to aid David should the need arise as it did in 1363.

As a result of the rebellion, Erskine further increased his holdings in Lowland Scotland and Douglas found himself inserted into the Border region as the Warden of the West March. David knew he could count on this Douglas for two reasons. First, Archibald's father, the "Good Sir James" Douglas (Robert Bruce's Lieutenant) left no landed provision for his *natural* son, Archibald, although some monetary resources were probably at his disposal. We know almost nothing about his childhood, though it is possible that he grew up with David II in exile in France. He must have had some access to money, since he escaped capture at Poitiers in

1356 only by a subterfuge committed by William Ramsay, who treated him as if he were a servant that had stolen his master's armor.⁴⁹⁹ Second, should Archibald betray David and join the camp of his cousin, the earl of Douglas, he would likely have lost everything, not having the influence his cousin had. Erskine found himself in roughly the same position.⁵⁰⁰

By 1369, however, Douglas eclipsed Erskine in influence. David established him in Galloway with all royal lands between the Nith and the Cree rivers, despite the second act of revocation issued by parliament. Shortly thereafter, Archibald gained all the lands of the earldom of Wigtown without the title. By David's death, Archibald Douglas was Lord of Galloway and the Warden of the West March. David II had neatly inserted him into two areas that represented trouble for David and lacked a strong royal presence, the Borders and Galloway. Pacifying Galloway permanently did not happen overnight. In fact, it took several years of Robert II's reign before Douglas accomplished completely the pacification program.

⁴⁹⁹ Froissart indicates that the only reason Ramsay did this was to spare Archibald's benefactors the cost of his ransom once the English determined whom they had caught.

⁵⁰⁰ Note that this theory assumes the worst, that Erskine and Douglas would have betrayed him if they had the chance. However, I do not believe this is true. Both men spent the rest of their lives loyal to the Crown, whoever happened to be wearing it at the time. Perhaps it was not so much David that they were loyal to, but the institution of the kingship itself. Nevertheless, the result was the same.

David II did something that none of his contemporary Scots expected; he ignored the power of the greater nobility and made his own allies where and when it suited him. He used his advantage in this area to great effect, and in fact public opinion of him appeared to be higher than the public's opinion of the nobles in question. Bringing the great earls to heel did nothing but increase his power at home amongst his subjects.

When David forced William, earl of Mar, to resign his lands to the crown, only to receive them back from the crown under condition of a tailzie leaving it to one not of Mar's line, one may truly see the extent of the king's control over the nobility. Even the submission of John of the Isles in 1369 or the temporary imprisonment of Robert the Steward and his sons in 1370 did not result in such a far reaching command from the king.⁵⁰¹ David proved several things to his nobles: one must submit to his wishes or face reprisals, no one was safe from his scrutiny, and one's loyalty would be rewarded.

Finally, one must discuss the relationship David maintained with his subjects. With his loyal followers, the Church and burgesses, David II had showed fairness, though, and a certain amount of favoritism. With his greater nobility, namely the earls of the kingdom, he showed wariness

⁵⁰¹ They did not have to resign their lands and receive them back from them king only to find that their heir had been designated for them.

and caution. Perhaps the relationship that caused the most strife throughout his reign was the one with Robert the Steward and his sons. Robert had never been much of a man of action. His comparatively weak effort during the 1330s to restore David Bruce to power merely began his lackluster career. After David's capture, one may see two things about Robert. First, his manner was better suited to self-preservation than the Lieutenancy of Scotland as seen by the method by which he governed during David's absence. Second, Robert had no desire to lose his position as heir to the throne.

He rebelled in 1363 supposedly to end evil council of David II by lesser men, which no doubt played some part, but also to try to stop the impending marriage of David II to Dame Margaret Logie. As Queen Joan was approximately eight years older than David II, her age upon his release from prison put her over forty years of age, past her prime child bearing years and possibly even post-menopausal. This meant there was very little threat to Robert's status as heir. By 1360 David's mistress Katherine Mortimer had been murdered, supposedly at the command of Thomas Stewart, earl of Angus, who ultimately paid for his crime. After David made Stewart submit in public at his wedding to Margaret Logie in May 1363, Robert had little choice but to wait and see what resulted.

By the end of the 1360s it became apparent to David II that his new queen would not bare him the child he desired, so he divorced her and immediately made arrangements to marry another, one Agnes Dunbar. Sometime during the fall of 1370, the Steward did something to offend the new prospective queen. David threw him and his sons in jail for a short time undoubtedly to remind Robert exactly who was king. In the meantime, David made arrangements for Agnes coming wedding present which consisted of a large annual cash payment, larger by far than would have been offered to anyone that were not meant to be queen. In January 1371, David II announced his intentions to wed young Agnes. By the end of February, David II lay dead and buried and Scotland had a new king in Robert II (the Steward).

No chronicle mentions the reason for David's death, nor did he appear to be suffering from any illness. It seems very coincidental that shortly after David formally announced his pending marriage to Agnes Dunbar that he should die, and die mysteriously, merely a middle-aged forty-seven year old. Even more interesting is the fact that David II's most staunch supporter, Archibald Douglas, shortly after David's death was paid five hundred marks and sent to France for diplomatic discussions that kept him in France for quite some time and

accomplished nothing.⁵⁰² David's death leaves unanswered questions, perhaps truly unanswerable. Certainly no known document implicates the Steward in David's death. Nevertheless, the circumstantial evidence appears compelling. Did Robert the Steward engineer David II's death? In my opinion, he was certainly capable of it.⁵⁰³

David II led Scotland through a time of misfortune, both of his own creation (as at Neville's Cross) and his enemies instigation (such as the occupation of the 1330s). One cannot blame the man or the king for the failure to govern what could not be governed, one must look at his accomplishments after he began to rule in earnest.

After 1357, David finally had the chance to rule, even though ruling Scotland included dealing with the issue of the ransom and the continued slow recovery of territory still held

⁵⁰² See the exchequer rolls for dates and amount paid.

⁵⁰³ Robert certainly had the motive to have David II murdered. Robert's concerns appear to be two-fold. First and foremost is his succession to the Scottish crown one way or another. Second was the growth in power of his family. He accomplished the latter largely during the years of David II's absence and continued to attempt to increase the family's influence after David's return. The former proved more difficult. By the time David returned from captivity, his wife was certainly past her prime childbearing years. There was little danger of an heir from her. Dame Logie, however, who had already proved fertile was another story. Unfortunately we do not know her age when David married her, but one must assume she had some prospect of bearing a child. However, if she was simply too old to have children, then a young Agnes Dunbar, almost certainly fertile, would have been more than enough to make Robert's ambitions for the crown fall apart. Apparently with each marriage, David learned from his mistakes, choosing a younger wife each time in the hopes of finally producing an heir. Treachery ending in eliminating a rival was certainly not beyond Robert, as his performance at Neville's Cross and the lackluster manner in which he negotiated for his king's release can attest. The Steward even managed to remove most of the stain of rebellion from his hands after the 1363 affair with Douglas and March. The Steward had motive, means and opportunity.

by a few English lords. His people supported him, suffering no general uprising while he ruled. The one attempt at organized rebellion he crushed out of hand before it really got started, and he showed his magnanimity by forgiving rather than eliminating the conspirators. He introduced strong government to Scotland precisely when it was needed and unwittingly set some basic groundwork for the absolutism practiced by the later Stewart monarchs, even though the next two Stewart kings failed to take advantage of his efforts. As a warrior, he showed himself to be initially unlucky and somewhat rash (resulting in his capture), but eventually cool and calculating as demonstrated by the recovery of most of the borders by his death in 1371. Finally, he surveyed Scotland and reorganized its fiscal affairs, changing it from a totally impoverished nation that could barely afford to operate its government to a financially sound one. At his death, despite the ravages of two occurrences of the Plague and of the long standing war with England, David II left a strong, safe, and stable nation. Perhaps Wynton's epitaph at David II's death does indeed do him justice:

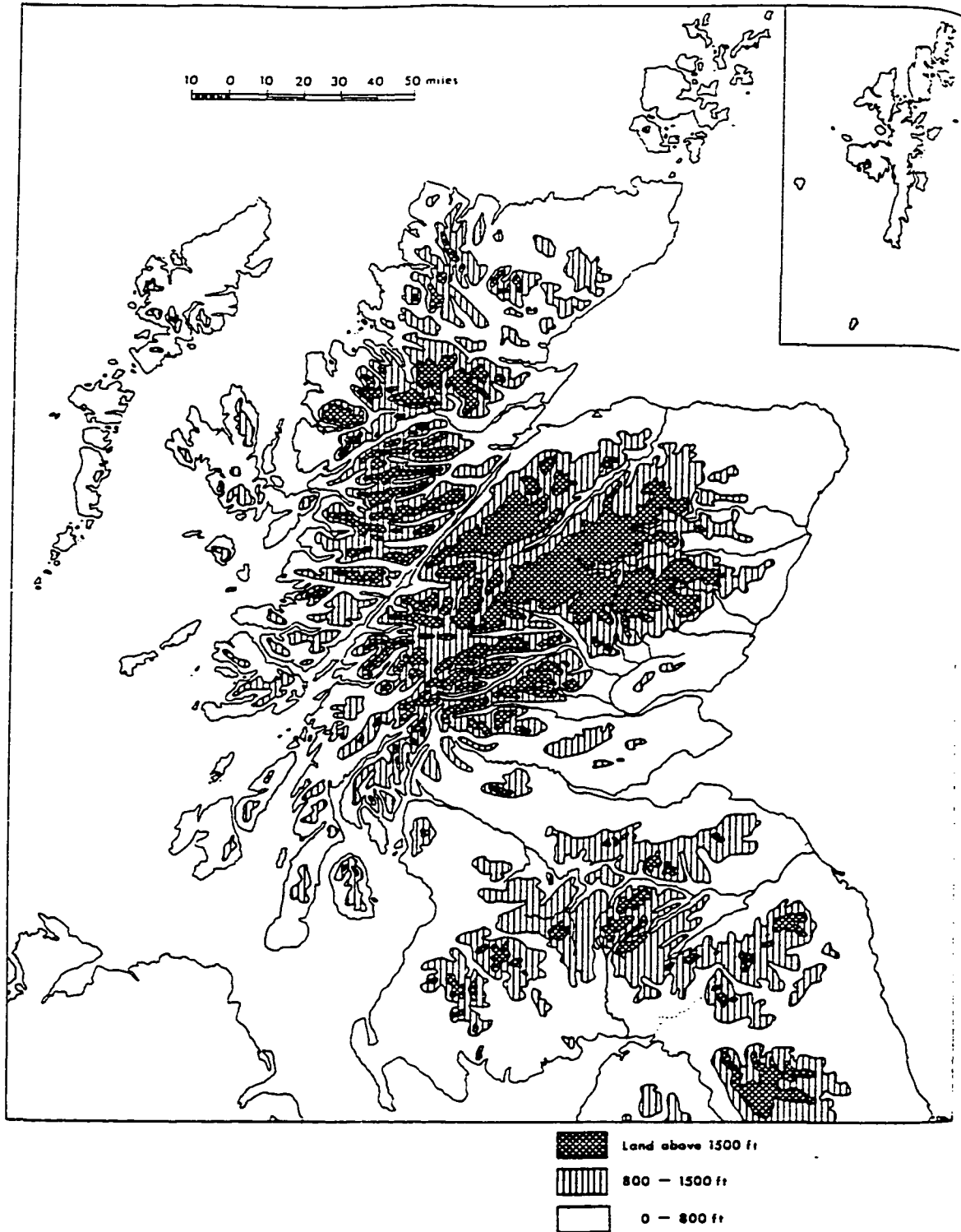
The fertility of the land obeyed his wishes;
So too the useful element of the sea...;
Savagery has disappeared, imperial law has
triumphed,
Honesty has increased, there is general quiet in the
country. ...

He has cultivated the prelates of the clergy by
treating them with respect,
and has desired the magnates to come to his side
with their power;
he made a statute that burgesses could exchange
their goods with his permission,
and he made it his business to keep the people
visibly in obedience to the law.

He is highly regarded by the English, and revered
for his strength,
he is regarded as truthful, and blessed for his
goodness....

...May he rest amid the rejoicing of his native
land...⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰⁴ Bower, vol. 7, pp. 362-365.

Scotland: Physical Features⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁵ Peter McNeill and Ranald Nicholson., eds., An Historical Atlas of Scotland c. 400-c. 1600. (Scotland: Atlas Committee of the Conference of Scottish Medievalists, 1975), p. 104.

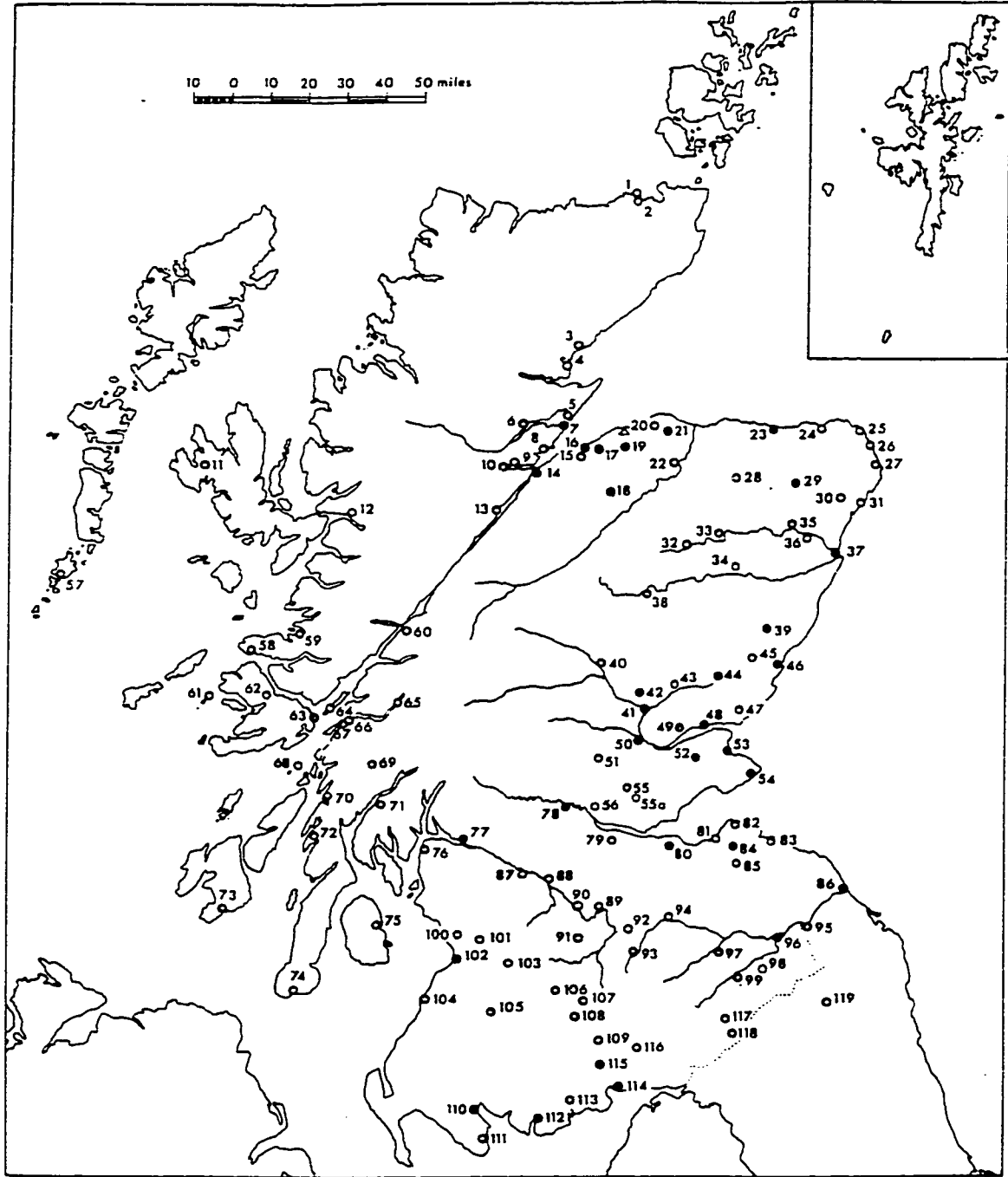
Castles and Strongpoints c.1296-1306⁵⁰⁶

1 Scrabster (earl of Caithness)	40 Black Castle of Moulin (earl of Atholl)	79 Linlithgow
2 Thurso	41 Kinclaven	80 Edinburgh
3 Dunrobin	42 Clunie	81 Luffness (Pinkney)
4 Skelbo (earl of Sutherland)	43 Inverquiech	82 Dirleton (Vaus)
5 Dunskeath	44 Forfar	83 Dunbar (earl of Dunbar)
6 Balconie	45 Brechin	84 Haddington
7 Cromarty	46 Montrose	85 Yester
8 Avoch (Murray)	47 Panmure	86 Berwick
9 Redcastle	48 Dundee	87 Rutherglen
10 Tarradale (Comyn)	49 Baledgarno (Cameron/Cambo?)	88 Bothwell
11 <i>Dunvegan</i>	50 Perth	89 Carstairs
12 Eilean Donan	51 Auchterarder	90 Lanark
13 Urquhart (earl of Ross)	52 Cupar	91 Douglas
14 Inverness	53 St. Andrews	92 Biggar
15 Rait (Rait)	54 Crail	93 Oliver Castle (Fraser)
16 Nairn	55 Muckhart (bishop of St. Andrews)	94 Peebles
17 Auldearn	55a Tullibole	95 Wark (Ros)
18 Lochindorb (Comyn of Badenoch)	56 Clackmannan	96 Roxburgh
19 Forres (or Blervie?)	57 <i>Kismul</i> (McNeil)	97 Selkirk
20 Duffus (Cheyne)	58 <i>Mingary</i> (McIan?)	98 Jedburgh
21 Elgin	59 Castle Tioram (McRuarie)	99 Cavers (Balliol)
22 Rothes	60 Inverlochy (Comyn of Badenoch)	100 Dundonald
23 Banff	61 Cairnburg (MacDougal)	101 Craigie
24 Dundarg (Comyn)	62 Aros (MacDonald)	102 Ayr
25 Inverallochy	63 Duart (McLean?)	103 Cumnock (earl of Dunbar)
26 Rattray (Comyn)	64 Achadun	104 Turnberry (Bruce)
27 Inveruge (Comyn)	65 Fraoch Eilean (McNaughton)	105 Loch Doon
28 Strathbogie (earl of Atholl)	66 Dunstaffnage	106 Sanquhar (Ros of Wark)
29 Fyvie	67 Dunollie	107 Dunsdeer
30 Eilon (Comyn)	68 Dunchonnel	108 Tibbers (Siward)
31 Slains (Comyn)	69 Inchconnel (MacDougal)	109 Dalswinton (Comyn)
32 Invermochty	70 Duntroon	110 Wigtown
33 Kildrummy (earl of Mar)	71 Castle Lachlan (McLachlan)	111 Cruggleton
34 Aboyne or Coull (Durward)	72 Castle Sween (McSween)	112 Kirkcudbright
35 Inverurie	73 Duniveg (MacDonald)	113 Buittle
36 Kintore	74 Dunaverty (McQuillan?/Bruce)	114 Caerlaverock
37 Aberdeen	75 Brodick	115 Dumfries
38 <i>Kindrochit</i> (earl of Mar)	76 Inverkip	116 Lochmaben (Bruce)
39 Kincardine	77 Dumbarton	117 Hermitage (Soules)
	78 Stirling	118 Liddel (Soules)
		119 Harbottle (Umfraville)

Note: Castles italicised possibly did not belong to the period.

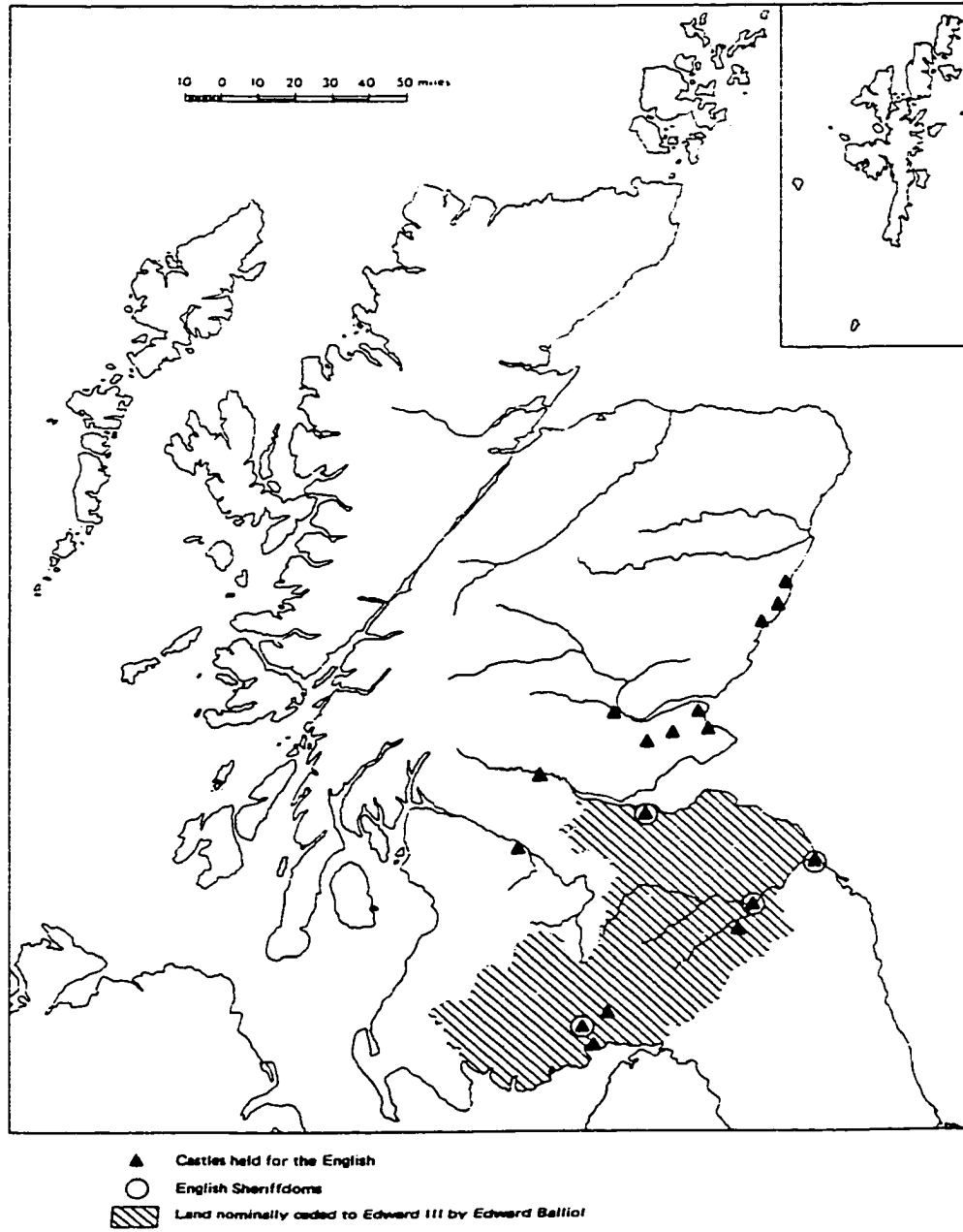
⁵⁰⁶ McNeill, p. 162.

Castles and Strongpoints c.1296-1306⁵⁰⁷

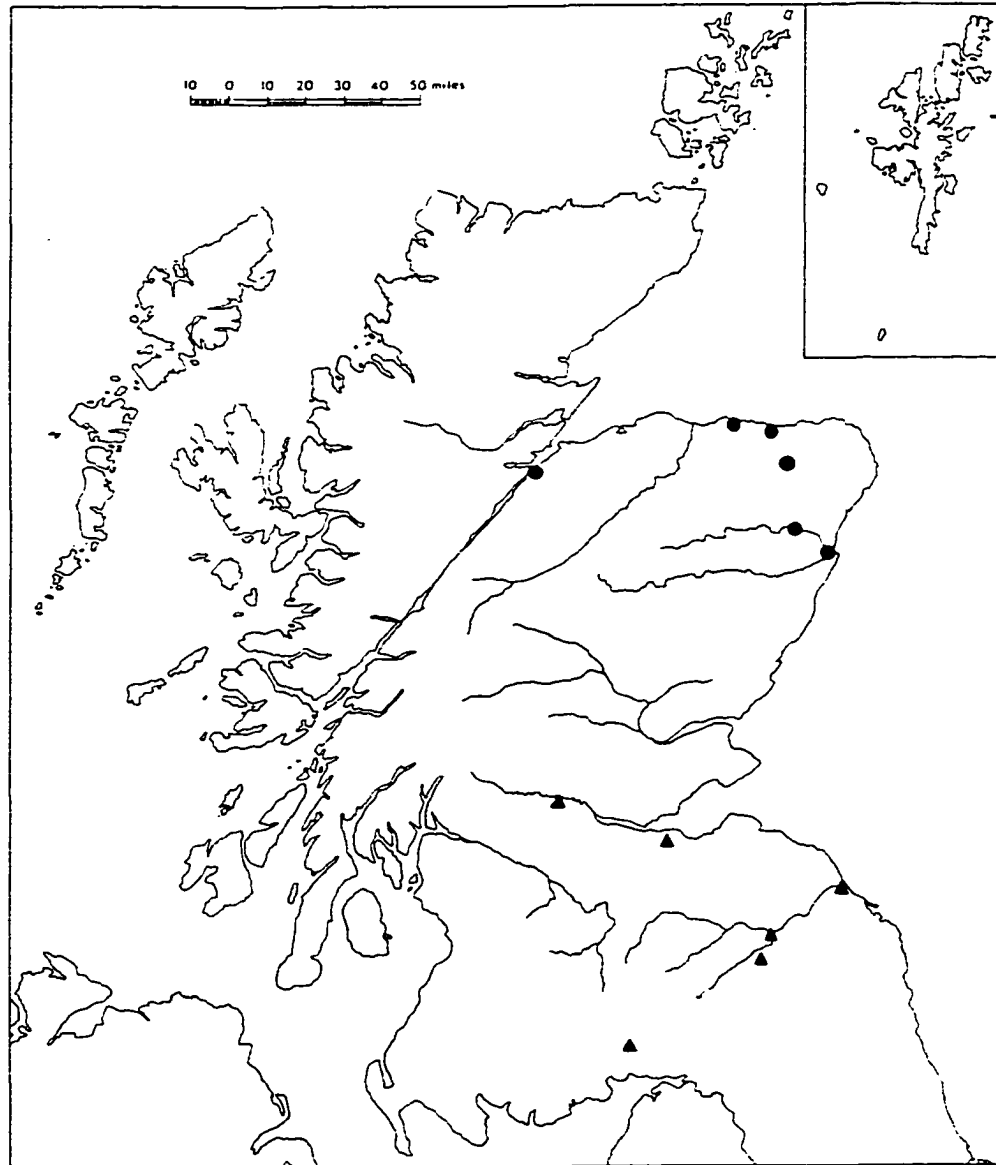


Castle and Strongpoints
● Royal
○ Others

⁵⁰⁷ McNeill, p. 163.

English Power in Scotland c.1336⁵⁰⁸

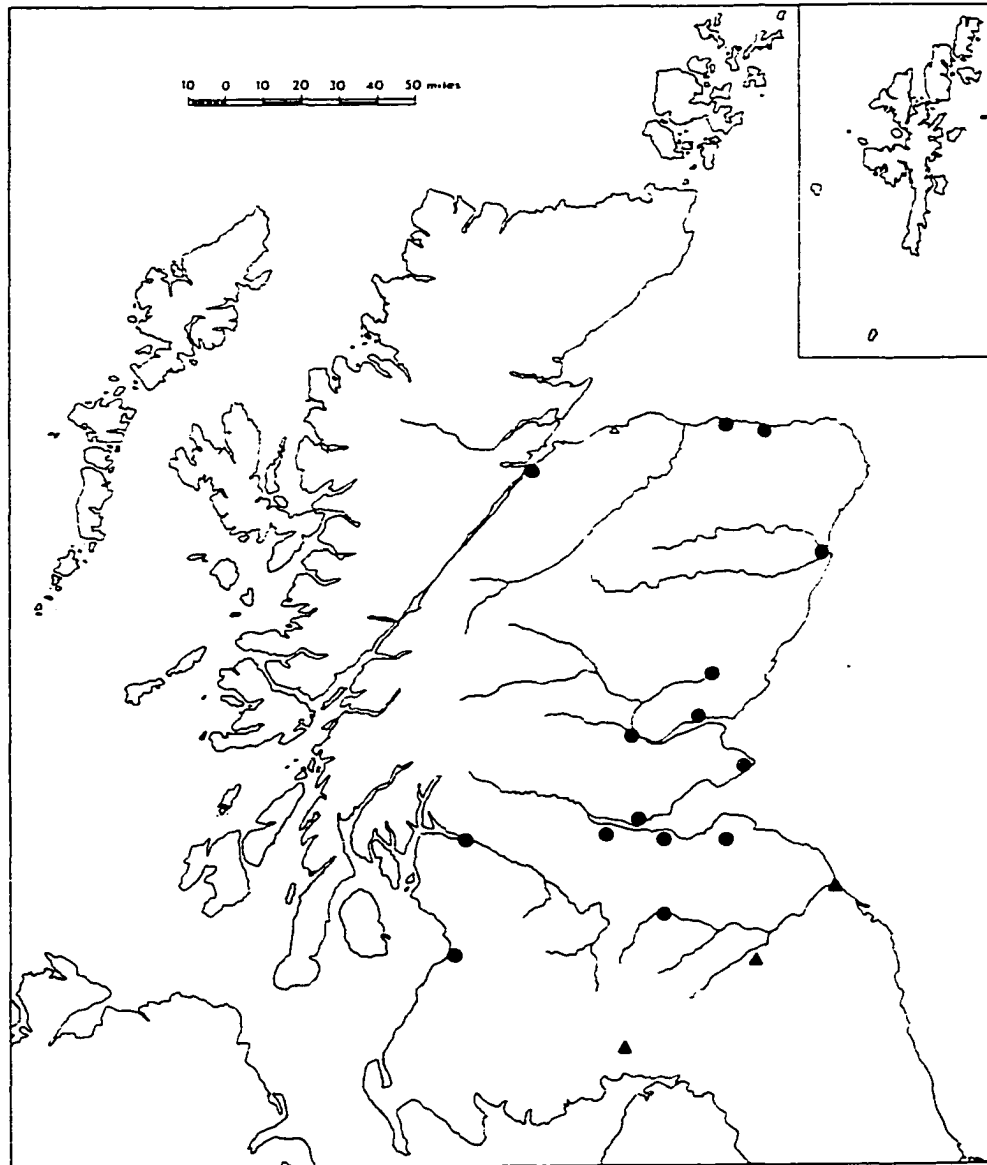
⁵⁰⁸ McNeill, p. 170.

English Power in Scotland c.1340⁵⁰⁹

▲ Castles held for the English

● Burghs rendering account at the Scottish Exchequer, April 1340

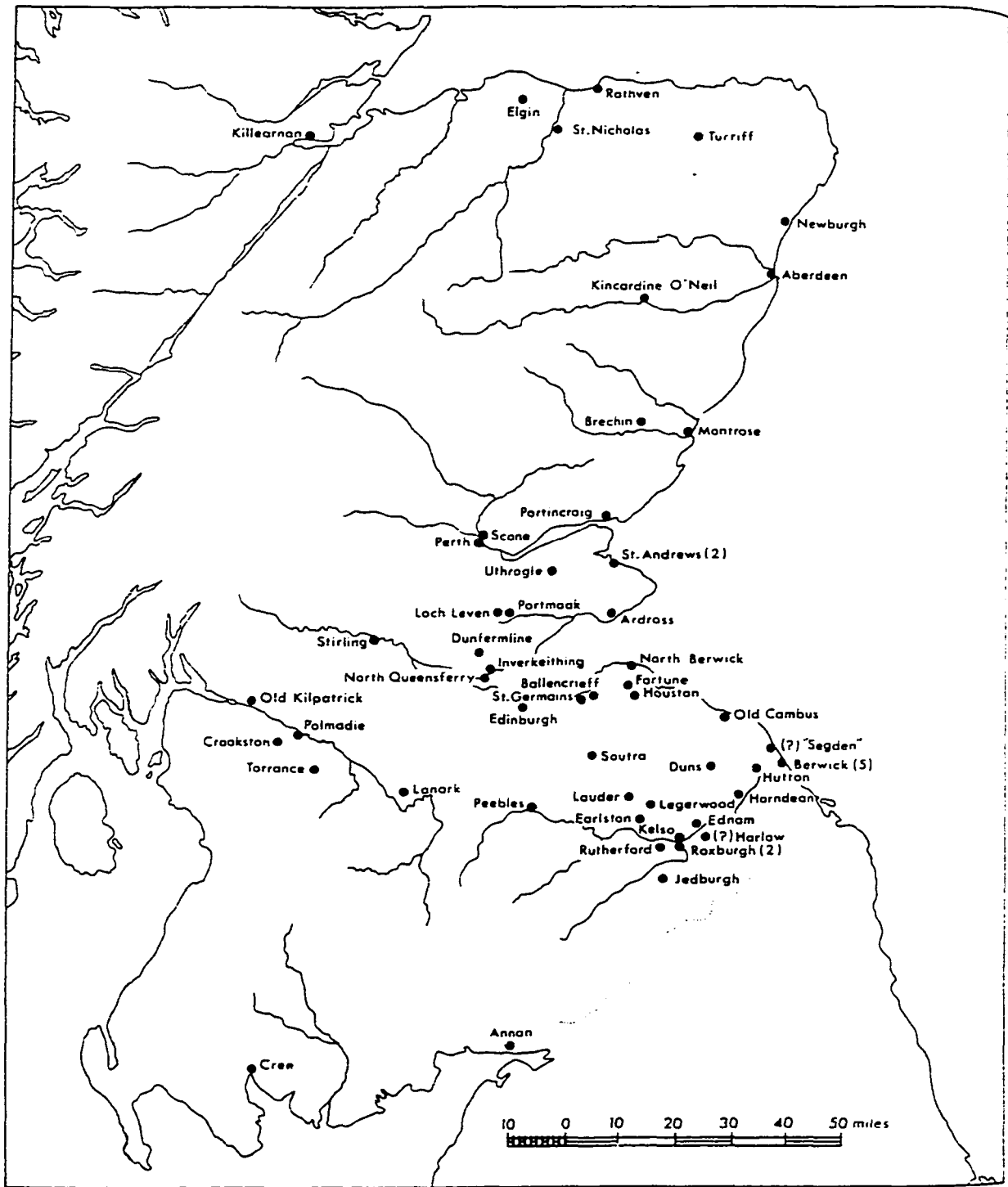
⁵⁰⁹ McNeill, p. 171.

English Power in Scotland c.1343⁵¹⁰

- ▲ Castles held for the English
- Burghs rendering account at the Scottish Exchequer, July 1343

⁵¹⁰ McNeill, p. 171.

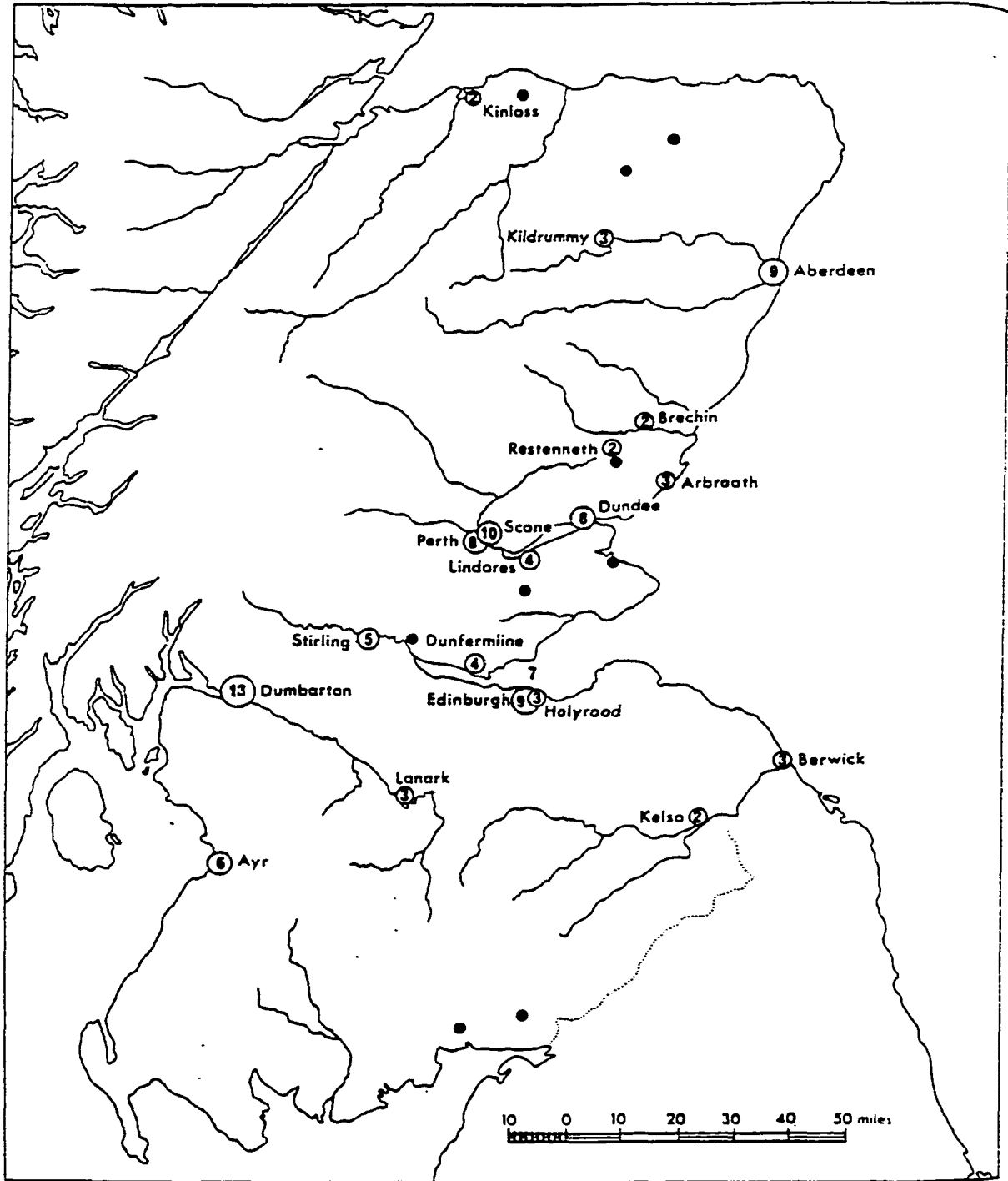
Hospitals in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries⁵¹¹



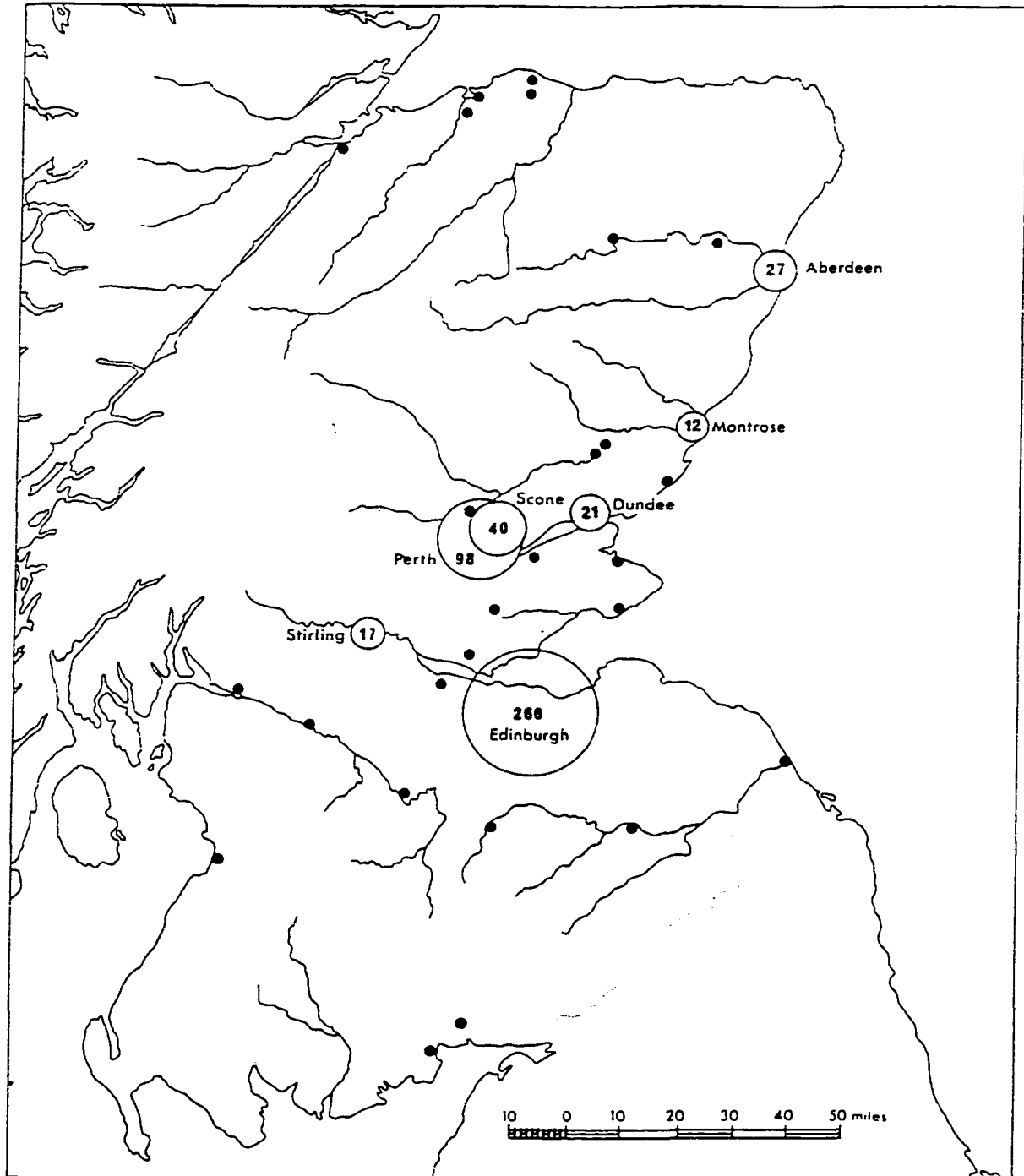
- Hospital
- ? Site of hospital uncertain

Note: Where there are more than one hospital, the number is indicated in brackets after the name.

⁵¹¹ McNeill, p. 160.

Place-Dates in Royal Charters (1329-46)⁵¹²

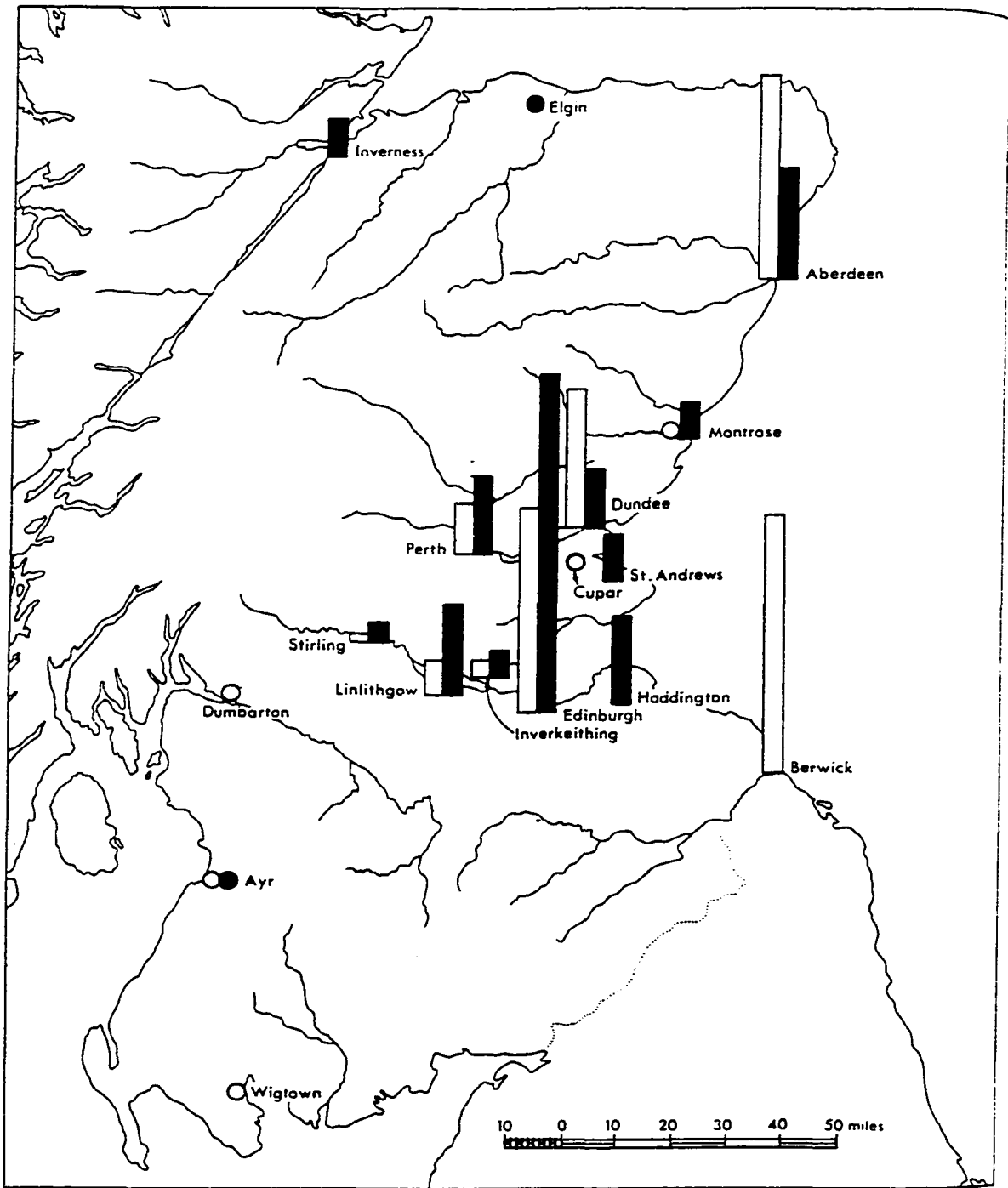
⁵¹² McNeill, p. 172.

Place-Dates in Royal Charters (1357-71)⁵¹³

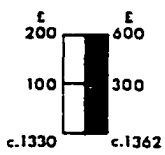
Places where charters were issued
 ● Under 7 charters
 ○ Number of charters where more than 7

⁵¹³ McNeill, p. 173.

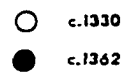
Customs (1327-31), (1362-66)⁵¹⁴



Customs Receipts



Burghs making small or irregular payments



⁵¹⁴ McNeill, p. 174.

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