

## Edward III & Scotland

CE topic War & Rebellion: English monarch v foreign country

(Scottish War of Independence)

After the death of Edward II, his son Edward who was only 14 years old became King. As he was so young, his mother Isabella and Lord Mortimer acted as Regents. Their regency was totally ineffective and both were more interested in money and land than in ruling the country. The Scots were making constant and often devastating raids on the northern counties of England. Rather than fight the Scots, Isabella and Mortimer signed the **Treaty of Northampton** in 1328, in which they gave up all claim to Scotland in return for the Scots agreeing not to invade England. In 1330, Edward now an 18 year old, decided to take charge of the country. Mortimer was arrested and hanged as a traitor and Isabella was confined to her private estate for the rest of her life.

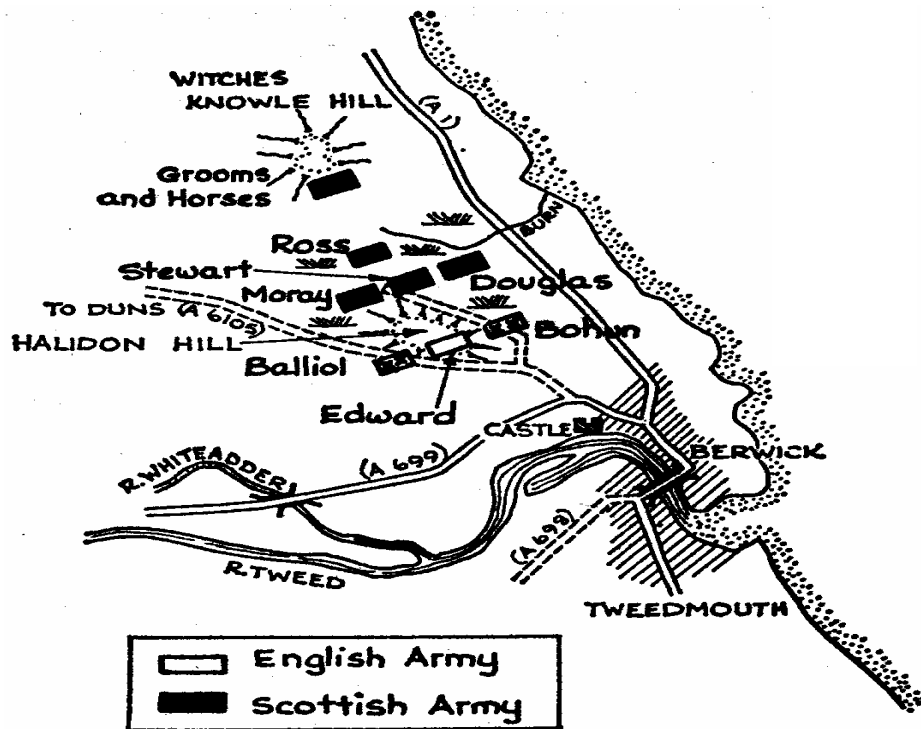
### How and Why Did Edward become involved in Scotland?

- The humiliating defeat at Bannockburn in 1314, still left a bitter taste in the mouths of many English. Like his grandfather, Edward I, Edward III wanted to control Scotland and was prepared to wait for the right excuse to justify his intervention.
- In 1329, King Robert Bruce died leaving a six year old son, David, as his heir. This started a struggle between the Scottish barons for the control of the country and also for the recovery of lands taken off them by Robert Bruce.
- In 1332, Edward Balliol, seized the throne of Scotland after winning the Battle of Dupplin Moor.
- To help strengthen his position, he agreed to do homage to Edward III in return for Edward's support. Berwick was also returned to England.
- However, Balliol was quickly dethroned by Murray and Archibald, supporters of the young David Bruce. Balliol fled to England. Bruce's supporters then invaded the North of England. At last, Edward III last had the excuse he had been waiting for and he could no longer be accused of breaking the Treaty of Northampton.
- Edward decided to restore Balliol as King.
- In 1333 an English army marched North, captured Berwick and then inflicted a severe defeat on the Scots at the Battle of Halidon Hill.
- David Bruce was sent to France for safety, and Balliol was once again placed on the throne.
- In 1334, Balliol gave south-eastern Scotland to Edward in return for his support. This angered many Scots.
- The start of the 100 Years War meant that Edward could not concentrate on Scotland. In 1339, Balliol was once again removed from the throne, and David Bruce returned to be crowned King.
- In 1346, David Bruce agreed an alliance with Philip IV of France. The English Navy again intercepted French supplies destined for Scotland.
- In 1346, David Bruce invaded England, but was defeated and captured at the Battle of Neville's Cross. He was kept a prisoner in England until 1357, when a large ransom was paid.
- With Edward's attentions elsewhere and Bruce in captivity, the Scottish nobles fought with each other. However, Edward's preoccupation with France allowed Scotland to remain independent.

## Battle of Halidon Hill

- Edward placed his army on top of Halidon Hill, an ideal defensive position, from where he could see from which direction the Scots were coming. Edward arranged his army into three divisions with archers on each wing, the left was commanded by Balliol, the centre by the King and the right by Sir Edward Bohun.
- On the 19th July the Scots approached from the west. Their army was much larger (14,200 made up of 13,000 spearmen and 1,200 knights) than Edward's which had suffered desertions. (10,000)
- The Scots were also arranged in three divisions under Moray, Robert Stewart and Archibald Douglas. Two hundred hand picked men stayed in reserve under the command of the Earl of Ross.
- The first wave of Scottish soldiers advanced towards the English. As they approached the boggy ground at the bottom of Halidon Hill, the English archers opened with devastating fire. The boggy ground caused many to stumble. Balliol's dismounted knights easily dealt with any Scots who reached them.
- The second and third waves of Scots suffered a similar fate.
- Only Ross stood his ground and fought a rearguard action that gave time for David Bruce to escape from the battlefield.
- The English knights remounted their horses and chased the Scots 'swooping like falcons'. The chase went on for 'five blood strewn miles' as the Scots were massacred by sword, mace and lance.
- 70 Scottish Lords including Douglas, 500 knights and several thousand foot soldiers were killed on the Scottish side. English losses were minimal. (14)
- Bannockburn had been avenged but Scotland was still unconquered.
- At only 20 years old, Edward III was a master tactician using bows and lance together in near perfection. He was also displaying that ruthless streak needed by successful commanders. The Scots simply didn't have the leadership or resources to deal with such a formidable commander as Edward III





A Scottish champion knight named Turnbull, according to the chronicler Baker, a giant of a man, and identified in Scottish lore as the first to bear the surname, having saved King Robert Bruce from a charging bull. At Halidon Hill, Turnbull, was accompanied by a large black mastiff, and challenged by a English knight called Robert Benhale. But unfortunately for Douglas the result of his champion was to prove only too accurate a prediction of the outcome of the day (Bannockburn and de Bohun). The dog was the first to be dispatched by the English knight, cut clean in two by his two-handed sword, and was followed shortly thereafter, after a fierce struggle, by the death of Turnbull too. Accounts vary as to whether he was hacked to death, or run through by Benhale's lance. Either way, the outcome was the same: valuable time and daylight was lost along with the Scottish champion.