

Patrick De Dunbar IV: The 8th Earl of March

By Owen Sullivan

As Earl of Dunbar (with alternate title Earl of March), Patrick is the head of his own castle in Dunbar, and he is an ally of the English, while his wife, Marjory Comyn, supported the Scots and provided them with shelter in their castle before the Battle of Dunbar. Over 10,000 Scots died in the battle, with the survivors scattering into the Ettrick Forest. Led by Comyn, the battle ended with John Comyn's arrest and the seizure of Dunbar castle.

Patrick's land lies in a very strategic place, East Lothian, and because of that, and a distant relative on his mom's side, he believes that he is a well-deserving, qualifying candidate to succeed King Alexander III.

Patrick, while an ally, would try and work his way so he can retain autonomy of his castle while remaining in England's favor. He would try to ultimately keep England happy so he can keep his land and autonomy over his castle.

Patrick has a bit of an argument with John Balliol and his family, because Patrick lost the contest for the throne of Scotland to him. So while Patrick can move past a feud the others and work together, it will be more difficult to compromise with Balliol.

A potential solution for Patrick to work with the other Scottish clans is to grant him full autonomy of his land with little oversight by the king, as well as increased protection from the inevitable wrath of King Edward I if Patrick chooses to align Dunbar with the revolution. However, Patrick must also find a way to get his autonomy back from England, so exploring an option of neutrality is a strong choice.

Another potential solution that Patrick could agree to is a compromise with England, and to support English troops by providing them shelter and supplies from his castle. This deal is somewhat forced as England already occupies his castle. If England is willing to compromise and allow Patrick, if he aligns with King Edward I, leadership of Scotland under England, the Earl of March would agree to that.

In conclusion, Patrick must explore an option that ends in him controlling his castle and land, even if it means turning his back on the other Scottish clans if no compromise can be reached.