Juliano Vaccarino

6th Earl of Surrey, John de Warenne

First Scottish War of Independence

The Scots clamour for a new monarch ever since the throne has remained vacant. These past several years, the lack of leadership has created a power vacuum. The clans are weak, there are several pretenders to the throne, and they all vie for power. If a suitable heir to the Scottish throne is not chosen swiftly, civil war will ensue. I believe my son-in-law John Balliol, would be the best candidate.[[1]](#footnote-1) His claim to the throne is by far the most legitimate, as he is one generation closer to King David I than his rival Robert de Brus.[[2]](#footnote-2) Should the English crown back Balliol, the weaker Scottish clans will be unable to oppose him.

Establishing Balliol as a puppet King will allow England to maintain sufficient influence over Scottish politics. The Scots will also be content to have diplomatically installed a new monarch, who is also a Scotsman. If we do not act quickly however, any one of these pretenders could usurp the throne and we would have no say in Scottish matters. Without someone to represent our interests in the Scottish court, we will also be left uninformed on the clans’ intentions. Under the leadership of my son-in-law, both England and Scotland would prosper. We must provide the necessary political and, should the need arise, military support for Balliol.

I am Earl John de Warenne, son of William, and I am no stranger to war. I am a veteran of both the Second Baron’s war (1264-67), and the conquest of Wales (1277-83). [[3]](#footnote-3) To strengthen our Kingdom, certain wars had to be fought, but they have bled our coffers dry. This has recently driven the King to expel the Jews from our Kingdom and repossess their estates, in order to improve our finances. Our occupation of Ireland is troublesome, this will require castles to be built and garrisons to be bolstered. This will be a costly endeavour. If war erupts in Scotland, we will be fighting on two fronts. I have been at war long enough to know that no kingdom’s finances can handle two wars simultaneously. John Balliol is our best option to avoid another war, and to preserve our wealth.

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