

# Skit Notes: Beyond Scotland's Golden Age

Rebecca Locklear

**Summary:** When the King of Scotland died in 1286, there was no direct heir to the throne of Scotland. How did the involvement of King Edward I of England lead not only to the downfall of the town of Berwick (located in Scotland) but to 300 years of war?

**Grades:** 6-12

Cast of Characters	# of Lines
Narrator	37
Townsfolk, about 20 actors	ad lib
Messenger	3
News Anchor	30
Serg, a reporter	16
Sir Maurice, pro-England	14
Mrs. Ridpath, pro-Scotland	7
William Wallace, Scottish activist	8
Clerk	3
Actors representing King Balliol, Pope, Frenchman	0
Herleva, a reporter	14
Person 1	2
Persons 2-7, who die	ad lib
Person 8	5
Soldier	1

**Props:** Wool cloth, tools, toys for children, animals (e.g., rabbit), swords, rope for prisoners, wooden crosses to wear, crowns for king/queen, microphone, scroll, alliance paper....

**Setting:** 1286-1296; in the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, which at that time was a part of Scotland. True information.

**Performance Time:** 15 minutes

**Background Information:** This skit is written with a modern-day “newsroom” twist as a way to introduce this event. The town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, which lies between the river Tweed and the North Sea in northeast England, is shortened to Berwick (BEAR-ick).

**Berwick** was a part of Scotland during the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Being a fortified “border” frontier town, it alternated between being held by Scotland and England fourteen times before the town permanently became a part of England in 1482. Even though today this town is English, the Scottish influence is still there. For example, the football (soccer) team plays in the Scottish league and the mayor wears the purple ceremonial robes of Scotland. “Berwick sees itself...as a

**CONTINUED**

**with detailed BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

“What I appreciated about ‘Beyond Scotland’s Golden Age’ is the thorough background information provided. Fascinating stuff is right there for you! Students loved this.” – Ann M., educator

# Beyond Scotland's Golden Age

## Start of Scene 2

### Scene 2 T.V. studio and Berwick Castle, 1292

ANCHOR: *(in studio with guests)* Today we find out who wins! Yes, as soon as we get word that the result is imminent, we will go over live to the great hall of Berwick Castle. In the meantime *(taking out microphone)*, I'm joined by three experts representing all sides of the debate.

But first, Serg, will you give us the background to the candidates in tonight's contest?

SERG: *(in field with chart)* Yes. The contest, which is to be decided by King Edward "Longshanks" today, started more than six years ago with the accidental death of the popular Scottish king, Alexander III, at the age of 44.

King Edward claims the right to adjudicate and has asked for submissions from the twelve candidates. Most of these claimants descend from the famous King William the Lion. There are a couple of complete outsiders and the usual crop of joke candidates.

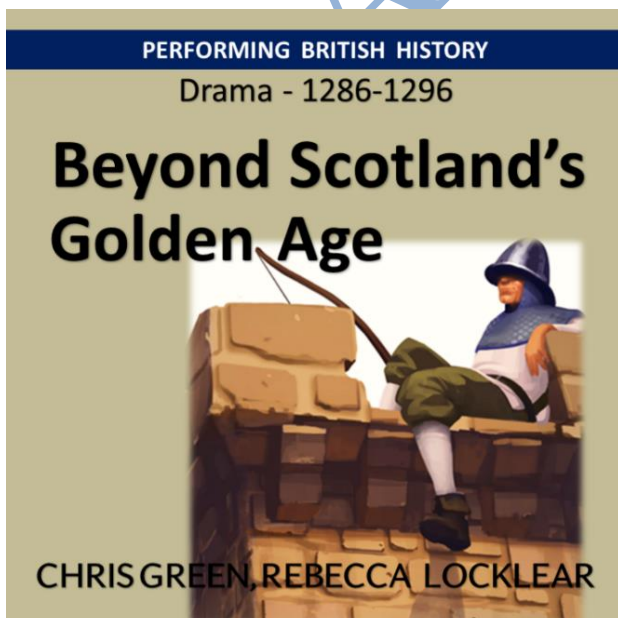
ANCHOR: Who do you put your money on?

SERG: I don't think there's any doubt the main contest is between Robert the Bruce, son of King William's second daughter, and John Balliol, grandson of the king's eldest daughter. The Scots favor Bruce, so it will probably go the other way.

ANCHOR: Yeeesss. *(turning toward his guests)* Well, Sir Maurice, what do you think?

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### CONTINUED WITH THE ENTRANCE OF WILLIAM WALLACE



I'd rather have my right hand cut off  
and buried in Berwick than let the  
English rule Scotland!

– William Wallace

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