

# Skit Notes: The Battle of Halidon Hill

Rebecca Locklear

**Summary:** How did a town in Scotland defend itself in a siege but end up losing a battle?

\*The background information is serious but the skit has silly elements like toy bows and arrows.

Cast of Characters	# of Lines
Narrator	25
King Edward III	16
Scot	10
Messenger	3
Scottish Knight Turnbull	2
English Knight Benhale	2
Scottish Army	3 ad lib
English Army	1 ad lib

**Setting:** 1333 on the slopes of Halidon Hill, two miles northwest of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Scotland. The hill is 600 feet above sea level.

**Props:** Swords, stuffed dog, toy bows and arrows.

**Performance Time:** 8 minutes

## Background Information

**A fragile relationship:** In 1328, King Edward III of England signed the *Treaty of Northampton* which recognized Scotland as an independent country. As a part of the treaty, the young son of King Robert I of Scotland was married to the sister of King Edward III of England. The following year, King Robert I died leaving his five-year-old son as his heir.

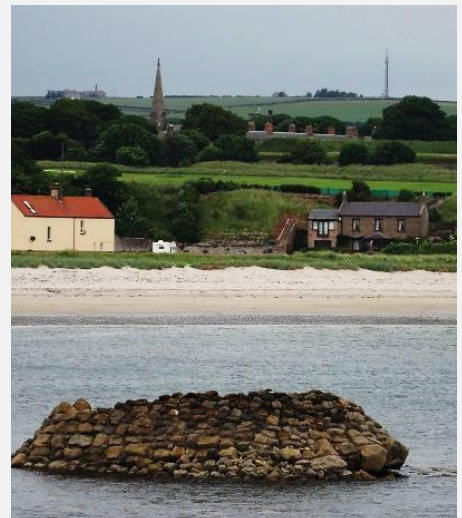
**Edward Balliol** was the son of the exiled former King John Balliol of Scotland and pressed his claim to the Scottish throne. He did defeat a force under the Earl of Mar – regent to the boy-king and Balliol’s supporters crowned him king. That lasted only a few months. Balliol then promised to give land to King Edward III of England if he would get involved with his cause. The King of England then broke the 1328 agreement and supported Balliol—the prized concession promised by Balliol being the town of Berwick.

**Invasion:** A 20-year-old King Edward III invaded Scotland in 1333 by first laying siege to the town of Berwick. A Scottish ...

**CONTINUES FOR 3 MORE PAGES OF  
BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

## WHERE IS THIS SKIT USED?

- History classes (English and Scottish history in the 13<sup>th</sup> century) as reader’s theatre
- Middle Ages fairs and events
- Homeschool events
- Music-drama history productions



# The Battle of Halidon Hill

Chris Green

Adapted by Rebecca Locklear

## Scene 1

**NARRATOR:** Finally we come to the Battle of Halidon Hill. The year is 1333 and the town of Berwick was a part of Scotland. Halidon Hill is two miles outside of Berwick.

**EDWARD III:** I, Edward III, had surrounded the town and invested it with ruthlessness and ferocity. So intense was the siege and the sufferings of the defenders, that they begged me for peace.

**SCOT:** We nevvah. We dinnah. We tried to negotiate a reasonable settlement.

**EDWARD III:** Look, I had a lot more soldiers than you.

**SCOT:** Aye, but they were useless against our strong defense.

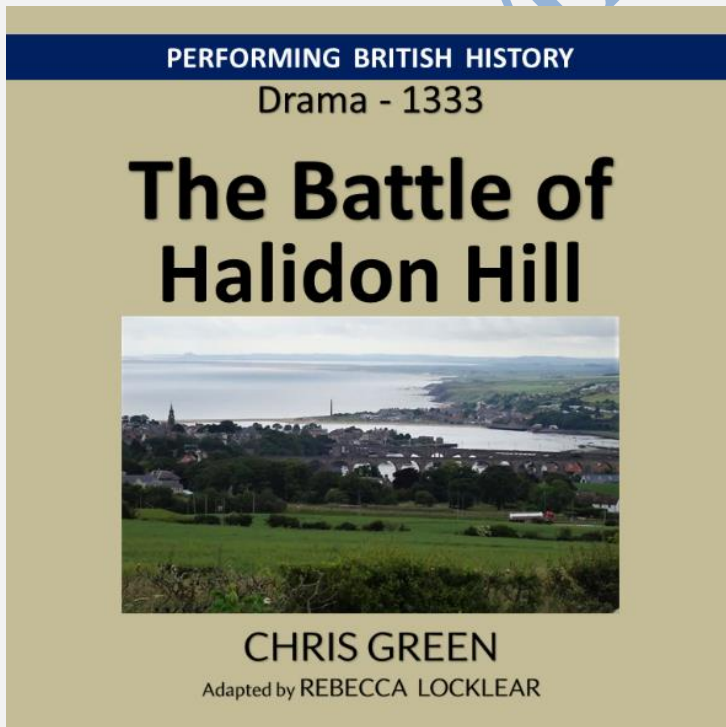
**EDWARD III:** Maybe, but you agreed that if a relieving force didn't reach you by July 11, then you'd surrender. And they didn't and you didn't!

**NARRATOR:** *(to EDWARD III)* Now that's a bit of a lie, isn't it? Don't you remember this message?

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**CONTINUED!**

**Additional Research:** Students could study the use of siege equipment, the first success of the English longbow, and even the tactics used in the battle of Bannockburn (1314) vs. Halidon Hill (1333).



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