

Political Society in South-East Scotland, 1094-1434

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by

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jurisdiction; the knights endured (or enjoyed) an additional layer of authority over their land. That this was no technical distinction is born out by the political choices and situations encountered by these men. Barons possessed a considerable freedom of action; knightly families had that only when their lord was largely absentee.

Nevertheless, in Eastern Lothian both groups made up the region's active political class, which was drawn towards both centre (service to the king) and locality during the thirteenth century. While local conditions of lordship are marked mainly by continuity, relations with the centre changed dramatically when Edward I removed Scottish kingship in 1296 and subsequently occupied large parts of the country. Consequently, Edward's first major act as lord of Scotland provides the conclusion for this chapter. The fealties sworn to him in the summer of 1296 – recorded in what is known collectively as the 'Ragman Roll' – give a unique picture of landed society in Eastern Lothian before the upheavals (below the level of King John), that were subsequently to affect it. The Ragman Roll provides a list of landholders in Scotland as Edward found it in 1296, and so reflects thirteenth-century landed society in Eastern Lothian (and elsewhere) as seen through English eyes, but not formed by them. Analysis of those barons and knights found within it belongs most suitably as a denouement of the thirteenth century.

The Era of Earl Patrick II (1232–48)

The most prominent family in Eastern Lothian, as in the twelfth century, remained the earls of Dunbar, and while the main account of political society in thirteenth century Scotland is concerned with the predominance of the Comyn family,⁵ the Dunbars seem to have equalled them in status and influence at court. It was the army of Alexander II's cousin Patrick II earl of Dunbar, who was described by the contemporary Melrose chronicle as a 'strenuous knight', that marched to the boundary

⁵ Young (1997a), *passim*.

of Galloway and forced the submission of Gilrod, the principal supporter of the rebel Thomas de Galloway in 1235.⁶ Earl Patrick can also be found (after Alexander II), heading the Scottish political community that sent letters to the Pope in 1237.⁷ His son Patrick III was the main force behind the government established in 1255 at the behest of Henry III, and a frequent royal councillor in the 1260s and 1270s whose attendance at court was only exceeded by Alexander Comyn earl of Buchan.⁸ It is clear the Dunbars remained mainstays of the Scottish political scene in the reigns of Alexander II and III. When Patrick II was listed first amongst Alexander II's liege men in 1244 ahead of the earls of Fife and Strathearn (men who were primarily responsible for enthroning the king and traditionally the pre-eminent earls in Scotland), it is clear that Mathew Paris' recognition of Earl Patrick II, on his death in 1248, as the man who 'had been the most powerful among the magnates of Scotland', was not an exaggeration.⁹

Unfortunately, while the earl's landed estates can be determined through the family's charters as a whole, there is relatively little evidence of who formed part of Patrick II's affinity and provided the nucleus of his evident power and authority. There are a mere eight charters certainly attributable to the earl, and only six have witness lists.¹⁰ Furthermore, two of the charters with witnesses (although composed in the earl's court at Edrom) were the products of settlements mediated in the presence of the king and 'his summoned barons', and do not simply reflect those close to the earl.¹¹ From such sparse material only brief conclusions can be attempted, but it is

⁶ Anderson, *Early Sources*, ii, 486, 496–8.

⁷ *CDS*, i, nos. 1358, 1359.

⁸ *CDS*, i, no. 2013; Young (1997a), 70; Anderson, *Early Sources*, ii, 580–3.

⁹ *CDS*, i, nos. 1654–5; Duncan (1975), 555; Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H. Luard (7 vols., Rolls Series, 1872–83), v, 41.

¹⁰ One of the eight is a note of a grant of Dundaff and Strahcarron outside Eastern Lothian to David de Graham. There are also four charters where identity of the earl in question cannot be certainly confirmed. One of these (*Coldstream Charters*, no. 19) is most likely to belong to Patrick II, judging by its witnesses, and so has been included in the analysis here in addition to the certain six. This attribution is also suggested by Hamilton, who has calendared the Dunbar charters of the thirteenth century: Hamilton (2003), 285–414.

¹¹ *Melrose Liber*, nos. 235–6.

clear that the strong presence of the Dunbar kin as witnesses to the earl's charters continued from the time of Patrick I. Lord Robert, Patrick II's steward in 1247, and William lord of Fogo were the earl's brothers and his most frequent attestors, witnessing five and four charters respectively.¹² Both men were frequently styled 'son of the earl' (Patrick I), presumably to stress their direct connection to their father, while the future Patrick III attested three of his father's charters.¹³ Beyond this immediate family, only Peter, the earl's chaplain,¹⁴ and David de Graham, a scion of the family based at Dalkeith, occur more than twice. Graham first appears in the earl's company c.1233 and continues to appear into the 1240s;¹⁵ in his case it is clear that his attestations signify a close relationship with the earl. His father had seemingly married a widow of one of the earl's prominent tenants, and David's step-brother endowed him with land in Mellerstain and rights in Fans.¹⁶ Although recently emphasis has rightly been put on Graham's extraordinary range of landed interests – amounting to 19 grants of land across Scotland from various donors including not only the earl of Dunbar but also the earls of Fife, Lennox, Carrick, Roger de Quincy earl of Winchester, and the Steward – it is clear that he was regularly in the Dunbars' company.¹⁷ He can be found with Patrick II and his brothers attesting a charter of the earl's tenant Robert de Muschamp dating from 1233×1247, and, more significantly, he helped found a house of Friars in Dunbar with Christina de Bruce, countess of Dunbar and step-mother of Patrick II, which demonstrates his closeness to the earl's family.¹⁸

¹² *RMS*, i, no. 251; *Melrose Liber*, nos. 230, 235–6; *Coldstream Charters*, no. 57.

¹³ *Coldstream Charters*, nos. 19, 57; *Melrose Liber*, no. 230.

¹⁴ Raine, *North Durham*, no. 135; *Coldstream Charters*, no. 19; *Melrose Liber*, no. 230.

¹⁵ Raine, *North Durham*, no. 135, datable c.1233 by Ranulf de Bunkle and Roger de Merlay who witnessed charters of Patrick I in 1232. This confirmation of Edrom was also likely to have been sought by Durham soon after Patrick II became earl. *Coldstream Charters*, no. 19; *RMS*, i, no. 251; *CDS*, i, no. 2672.

¹⁶ *Kelso Liber*, nos. 133, 134, 135.

¹⁷ Neville (2005), 56; Brown M. (2004a), 102; Fraser, *Lennox*, ii, no. 12; *Scots Peerage*, vi, 199–202.

¹⁸ *Yester Writs*, no. 14; *Melrose Liber*, no. 232.

More detailed information on those close to Earl Patrick II is provided by the circumstances of 1244, when the Bisset family, who had been exiled from Scotland at the separate insistence of Earl Patrick and the Comyn family in 1242, arrived at the court of Henry III and helped persuade him that Alexander II was trying to negotiate an alliance with Louis IX of France.¹⁹ Potential hostilities were averted when both kings met in August 1244, whereupon 24 barons and four bishops subsequently swore with Alexander to be at peace with England; but the influence of the Bissets was demonstrated by the need for Earl Patrick and Walter Comyn earl of Menteith to give special oaths of good behaviour to Henry III, backed up by oaths on their behalf by 39 and 40 compurgators or jurors respectively.²⁰ It is tempting to see these jurors as the beginnings of the pro- and anti-Comyn parties that emerged during the minority of Alexander III,²¹ but circumstances were very different in 1244 with an experienced adult monarch on the throne. Of the 24 laymen who were important enough to swear with their king to be at peace in November 1244, half, including the earls of Fife, Mar and Atholl, Alan Durward, and eight other barons, did not compeer with either Dunbar or Menteith to separately promise good behaviour to Henry.²² A large part of Scottish political society was not associated with either Dunbar or Comyn, and so the jurors who swore with the two earls in 1244 are more likely to reflect the tenants, kin and neighbours upon whom the earls' authority was based. Therefore, analysis of the men supporting Patrick II will give an insight into the workings of his lordship in southern Scotland.

It is immediately clear that the core of Patrick's 39 supporters consisted of men from the earldom: while only two of Comyn's jurors are known to have had a tenurial link with him, at least 12, and possibly 14, Dunbar men had tenurial connections with Patrick's earldom.²³ Admittedly some of those connections were at best indirect –

¹⁹ For the circumstances of 1244: Duncan (1975), 535–7; Brown (2004a), 39–42; Watt (1971), 2–5.

²⁰ *CDS*, i, nos. 2671–2.

²¹ Young (1997a), 61; Watt (1971), 4.

²² *CDS*, i, no. 1654.

²³ Young (1997a), 46–7 for a comparative study of the Comyn jurors; and for an alternative view of the

such as Malise earl of Strathearn's interest in Hassington through his wife, one of three heiress of Robert Muschamp III lord of Wooler in Northumberland – but most were fairly substantial.²⁴ Laurence Fraser, lord of Drumelzier in Peeblesshire, held Hailes in the earldom; and while Ness Fraser, who swore alongside him, was also a suitor at the sheriff court of Peebles, his personal name was obviously drawn from previous holders of Waughton who were overlords of Hailes, and he may have maintained an interest in East Lothian.²⁵ The actual estate of Waughton was held by the elderly Bernard Fraser in 1244, but it was soon to become the property of Roger de Mowbray in right of Bernard's daughter and heiress Christian;²⁶ Roger, a distant kinsman to Earl Patrick as one heir of the Allerdale branch of the house of Cospatrick, was lord of Dalmeny and Inverkeithing in Mid-Lothian, and he and his kinsman Robert swore for the earl.²⁷ Waldeve de Strathechin also seems to have gained his interest in Hailes by this time (most probably through marriage to Maria de Hailes).²⁸

Adam de Gordon, David de Graham, Philip de Pitcox and Richard le Mahle of Bassendean were all from families well established in the earldom,²⁹ while John de Keith may have held the lands in Oldhamstocks in the earldom which were his grandson's property in 1294.³⁰ David de Burradon was a 'knight and faithful man' of Earl Patrick in 1231, and it was probably he who gained the lands of Blackadder in the earldom on which his descendants are found.³¹ Little is known about David

Dunbar jurors, see Hamilton (2003), 210–1.

²⁴ *Northumberland Families*, i, 39; *Melrose Liber*, no. 233.

²⁵ Laurence's kinsman Bernard Fraser was brother-in-law to descendants of Ness of Waughton who held Waughton c.1200. Bernard succeeded to Waughton, which means that Ness Fraser is unlikely to equate to Ness son of Ness (of Waughton) who held part of the Waughton estate around the same time, and he is more likely to be a son or brother of Laurence. *Newbattle Registrum*, nos. 78, 95, 109, 111; Hamilton (2003), 181–2, 447; *Scots Peerage*, vii, 420–1.

²⁶ Bain (1887–8), 27–8, which disproves the claim that Bernard was without heirs: *Scots Peerage*, vii, 419. Bernard was alive in 1244: *CDS*, i, no. 1655.

²⁷ *Northumberland County Hist.*, vii, 14–106; Barrow (1980), 36, 185–6.

²⁸ *Newbattle Registrum*, no. 96; in which case he may have been step-grandfather to Laurence Fraser.

²⁹ *Midlothian Charters* (Soutra)], no. 36; *Melrose Liber*, nos. 221–2, 328; *Coldstream Charters*, nos. 43, 45–6.

³⁰ NLS, Adv. MS. 34.6.12, p. 186.

³¹ The names Burradon, Burghdon or Burndon seem interchangeable, and come from either Burradon

Olifard, but he was most probably the younger brother of Walter Olifard, justiciar of Lothian; the Oliphards held lands across southern Scotland, but more specifically were lords of Cranshaws and Hedderwick in the earldom.³² The remaining tenants were also the earl's kin: William, son of earl Patrick I, was lord of Fogo; and John son of Waldeve (great grandson of Cospatric II and also known as John de Edlingham in Northumberland), was a tenant of the earl at Beanley in Northumberland, and at Belton and Penshiel in the earldom.³³ Finally, Earl Patrick's father, and his step-mother Christina de Bruce, had shared a dower interest in Hartness and Hartlepool market with Christina's son by her first marriage, Robert de Bruce³⁴ – who headed his step-brother's jurors after the earl of Strathearn.

However, equally notable alongside this tenurial element, given their local significance, is the number of members of the baronial and knightly class from Eastern Lothian and elsewhere in southern Scotland who swore on behalf of Earl Patrick. Prominent amongst these were the barons William Gifford of Yester, William de Mordington (respectively, probably, sheriffs of Edinburgh and Berwick),³⁵ John de Keith, and William de Ormiston. William Vipont of Langton, Horndean and Bolton swore too, but his namesake occurs in the list of Comyn supporters; thus in this case it seems that father and son can be found in different camps, and the younger Vipont is the more likely Dunbar associate.³⁶ David Marshall, baron of Hilton in Berwickshire and lord of its pertinent which bordered the earldom at Otterburn in the

near Gosforth in Earsdon parish or Burradon in Coquetdale, both in Northumberland; not to be confused with Burdon in County Durham: *Northumberland Families*, i, 22; ii, 93–103, 141–53; *Northumberland County Hist.*, ix, 43–9. The Coquetdale town is the more likely origin: *CDS*, i, no. 1667. For David de Burradon and his lands, Raine, *North Durham*, no. 129; *CDS*, ii, p. 203; iii, p. 372.

³² *Scots Peerage*, vii, 526–31.

³³ *Melrose Liber*, nos. 212, 213; 'Documents relating to the Isle of May Priory', ed. Duncan, no. 54; *CDS*, i, no. 1712; *Northumberland County Hist.*, vii, 14–106. The juror William son of the earl must be a copying error for the lord of Fogo, refer to an otherwise unknown son of Patrick II, or be an error for Robert son of the earl, Patrick's brother: Hamilton (2003), 210.

³⁴ *CDS*, i, no. 700.

³⁵ *Yester Writs*, no. 13; *Sheriffs of Scotland*, 7, 15.

³⁶ *Coldstream Charters*, no. 38 (dating 1232×1248, but possibly to the 1240s by the appearance of Alan de Harscarce), where Vipont junior is in the exclusive company of men from the earldom.

Lammermuirs, belonged to the family of Keith (perhaps John de Keith's great-uncle);³⁷ and his kinsmen Richard and Robert Marshall also swore for Earl Patrick in 1244. Robert de Congalton came from a knightly family resident in the barony of Dirleton, and Alan de Sinclair held land at Herdmanston and Carfrae in the lordship of Lauderdale for knight service.³⁸ Also swearing were Patrick de Melville, presumably from the family that were lords of Melville in Mid-Lothian; Adam de Yetholm, a Roxburghshire knight; and Simon Lockhart, lord of Symington in Clydesdale.³⁹ Nor was the earl's reach limited to Scotland, for several of his jurors had origins in Northumberland. John son of Waldeve and David de Burradon were active members of Northumbrian county society, a description that can equally be applied to Sir Walter de Burradon, juror on an inquisition into the Umfraville estates in northern Northumberland in 1246; while Thomas de Normanville and Waleran his brother came from a family who had gained Maxton in Roxburghshire in addition to their original patrimony at Stamfordham across the Border.⁴⁰

Cumulatively, these men make up an impressive stratum of landed society across southern Scotland and into Northumberland; but as a group their presence as jurors is somewhat surprising, since ten of them cannot be linked to the Dunbars by charter evidence at this time.⁴¹ It is possible that they indicate a wider range of contacts and responsibilities than have so far been evident, but their association with the earl may have been anomalous, given the exceptional circumstances of 1244: officially recognising the authority of a foreign king was not commonplace for Scottish magnates, and both earls may have sought the widest possible support.

³⁷ *Scots Peerage*, vi, 26–9; *Coldstream Charters*, no. 27; *Rot. Scot.* i, 530b. Although never styled 'of Hilton', the amount of times David and Richard occur around Berwick and Coldingham, and their status when they do, make it clear they were often in the region and probably resident: Raine, *North Durham*, nos. 118, 125, 168–9, 265, 388, 529; *Kelso Liber*, no. 273; Fraser, *Douglas*, iii, nos. 8, 285.

³⁸ *Melrose Liber*, no. 227; *Midlothian Charters* (Soutra), no. 36; *Lanercost Cartulary*, no. 163.

³⁹ Barrow (1980), 36; *Kelso Liber*, nos. 239, 333.

⁴⁰ *CDS*, i, nos. 451, 912, 1015, 1699; *Northumberland Families*, ii, 95; Barrow (1980), 103.

⁴¹ Gifford, Mordington, Ormiston, Congalton, Sinclair, Lockhart, Melville, Richard Marshall, Waleran Normanville and Keith.

Certainly the barons and knights of Eastern Lothian were not primarily dependent on the earl of Dunbar, and were not his exclusive companions. Instead, it would have been the status and ability of these men that made them valuable jurors for Earl Patrick in 1244, and it was to his credit that he was able to gain the service of men who were lords in their own right. One consequence of this was that William lord of Fogo was able to bring along his tenant and knight Adam de Yetholm to act as one of the Dunbar jurors.⁴² Generally, however, the barons and knights from outside the earldom who swore for Earl Patrick were more frequently operating on their own terms of reference as lords and members of neighbourhood networks. The earls of Dunbar and their kinsman and tenants are not found witnessing the (admittedly few) charters issued around this time by Gifford, Keith or Congalton, or even Laurence Fraser's charters relating to lands in the earldom. The latter's documents were witnessed by men resident near Hailes itself, like Alexander de Seton, Walter de Congalton and David de Lindsay of Luffness, and men from near Fraser's main estates in Peeblesshire like Philip de Romanno.⁴³ These documents were typical of the local baronage in being witnessed by men who were Laurence's neighbours, friends and equals; but they also illustrate the independence of the baronage, who were able to act at their own instigation and beyond the authority of nearby magnates. The same trends are evident in a charter made to William Gifford by one of his tenants and witnessed by his neighbours William de Vipont and Walter de Pencaitland: while the attestors to a charter of John de Keith were overwhelmingly drawn from among the neighbouring barons and knights of East Lothian and Lauderdale.⁴⁴

This is not to claim that such men were less enthusiastic Dunbar supporters because they also moved outside the Dunbar circle. But it should be stressed that there were different levels of commitment to the Dunbars within that circle, and that, most importantly, relations between lords and men were much more complex than the stark

⁴² *Kelso Liber*, no. 239. William had succeeded to the Corbet estate, which included Yetholm: *RRS*, ii, no. 75; Barrow (1973), 34.

⁴³ *Newbattle Registrum*, nos. 78, 95.

⁴⁴ *Midlothian Charters* (Soutra), no. 36; *Yester Writs*, no. 13.

list of jurors suggests. Men from within the earldom – such as Mahle, Gordon and Pitcox, who are not known to have held lands elsewhere – naturally looked towards Earl Patrick for lordship, and, as his tenants, were in regular contact with him through suit-of-court and other obligations. Thus to find Adam de Gordon in the company of barons from the sheriffdom of Edinburgh, completely outside any Dunbar context, is exceptional.⁴⁵ Conversely, men from knightly families outside the earldom tended to have other associations, and it is telling that Robert de Congalton's only known charter was issued in Carlisle, as a consequence of his lord having estates in Cumberland; while the Burradons had obligations in Northumberland.⁴⁶ Yet men such as Congalton and Walter de Ormiston, whose families went on to provide members of the earl's affinity in the later thirteenth century – or the Burradons, David de Graham, and Roger de Moubray, who can be found witnessing for the countess of Dunbar in the 1240s, or Laurence Fraser who witnessed for Earl Patrick III – were probably closer to the Dunbars than the likes of Gifford and Keith, who cannot be found in the earl's company except in 1244,⁴⁷ or the Berwickshire baron William de Mordington, who had obligations elsewhere (Mordington's most familiar lord was the prior of Coldingham, for whom he witnessed over 30 charters as a knight of the prior's court for his lands in Lamberton).⁴⁸ While these men could form part of 'two well-defined groups',⁴⁹ their status naturally involved them in their own estates and courts as well as in other forms of lordship throughout Eastern Lothian and beyond.

The complexity of relations between lords and men becomes particularly apparent when the Comyn jurors in 1244 are considered, for several of them had links with the Dunbars. Two of those occurring towards the end of Comyn's list were actually Earl Patrick's tenants, while Henry de Graham was to marry his son to the

⁴⁵ *Midlothian Charters* (Soutra), no. 36.

⁴⁶ *Lanercost Cartulary*, no. 163; *CDS*, i, nos. 451, 1667.

⁴⁷ *Melrose Liber*, no. 365; *Yester Writs*, no. 14; Raine, *North Durham*, no. 136. For Alan Ormiston, see below.

⁴⁸ For Lamberton: NAS, RH1/2/59, and generally Raine, *North Durham*, App., passim.

⁴⁹ *ODNB*, 'Comyn, Walter, earl of Menteith (d. 1258)', 909.

daughter of the earl's principal backer, the earl of Strathearn, and eventually gained an interest in Hassington in the earldom by 1269.⁵⁰ More significantly, Henry de Haliburton came from a major earldom family, and both he and Ralph de Halton, who held lands at Anton's Hill in Eccles parish, can be found witnessing for some of the earl's more prominent tenants, though not for the earl himself;⁵¹ the two men were active participants in the earldom, and their links to the Dunbars were not insignificant, with Henry's nephew witnessing for Patrick III, and Ralph (or his father and namesake) endowing the Dunbar foundation at Coldstream with land.⁵² While neither of those Comyn supporters were of great importance in the earldom, their circumstances meant contacts with more than one lord were perfectly justifiable. Haliburton's main estate was at Mow in Roxburghshire, while Halton probably came from a family that were near neighbours of the Comyns in Tynedale.⁵³

Moving up the social scale from the knightly to the baronial class, a more significant Comyn juror was Ranulf de Bunkle and his kinsman Walter. Ranulf also had strong Dunbar connections, heading a select group of witnesses to one of Patrick II's earliest charters, including David de Graham, the earl's knight David de Burradon, and his companion Robert de Anesey; and the earl was Ranulph's neighbour and actually his tenant for land at Billie.⁵⁴ Men like Ranulf de Bunkle evidently moved easily between the service of different lords. In 1212 King John of England excused Bunkle attendance at the great assize in Cumberland at the request of Prince Alexander, and he can also be found acting as a guarantor of a treaty with England for Alexander II in 1220.⁵⁵ He was with the infirm earl of Dunbar and his

⁵⁰ *Melrose Liber*, Appendix, no. 18; *Scots Peerage*, vi, 194–5.

⁵¹ *Kelso Liber*, no. 292; *Coldstream Charters*, no. 40. Haliburton may have been the son of the current lord, but as that Henry gave homage in 1296 and was still alive in 1308, it seems more likely that he was the uncle of the current lord of Haliburton: *Scots Peerage*, iv, 330–2; *Kelso Liber*, nos. 137, 270.

⁵² *Coldstream Charters*, nos. 9, 10.

⁵³ *Kelso Liber*, nos. 168, 174; Stringer (2007), 29.

⁵⁴ Raine, *North Durham*, nos. 122–3, 135, 139. Walter's landed interest may have been limited to the family's estates in Cumberland: Thorley (2004), 140.

⁵⁵ *CDS*, i, nos. 542, 762

closest associates in 1231×1232, and four years after he swore on Comyn's behalf, he appears in the presence of Robert son of the earl of Dunbar and William de Mordington (both jurors for Earl Patrick), asserting custom on the Border.⁵⁶ Similarly Robert de Menzies or Manners of Etal in Northumberland swore for Comyn in 1244, but was appointed to the anti-Comyn/pro-Dunbar government established in 1255, and can be found in the earldom witnessing charters of Patrick III in the company of the earl's followers.⁵⁷

That lords like Dunbar and Comyn could provide only one of several complementary foci for men's attention is best demonstrated by a rare surviving document emanating from the justiciar of Lothian's court, held at Roxburgh in August 1247.⁵⁸ Here Dunbar jurors like William de Mordington (sheriff of Berwick), David Marshall, William Gifford, Thomas de Normanville and Simon Lockhart, along with Alan de Harcarse from the earldom, attended the justiciar David de Lindsay of Luffness (one of several Eastern Lothian barons not to be found in either group), alongside Comyn jurors like Nicholas de Soules (sheriff of Roxburgh), Henry de Graham, Henry de Winton, and Thomas son of Ranulf (ancestor of the earls of Moray) and Aymer de Maxwell, future members of the Comyn government removed in 1255. These men do not appear before the justiciar in two separate groups; nor does their dominance of the witness list suggest a politicised, or packed, justiciar's court. Instead, their presence before the justiciar demonstrates that these were the politically active men in southern Scotland in the 1240s, and that their authority came from their independence from the greater lords. David Marshall had associations with the Dunbars from before 1232, but they were simply due to his prominent role in local society; while Gifford (like Lindsay) was one of four men close enough to Alexander II and of suitable status to swear on the king's behalf in 1244, and he was clearly held in high regard by Alexander as well as by Earl Patrick.⁵⁹ Gifford's future presence in

⁵⁶ CDS, i, no. 1749; Raine, *North Durham*, no. 124.

⁵⁷ *Northumberland Families*, ii, 244; CDS, i, nos. 2013, 2015; Raine, *North Durham*, no. 137.

⁵⁸ Fraser, *Douglas*, iii, no. 285; NAS, RH1/2/53.

⁵⁹ CDS, i, no. 1654; Raine, *North Durham*, nos. 118, 168, 169; *Melrose Liber*, no. 21. For a different

the 1255 government was as part of its 'broad base of moderate opinion'.⁶⁰ and the ability of these men to choose their lord is testified by those who moved between factions. Thomas de Normanville and David de Graham were former Dunbar jurors expelled with the Comyns in 1255, while Gilbert de Hay followed Robert de Menzies's example as a former Comyn juror who joined the new Dunbar-inspired government.⁶¹ Clearly, barons involved in the highest echelons of political society possessed a degree of freedom that makes their continued association with any one faction difficult to accept. Appropriately, in the justiciar's court these men witnessed a quitclaim and charter in favour of Ranulf de Bunkle, a man with close links to Alexander II, the Dunbars and Walter Comyn.