pitiless and barbarous circumstances, we are forced to realize that given the appropriate stimuli perfectly ordinary human beings, women as well as men, can behave like deeply disturbed and uncontrollable psychopaths. Precisely what the stimuli were in the case of the Anglo-Scottish Border from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century is perhaps not entirely clear. Here it can only be suggested that a combination of on the one hand political and cultural nationalism, strongly marked in both England and Scotland in these centuries, and on the other deteriorating conditions of climate and food production were sufficient to generate racial animosity, even hatred, and a fierce hunger for land and livestock. It cannot be said that royal government in either country took a back seat, whether deliberately or *faute de mieux*. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that in this period certain powerful noble families, in England Percy, Neville, Dacre and Clifford, in Scotland Douglas, Scott, Ker and Hume, came to dominate the scene, tolerating - or perhaps not able to suppress - the conflict and rivalry of numerous lesser 'surnames' often at feud with one another even when they belonged to the same side of the frontier.

The first War of Independence lasted with few intermissions from 1296 to 1328. The second War of Independence, which in some respects may have been even more destructive in the Border region than the first, was waged intermittently from 1332 to 1357[58].Unlike the Treaty of Edinburgh of 1328 which was intended to be a final settlement of the Anglo-Scottish quarrel, the treaty of 1357 was no more than provisional[59]. Owing to the Scots' failure to pay the full ransom demanded for their king David II (captured in 1346), and to the support from France which the Scots could always count upon, the state of war with England continued indefinitely, although alleviated by lengthy periods of truce. Even the Treaty of Perpetual Peace made between James IV and Henry VII in 1502 did not bring an end to the chronic warfare, as the famous battle of Flodden in 1513, in which the Scots king was killed, shows only too clearly[60]. In this situation of war and truce the Border, from *c.* 1300, came to be administered by keepers, *custodes*, 'wardens of the Marches' as they were usually known in the vernacular[61]. The practice of appointing Wardens was begun by the English but was very soon copied by the Scots. At first they were purely military officers who did not supersede the sheriffs, stewards or justiciars. But before the end of the fourteenth century they had taken on a multipurpose role, military leaders, castle commanders, administrators and even legal officers empowered to hold 'warden courts' and also to meet their opposite numbers at the Border trysting points for 'March Days'[62]. It was quite normal on the English side to have teams or panels of wardens operating by

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58 Nicholson, *Scotland: The Later Middle Ages*, chapters 5-8.

59 Ibid., 163, 167-8.

60 Macdougall, N., *James IV*, Edinburgh, 1989, 248-76.

61 Storey, R.L., "The Wardens of the Marches of England toward Scotland", in: *English Historical Review*, 73 (1957), 593-615.

62 Ibid., 594, 597; Reid, R.R., "The office of Warden of the Marches; its origin and early history", in: *English Historical Review* 32 (1917), 479-96, especially 483.