

WILLIAM WALLACE (AKA 'BRAVEHEART')

- Born c 1270-1274 possibly in Elderslie, near Paisley. Second of three sons of a minor landowner. Believed to have been educated:
 - Dunipace near Stirling
 - Church School near Dundee
 - Paisley Abbey
- Wallace's life was inextricably linked with that of Edward I of England.
- During the 1290s Scotland was under English control which led to resentment.
- Wallace became a focus for rebellion in the south of Scotland.
- Wallace's father may have been killed in a skirmish with English soldiers in 1291.
- Wallace's wife was burned to death-possibly by William Heselrig the English sheriff of Lanark- for assisting Wallace's escape from capture. In retribution, Wallace killed Heselrig in his bed and may have massacred his garrison.
- In 1297 Edward was away in Flanders and left John de Warenne and Hugh de Cressingham to put down the Scottish rebellion. By early September they had amassed an army numbering between 20,000 and 50,000.
- Wallace and Andrew Murray left a small portion of their army to continue the siege of Dundee and moved the rest south towards Stirling to meet the advancing English. Size of Wallace's army not known but almost certainly much smaller than the English force.
- By Sept 10th 1297 the English force had massed on the southern side of the River Forth at Stirling close to the Castle which was in English hands.
- The Scottish force was hidden beyond Abbey Craig on the north side of the river.
- The width of the bridge over the Forth was sufficient for troops to cross just two abreast.
- On September 11th the commander of the English forces awoke to find that his forces had commenced crossing the river but he immediately ordered them back because he had not ordered the advance.
- Surrender terms were offered to the Scots but the English were rebuffed.
- The English army then commenced crossing the bridge, two at a time.
- As soon as the English force on the north side had reached a size with which the Scots could cope the Scots charged with aim of securing the bridge which was captured and thereby splitting the English army in two. The English north of the river were slaughtered which triggered a retreat by the remainder of the English.
- After the defeat at Stirling Bridge, only four Scottish castles were left in English hands. In anticipation of retribution from Edward, Wallace swept into northern England causing much devastation. On his return to Scotland he was knighted and became Guardian of Scotland.
- The English invaded in the spring of 1298 and Wallace was defeated at the Battle of Falkirk and thereafter lost the title of Guardian.
- In 1302 Edward swept around Scotland with a huge army and succeeded in obtaining loyalty of all the Scottish nobles except Wallace.

- Wallace was betrayed by Sir John Menteith in 1305 and was arrested at a small house in Robroyston north of Glasgow. He was taken to London tied to the underbelly of a horse-a journey which lasted 17 days.
- On August 23rd 1305 was tried at Westminster Hall, London. He was found guilty and promptly hung, drawn and quartered with the quartered remains of his torso sent to the towns of Newcastle, Berwick, Perth and Stirling.

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