

Famous Scots - William Wallace

About His Early Life

Surprisingly, we don't actually know a great deal about William Wallace's early life. Some historians say he was born in Elderslie in Renfrewshire whereas others say he was born in Derwent Park in Kilmarnock. Most historians agree that he was born to a minor noble family.

Date of Birth

Around 1270

Place of Birth

Somewhere in Scotland

Occupation

Guardian of Scotland

Attack at Lanark

In 1297, Wallace attacked Lanark, killing the Sheriff, who was an Englishman. Some historians believe it was revenge that Wallace sought as they think that the Sheriff of Lanark had killed Wallace's wife.

Wallace's attack at Lanark led to a wider rebellion. Many Scots joined the fight to drive the English out of Scotland, particularly in the areas around Perth and Fife.



Battle of Stirling Bridge

In September 1297, Wallace, alongside Scottish troops, fought against the English at Stirling Bridge. The English Army had many more men than the Scots and yet, due to clever tactics, the Scots defeated them. Many Scots took great heart from this victory and it weakened the English hold on Scotland.

Following the battle, Wallace began to send raids into England.

In the following months, William Wallace was knighted by John Balliol and appointed 'Guardian of the Kingdom of Scotland'.

Battle of Falkirk



In July 1298, the English king, Edward I, tried to invade Scotland again. Wallace and the Scots met the English army at Falkirk and this time, the Scots were defeated. Wallace was able to escape from the battle and shortly afterwards, went abroad to try and gain support for the Scottish cause. It was around this time that he resigned the guardianship of Scotland.

Death

William Wallace returned to Scotland in 1303. While Wallace was abroad, King Edward had made peace with Robert the Bruce and John Comyn. Edward deliberately excluded Wallace from this truce and instead put a price on Wallace's head, offering money to anyone who either captured or killed him.

In August 1305, Wallace was eventually captured near Glasgow. He was tried and found guilty of treason. King Edward wanted to make an example of him. He ordered Wallace to be hanged, drawn and quartered. His head was placed on London Bridge and his limbs were displayed in Newcastle, Berwick, Stirling and Perth.

Legacy

William Wallace has become a great Scottish hero. However, he wasn't always so popular or well-known. There is little that is actually known about his life and there are many question marks over even the basic facts.

There are over 20 monuments to remember the life of William Wallace. The most famous of these is the Wallace Monument, which stands above Stirling on Abbey Craig.





Comprehension Questions

Please read the passage about 'Famous Scots – William Wallace' carefully and answer the following questions.

Please write your answers in full sentences and write in as much detail as you can. **Don't forget to upload your hard work!**

- 1) Which year did the Attack at Lanark take place?
- 2) Read the '**Attack at Lanark**' paragraph. **Find** and **copy** a word that means 'wanted'.
- 3) List two things that happened **after** the Battle of Stirling Bridge.
- 4) Use the text to match these sentences up:

The Battle of Falkirk	led to a wider rebellion in Scotland.
The Battle of Stirling Bridge	ended in a loss for the Scots and Wallace had to go abroad.
The Attack at Lanark	was a great victory for the Scots, despite having fewer men.

- 5) What did Wallace do after the Battle of Falkirk? Choose two of the following options:
 - Return to Scotland
 - Argue with Robert the Bruce
 - Go abroad to gain support
 - Give up the guardianship of Scotland
- 6) Who was involved in the peace deal between Scotland and England?
 - King Edward with Robert the Bruce
 - Robert the Bruce and William Wallace
 - King Edward, Robert the Bruce and John Comyn
 - King Edward and John Comyn

LI – I am learning to answer literal questions.

- 7) Why do you think King Edward wanted to 'make an example' of Wallace?
- 8) Where is the most famous monument to Wallace?