

Robert the Bruce - II

Lead: Some wag has said that treason is often a matter of timing. He could not have found a better example of that truism than the conflicted career of Scotland's liberator, Robert the Bruce.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: In the 1290s English King Edward I was meddling in Scottish affairs. He forced the Scottish nobles to heel and to accept his candidate for the empty throne, John de Balliol. This was a bit too much for the Scots

who rebelled and took up with the French. Edward invaded in 1296 and beat them badly, confiscating the sacred Stone of Scone on which Scottish kings had been crowned. Edward also crushed William Wallace's popular rebellion at Falkirk in 1298, but the English king, despite prodigious campaigning, could not completely subdue the Scots.

One of Wallace's initial supporters was the Earl of Carrick, the eighth in a succession of nobles bearing the name, Robert Bruce or Robert the Bruce. In an era that required shifting loyalties in order to survive, Bruce became adept at picking the right alliance at the right moment. In

succession he supported Edward, Balliol, Edward, Wallace, Edward, and then in 1306 cast his fortunes with Scottish independence. Either he or his followers murdered one of Edward's most loyal Scottish allies, John "The Red" Comyn in the Franciscan church at Dumfries in February of that year and Bruce quickly moved to Scone, was crowned King of Scotland, and prepared to defend his claim. It was not easy going. His forces were regularly defeated, his family was captured and he became a fugitive, but by 1314, thanks to the death of Edward I and the incompetence of Edward II, King Robert I had secured his claim at the Battle of Bannockburn and Scottish independence when the English gave

up their claims in 1328.

**At the University of Richmond,
this is Dan Roberts.**

Resources

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<http://www.britannia.com/bios/robertbruce.html>

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