

The Battle of Stirling Bridge

William Wallace

A Scottish warrior that led Scotland into battle at Stirling Bridge. He was a prominent figure in the Wars of Independence.



John de Warenne

John de Warenne was appointed Guardian of Scotland by King Edward and led the English army at the battle of Stirling Bridge.

Hugh Cressingham

Hugh Cressingham was an English treasurer in Scotland and an advisor to John de Warenne. He suggested launching the full-scale attack across Stirling Bridge.

Andrew de Moray

Helped to regain control of the north of Scotland from England. He joined forces with William Wallace and led a combined army at Stirling Bridge.



When

11th September 1297



Significant Figures

- William Wallace
- Andrew de Moray
- John de Warenne
- Hugh Cressingham

What Led to the Battle?

In 1286, King Alexander III of Scotland died after falling from his horse. His granddaughter, Margaret, the Maid of Norway was the next in line to the throne. Unfortunately, Margaret died in Orkney on her way from Norway to Scotland. King Edward I of England then chose John Balliol as King of Scotland because he was most closely related to Alexander III. There was tension between Scotland and England and within Scotland itself because of the struggle for power. King Edward had hoped that Scotland would support England's efforts in their war with France, but instead Scotland formed an alliance with France. In 1296 King Edward I declared war on Scotland.

The Battle

King Edward I of England had ordered John de Warenne to the north of Scotland as William Wallace and Andrew de Moray were gaining support in those areas. To progress further north, the English army had to cross the River Forth at Stirling Bridge. William Wallace, Andrew de Moray and their armies had travelled to the north of the River Forth to meet the English army.

John de Warenne had hoped the strength of his army would intimidate the Scots into backing down, but after days of waiting for a resolution they had no choice but to cross.

The bridge was narrow and only two horsemen could fit side-by-side on the bridge. It was suggested that John de Warenne send some of his archers to another location to provide cover to the men crossing the bridge. However, Hugh Cressingham, who was frustrated by the time already wasted, advised Warenne to make the full-scale attack and send all of the army across the bridge.

The Scots army were hiding at the high vantage point of Abbey Craig and they waited until a large number of the English army had made it across the bridge before attacking. When they attacked, the English soldiers could not retreat back over the bridge and many died drowning in the river or in battle.

The Outcome

The Scots were successful in defeating the English and had killed Hugh Cressingham during the battle. Andrew de Moray was also mortally wounded during the battle and died of his injuries two months later.

After the Battle

The battle for Scottish independence continued, with the victory at Stirling Bridge gaining Wallace support. The following year, William Wallace led his army to battle at The Battle of Falkirk, where Wallace and the Scots were defeated. William Wallace was captured and executed by the English in 1305. Robert the Bruce continued the crusade, leading the Scottish fight for independence. In 1314 the Scots defeated the English in The Battle of Bannockburn and regained their independence.

