

## British History Series: Episode 16: Scotland & Her Auld Enemy

Presented by Chris Green

### Introduction

This talk delves into the complex relationship between Scotland and England, focusing on the events leading up to the Battle of Bannockburn.

### Key Points and Figures

- **Malcolm III (Malcolm Canmore):** King of Scotland (1066), who defeated Macbeth and married Margaret of Wessex, niece of Edward the Confessor, intertwining the English and Scottish royal families.
- **Henry I of England:** Son of William the Conqueror, married Edith, daughter of Malcolm III and Margaret of Wessex, further entangling royal lines.
- **David I:** Malcolm III's son, who invaded northern England during the English Civil War (the Anarchy) to support his niece Matilda against King Stephen.
- **William the Lion:** Second longest-reigning Scottish monarch, whose son, Alexander II, signed the Treaty of York (1327), establishing the long-standing border between England and Scotland.
- **Alexander III:** Alexander II's son, who incorporated the Western Isles into Scotland after defeating the Vikings at the Battle of Largs (1260s). His death in 1286 without a direct male heir initiated a succession crisis.
- **Margaret, Maid of Norway:** Alexander III's 3-year-old granddaughter and heir, who died in 1290 en route to Scotland, deepening the succession crisis.
- **Edward I of England ("Hammer of the Scots"):** Alexander III's brother-in-law, who initially supported Margaret of Norway's claim. After her death, he was asked to adjudicate the claims of 13 Scottish noblemen to the throne.
- **John Balliol:** Chosen by Edward I as King of Scotland in 1292. He later angered Edward by refusing to attend English Parliament and signing the "Old Alliance" with France (1295).
- **The Old Alliance:** A strategic pact between Scotland and France, designed to counter England's power, which endured for centuries.
- **Edward I's Invasion (1296):** Edward invaded Scotland, deposed Balliol, and took the Stone of Scone (Stone of Destiny) to Westminster Abbey.
- **William Wallace:** Led a rebellion against English occupation, eventually captured and executed in London (1305).
- **Robert the Bruce:** Declared himself King of Scotland in 1306 and benefited from Edward I's death in 1307.
- **Edward II of England:** Son of Edward I, his less militaristic reign allowed Robert the Bruce to consolidate power. By 1314, only Stirling Castle remained under English control.

## **Key Battles**

- **Battle of Stirling Bridge (1297):** William Wallace famously defeated the English.
- **Battle of Falkirk:** William Wallace was later defeated by Edward I.

## **Discussion Points**

- The talk highlights the deep intertwining of the English and Scottish royal families, which was often more complex than popular narratives suggest.
- The concept of "overlordship" played a significant role in medieval Anglo-Scottish relations.
- The role of personal character (e.g., Edward I vs. Edward II) greatly influenced historical outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

- This episode sets the stage for the pivotal Battle of Bannockburn, detailing the long and often contentious history between Scotland and England, marked by dynastic intermarriages, succession crises, and fierce battles for independence.