

Robert the Bruce

Year	Event	Commentary
c. 1124	Robert de Brus, the first Lord of Annandale, is granted the lands of Annandale by David I of Scotland.	The first "Bruce" was one of the Norman noblemen who accompanied David when he became governor of Cumbria; the lands of Annandale were in a key location for the defense of Scotland, for they covered the western approach to Scotland from England, and they were a buffer against the "wild men of Galloway".
c. 1220	Robert Bruce, "the Noble" (to contemporaries) or "the Competitor" (to posterity), is born.	
1238	The Competitor is designated as Alexander III's heir — that monarch is still childless, and Balliol has yet to be born.	The Scots during Alexander's reign were constantly having to deal with issues of the succession, for Alexander did not produce a male heir until late in his reign, and the boy was not strong.
1245	The Competitor succeeds his father as the fifth Lord of Annandale; grandfather of the future king, this Bruce was one of the leading nobles in England <i>and</i> Scotland.	
c. 1270	The Competitor joins Lord Edmund, Henry III's younger son, on a crusade to Tunis and the Holy Land.	Bruce's grandfather made this trip when he was 50 years old — he was a man of incredible vigor and stamina; we can only surmise the impact that these travels had on the elder Bruce, for he came in contact with the dynamic civilizations of the Mediterranean, including the city-states of Italy and the Byzantine Empire.
1272	Robert Bruce, son of the Competitor and father to the future king, marries Marjorie of Carrick, and thus becomes the Earl of Carrick.	With this marriage the Bruce family comes to represent the mixing of peoples in Scotland: the people of Annandale was primarily Anglo-Norman, whereas the people of Carrick were Gaelic.
1274	The future king, and sixth Robert Bruce, is born to Robert and Marjorie, probably at Turnberry Castle; Bruce's parentage, and heritage, was a mixture of Gaelic and Gallic (Celtic and Norman).	
1286	Death of Alexander III; election of the six Guardians.	"When Alexander III died, young Robert Bruce was well on his way to manhood. His birth, and for all we know his character as a boy and a youth, may have given special stimulus to his tough old grandfather as he prepared to put forward his claim to the throne. The Competitor would hardly have fought so keenly for his spineless, colorless son: but already in the youngest Bruce he must have beheld a more fiery mettle" (Barrow, 1988, p. 26).

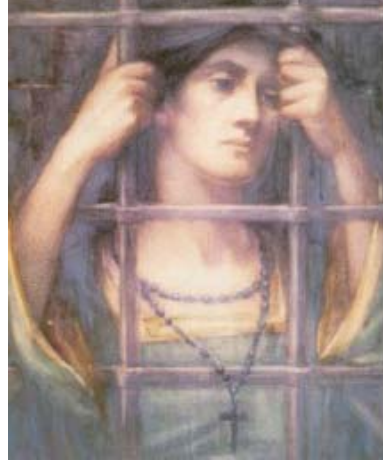
- 1290 Death of Queen Margaret, "the Maid of Norway"; Bishop Fraser requests Edward I to intervene. Margaret, still a child, dies in the Orkney Islands on her voyage from Norway to Scotland.
- 1291 Edward is accepted as Lord Superior of Scotland. In Edward's eyes, the vassalage of Scotland is complete.
- 1292 Court of Claims pronounces judgment in favor of John Balliol; Bruce's father resigns earldom of Carrick to his son, the future king.
- 1293 After resisting Edward's demands that major Scots' cases be tried in English courts, Balliol submits as Edward's liege vassal.
- 1295 Bruce's grandfather, "the Competitor", dies.
- 1296 War between Balliol and Edward; sack of Berwick; Ragman Roll; John earl Warenne becomes Edward's governor of Scotland. Eventually Edward's poor treatment is too much for even John Balliol, and King John goes to war – Edward's reaction is swift and savage; when Edward sacked Berwick, it was the largest and most prosperous town in Scotland, with a population of about 17,000; Edward had all of the citizenry killed – men, women, and children – and left the bodies decaying in the streets.
- 1297 While Edward is in Flanders, Andrew Murray leads a revolt in Moray, Wallace in Lanark, and Bruce in Carrick; Wallace and Murray defeat Warenne's army at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.
- 1298 Wallace is appointed Guardian; Edward returns and defeats Wallace at the Battle of Falkirk; Wallace resigns Guardianship, Bruce and Comyn are appointed joint Guardians.
- 1299 Scots take Stirling Castle; Lamberton is appointed third Guardian, in the hopes he can mediate between Bruce and Comyn.
- 1301 After the joint Guardianship proves unworkable, John de Soules appointed soul Guardian.
- 1302 Bruce submits to Edward and "comes into his peace"; Bruce marries Elizabeth de Burgh.
- Elizabeth de Burgh is the daughter of the Earl of Ulster, one of Edward's staunchest lieutenants; we can only surmise, but it appears that Bruce was vacillating between two positions, one being an independent Scotland, the other being a united kingdom under Edward's rule — Bruce was probably weighing his options primarily in terms of personal ambition.

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- 1303 Edward invades Scotland; Battle of Roslin.
 1304 Fall of Stirling; Scots leaders submit to Edward; Bruce's father dies.
 1305 Wallace captured and executed; Westminster Parliament draws up the Ordinance for the Governance of Scotland.

Isabel, Countess of Buchan



- 1306 Bruce murders Comyn at Dumfries; Bruce is crowned at Scone by Isabel of Fife, countess of Buchan; Battles of Methven and Dail Righ — Bruce flees Scotland, probably for Ireland; Bruce's brother (Nigel), wife, sisters, and daughter are captured by the English — Nigel is executed.
 1307 Bruce returns — lands at Turnberry; Ambush at Glen Trool, Battle of Loudoun Hill; Bruce's brothers Alexander and Thomas are captured and executed; death of Edward I.

This is the low-point of Bruce's career: he faces Edward in England, the Comyn's in Scotland, he loses his first two battles and has no army, his wife, daughters, and sisters are captives, his brother Nigel is executed — his only supporters are the church, his subjects in Annandale and Carrick, and the Lords of the Isles.

Bruce, starting with almost nothing, wages one of the most remarkable campaigns in military history; beginning with his victories of 1307, he gradually wins back his kingdom, from the Comyns and the English; his achievement is highlighted by numerous acts of personal bravery, military leadership of the first degree, and a keen sense of kingship.

- 1308 Galloway campaign; Battle of Brander.
 1309 St Andrew's Parliament
 1310 Bruce fights Edward II in Scotland
 1310 Bruce raids northern England.
 1312 Bruce again raids northern England; Scoto-Norwegian Treaty of Inverness.
 1313 Bruce captures Perth, Dumfries, Isle of Man
 1314 Douglas takes Roxburgh castle; Randolph takes Edinburgh castle; Battle of Bannockburn; Cambuskenneth Parliament
 1316 Death of Robert Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow; death of Princess Marjorie; Edward Bruce crowned King of Ireland.
 1317 Bruce in Ireland, fighting for Edward Bruce.

Bruce slays de Bohun, on the eve of Bannockburn



Edward Bruce, although a brave and daring soldier, was not much of a politician; his ridiculous deal with the commander of Stirling Castle forced Bruce's hand at Bannockburn

(although things turned out well), and Edward's involvement in Ireland distracted Bruce from more important matters in Scotland; furthermore, the Irish campaign did much harm to Robert's health.

- 1318 Scots capture Berwick.
- 1319 Edward Bruce dies, near Dundalk; Douglas and Randolph invade England.
- 1320 Declaration of Arbroath; Scone Parliament
- 1322 Battles of Boroughbridge and (Old) Byland; Bruce raids north Yorkshire.
- 1323 Thirteen-year truce.
- 1324 Papacy recognizes Bruce's title as king of Scotland.
- 1326 Franco-Scottish Treaty of Corbeil; succession to Scottish throne settled on Robert's eldest son, David.
- 1327 Edward II dies, succeeded by Edward III; Scots break truce, raid County Durham; Edward III leads an army into the Borders, but is outwitted by Douglas and Randolph at Stanhope Park; Bruce invades Northumberland.

Sir James Douglas, "The Black Douglas", and Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, were Bruce's most able lieutenants — the trio of Bruce, Randolph, and Randolph were generally recognized as the most able soldiers in Christendom by the time of Bruce's death.

"For as long as but a hundred of us remain alive, never will we on any conditions be brought under English rule. It is not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom — for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself." From The Declaration of Arbroath 1320.

Bruce presenting charter to the burgesses of Edinburgh



- 1328 Treaty of Edinburgh ratified at Northampton; death of William Lamberton, Bishop of St Andrews; Prince David marries Joan of the Tower, Edward III's sister.

The Treaty of Edinburgh was Bruce's crowning achievement, for it not only brought peace (for a while anyway), but more importantly (in the long view) brought formal recognition of Scotland as an independent kingdom; Robert Wishart and William Lamberton were essential to Bruce's success as a king #151: the second

		of his old friends dies this year, making success bittersweet.
1329	Death of Bruce; David II succeeds to the throne.	Thomas Randolph, Earl of Moray, assumed the role of Guardianship during David II's minority.
1330	Death of Douglas in Spain.	Bruce never had a chance to go on a crusade, so his deathbed wish was for Douglas to take Bruce's heart to the Holy Land — Douglas obliged, but was killed by Saracens in Spain.
1332	Death of Randolph.	Scots who hae with Wallace bled Scots wham Bruce has aften led Welcome to your gory bed Or to victorie.

Six Constants of Leadership

Although there are several good books on leadership, we will adopt for this analysis the cognitive-developmental framework of Howard Gardner, most completely described in his *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (1995, Basic Books). The core of his approach is a set of six constants that – in his view – collectively define effective leadership. These constants are listed below, and can provide one intellectual framework for investigating the great leaders of Scottish history.

- **The Story:** In order to be effective, the leader must articulate and communicate a message, or story, to his or her audience.
- **The Audience:** In order for the leader to be effective, the audience must be able to understand, and be responsive, to the leader's story.
- **The Organization:** In order for the leader to be effective, he or she must create or shape an organization; very often the leader will rely on an inner circle of close associates who are instrumental to the communication and implementation of the leader's policies .
- **The Embodiment:** In order for the leader to be effective, he or she must be credible, that is, they must embody the central themes of their story.
- **Direct and Indirect Leadership:** There are two broad categories of leadership:
 - o *Direct Leadership:* What we normally think of when we think of leaders, including generals, presidents, kings, and queens.
 - o *Indirect Leadership:* Another form of leadership where the leader exerts his or her influence indirectly, such as is the case with scientists, writers, and artists.
- **The Issue of Expertise:** Expertise is most obviously relevant in the case of indirect leadership, where the leader must be an expert in his or her field in order to exert influence; but expertise of other kinds is relevant for direct leadership (e.g. military skill or oratorical excellence).

Leadership Analysis: Robert the Bruce

Constant

Analysis

Story

It is tempting to attribute to Robert the Bruce the story of Scotland's independence, as was so eloquently stated in the *Declaration of Arbroath*. However, we must remember

that Bruce had many motivations, and a major one certainly was his ambitions towards the crown of Scotland. Nevertheless, Scotland's story was articulated during Bruce's reign, and the sacrifices made by Wallace, Murray, Douglas, and Randolph were also Bruce's sacrifices, who lost as much as any of them. So, I think it is fair to say that this, the story of independence, as articulated in the *Declaration of Arbroath*, is Bruce's story. And while it is certainly the case that the *Declaration of Arbroath* springs from the same soil as the *Magna Carta*, it is far more eloquent document. Some have even claimed that the echoes of the *Declaration of Arbroath* can be heard in our own *Constitution* (see A. Turnbull, "Scotland and America". In Daiches, Jones & Jones [1996] — see the syllabus for a complete reference).

- Audience** The audience for this story would have consisted certainly of the country's leadership: the greater and lesser nobles, as well as the leaders of the church. However, other groups were emerging in the late medieval period who also would have been responsive to the story of independence. Perhaps the most important of these would have been the burghers of the growing towns. All of these groups — lords, prelates, and burghers — would have consisted mainly of hard-headed realists, and would have seen the benefits of independence primarily in economic and religious terms. The heady idealism of the *Declaration of Arbroath* would certainly have been appealing, but for them the story of independence was essentially a practical matter.
- Organization** Bruce assembled an "inner circle" of close who were extremely able, and his success depended greatly on their assistance. Two churchmen were among Bruce's greatest assets, the bishops Robert Wishart of Glasgow and William Lamberton of St Andrews. These two men put the considerable resources of the Scottish Church behind Bruce at his darkest hour, and were a constant source of support. Two warriors were also among Bruce's greatest assets, the knights Sir James Douglas and Earl Thomas Randolph of Moray. Together with Bruce, these men forged a military record that has few peers.
- Embodiment** Was Bruce the embodiment of his story? Absolutely. A first-class warrior himself, he attracted military men of the highest stature. A pious man himself, he attracted the support of the finest prelates in Scotland. A family man, he endured tragedy after tragedy, and still remained true to his cause and his family.
- Direct or Indirect?** Robert the Bruce is clearly a direct leader, most noticeably as a military leader, but equally importantly in the other kingly roles as judge, diplomat, and political leader (note the many parliaments during his reign). Treaties with Norway, France, and ultimately, England, are testimony to his diplomatic skills. To the extent that he was responsible for the ideas expressed in *Declaration of Arbroath*, he could also be called an indirect leader, for this is a document that "rings down the centuries" of Scottish and western history.
- Expertise** Bruce apparently had it all. He was a fierce and capable warrior in one-on-one combat. He was a superb military commander, who was able to adjust his tactics and strategy to his means. Once he returned to Scotland after his initial defeats, he never lost a battle, even when his brother Edward foolishly forced a confrontation with the English at Stirling. Although his military skills were the foundation for his success, he also must have been skilled in other ways, as is witnessed by the numerous parliaments, charters, and treaties that were achieved during his reign.