

Annan Bruce Statue Project

Patron: The Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, K.T.

Robert Bruce - A Short History

Adam de Brus came from Normandy with William the Conqueror during the Norman invasion in 1066. The family was granted lands near Cleveland, North Yorkshire, for assisting with the occupation.

De Brus's son, Robert Bruce, now Lord Cleveland, came to Scotland and was granted the Lordship of Annandale by David 1, King of Scotland.

As the 1st Lord Annandale, he settled in Annan and built the Annan Motte and Bailey near the river.



At that time castles were built of timber and the Bruce family

“castle” on the Motte would have been a strong timber fort and the Bailey would have been secured with a high timber palisade.

Robert, 2nd Lord of Annandale succeeded his father. His son Robert was made 3rd Lord of Annandale but predeceased him without an heir. The succession then passed through the second son to another Robert, who became 4th Lord of Annandale. His son was known as Robert the Competitor (5th Lord). The Competitor's son, also Robert (6th Lord, & father of King Robert Bruce), became Earl of Carrick after his marriage to Marjorie, Countess of Carrick.



The *Brus stane*, now displayed in the Council Chamber of Annan Town Hall, would have been inscribed by order of King Robert Bruce's father, and can be roughly translated to read:

Robert De Brus Count of Carrick and Lord of Annandale.

The date 1300 is crudely carved on the Brus Stane. Although this date is accurate it appears to be the work of an ancient graffiti artist.

Robert Bruce, born to Marjorie and Robert Bruce, became the 7th Lord of Annandale and Earl of Carrick, and was later to become King of Scotland. A man of both historical fact and modern legend, he is now referred to as **Robert the Bruce**.

Bruce's Rise to Power.

John Comyn, known as the Red Comyn, had estates in Nithsdale and the support of the English King, Edward I. The Comyn met Robert Bruce in Greyfriars Church Dumfries in 1306. The background and reasons for the meeting are now supposition, but the outcome is well known - Bruce killed the Red Comyn within the church.



A month later Robert Bruce was crowned King of Scots at Scone and reigned from 1306 to 1329. Soon after his crowning he was excommunicated by the Pope for the killing in Greyfriars. He was forced into many years of guerrilla warfare in Galloway, Annandale and throughout much of Scotland against the English and their Scottish allies. The stories of this period relate to his persistence and ultimate victory against great odds.

The tale of Bruce being inspired while resting in a cave watching a spider has become folklore and dates from this time of trial. While in hiding Bruce watched a spider trying to spin a web again and again before ultimately succeeding and it is said to have encouraged him when he felt he could not go on.

Robert Bruce and his close friend and ally, Sir James Douglas, had many military successes fighting the occupying forces.

The struggle finally ended with the decisive battle at Bannockburn in 1314 when the army of Edward II was overwhelmingly defeated.

Before the battle, Bruce, who was lightly armoured, had been challenged by an English Knight Sir Henry De Bohun. During the fight Bruce parried De Bohun's lance thrust and killed him with a single blow with his battleaxe.

After Bannockburn, fighting continued intermittently until the Declaration of Arbroath was signed in 1320. The Pope then withdrew his opposition and King Robert Bruce was fully reinstated. A peace treaty with England was signed in 1328. Bruce died at Cardross in 1329; it is thought he had been suffering from leprosy.

