

0. THE MAKINGS OF A HERO - Story Preface

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At first blush, William Wallace would have been an unlikely candidate for "hero."

Born in <u>Elderslie</u>, in approximately 1272, the second son of a minor Scottish laird (lord), William was bound for the church. That's the path most second sons took in 13th century Scotland. Family wealth, titles and land were always inherited by first-born sons.

William's brother Malcolm, named for their father, would inherit what little wealth the Wallace family had. William would be a priest.

On closer examination, though, William Wallace had the early makings of a hero. At a time when most men stood 5 feet, Wallace was reportedly 6'7". By the time he was 20, English invaders had already killed the father and older brother he adored.

While at Cambuskenneth Abbey, studying with his uncle, William learned about the "idea" of freedom in a poem that today is part of the Wallace monument in Stirling, Scotland:

> Freedom is best I tell thee *Of all things to be won* Then never live within the bond Of slavery my son

English efforts to forever control the region would not go unchecked in Scotland as rage built within the young Wallace. Longshanks had required a mere six years to crush Wales. Wallace would see to it that his Scotland would not be completely subjected as <u>Wales</u> had been.

But William's efforts would result in a trial which was a judicial sham. And in his efforts to "legally" crush Wallace, Edward I created a Scottish martyr whose heroism is still honored more than 700 years later.

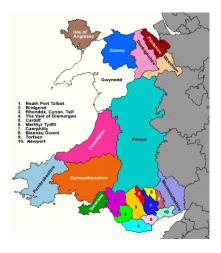
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-MAKINGS-OF-A-HERO-William-Wallace-Infamous-Trial

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Media Stream



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