

Recent Research on the Scottish Wars of Independence

University of Glasgow
Higher History Paper 2 Conference
1 December 2012
Dauvit Broun

Four obvious ways to advance our historical knowledge and understanding

- Discover a new original document
- Discover new information in a later manuscript
- Propose a new way to read/explain an existing document
- Develop new research tools that allow you to see and use sources in different way



1. Discover a new original document

**Only surviving statement in an
English government record of
charges against Wallace**

Morning session

- 3. William Wallace and Scottish resistance
- New information on English government's view of Wallace

Some key English financial records

Pipe Rolls (survive 1129–1130, 1155–1832)

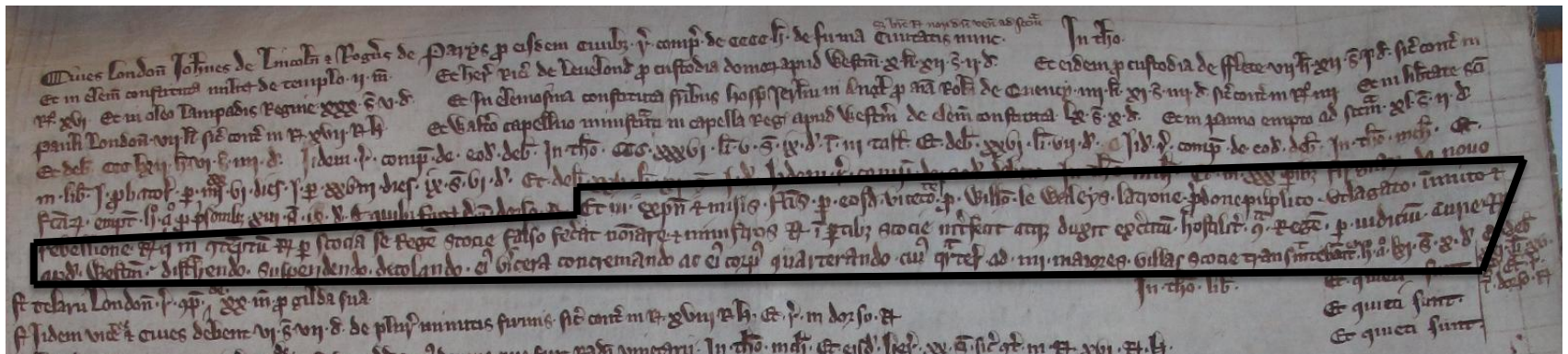
- audit of income to the king from each county in each financial year (began 29 September)
- two copies made: one kept by Chancellor's office

Memoranda Rolls (separate docs sewn together)

- collection of notes and instructions relating to the Exchequer's business, drawn up in the course of each financial year



Account of costs for Wallace's execution in Pipe Roll discovered by John Reuben Davies. It says much more than is necessary!



Charges against Wallace, and his execution, as stated in the Pipe Roll account for London's sheriffs for 1305

- Citizens of London John of Lincoln and Roger of Paris for the same citizens render account [etc.] As expenses and payments made by the same sheriffs for William Wallace – a robber, a public traitor, an outlaw, an enemy and rebel of the king, who in contempt of the king, throughout Scotland, had falsely sought to call himself king of Scotland, and slew the king's officials in parts of Scotland, and also led an army in hostility against the king – by sentence of the king's court at Westminster being drawn, hanged, beheaded, his entrails burned, and his body quartered, whose four parts were dispatched to the four principal towns of Scotland

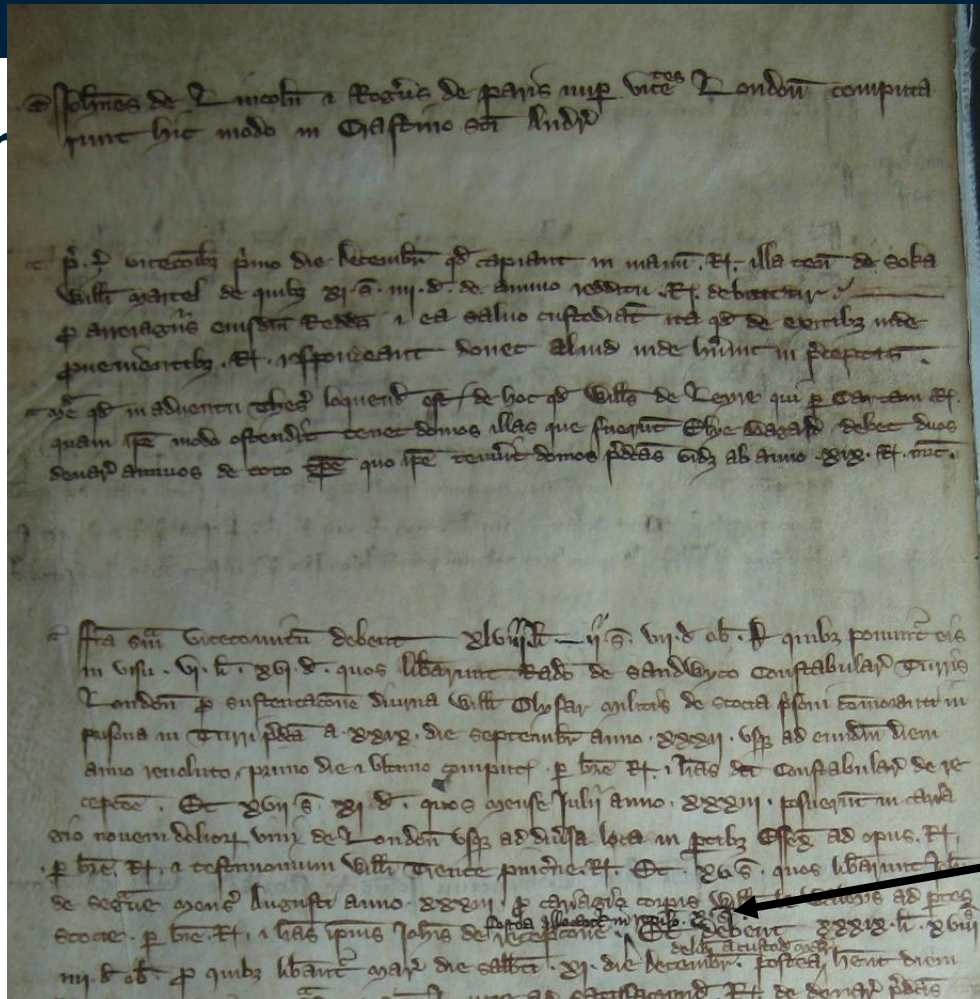
The only previously known official record of Wallace's fate: from the Memoranda rolls

- John of Lincoln and Roger of Paris lately sheriffs of London have accounted in this manner on the morrow of St Andrew [1 December . . .] And 15 shillings which they had paid to John of Seagrave in the month of August in the 33rd year [AD 1305] for the conveyance of the body of William Wallace to parts of Scotland, by writ of the king and letters of the same John for receipt.



University
of Glasgow

From the



Added cross-
reference to
other rolls

Charges against Wallace, and his execution, in the sheriffs of London's account in the Pipe Rolls: new information

- Citizens of London John of Lincoln and Roger of Paris for the same citizens render account [etc.] As expenses and payments made by the same sheriffs for William Wallace – a robber, a public traitor, an outlaw, an enemy and rebel of the king, who in contempt of the king, throughout Scotland, had falsely sought to call himself king of Scotland, and slew the king's officials in parts of Scotland, and also led an army in hostility against the king – by sentence of the king's court at Westminster being drawn, hanged, beheaded, his entrails burned, and his body quartered, whose four parts were dispatched to the four principal towns of Scotland

***Annals of London* (extract translated by A. A. M. Duncan): account of Wallace's trial and execution**

- *Among the charges against Wallace was that 'he caused his writs [official government instructions] to be sent out throughout Scotland, as though they were the writs of the superior of that land, and he ordered his parliaments and musters [of the army] ...*
- *'He advised all the prelates, earls and barons ... That they should submit to the fealty and lordship of the king of France...'*

Had Wallace sought to call himself king of Scotland?

- Acted like king: led army, issued royal documents, appointed a bishop of St Andrews
- Wallace's own view of his authority can be gained from looking at how he described himself officially in a charter

Opening address in charter of William Wallace as Guardian, 29 March 1298

- ‘William Wallace, knight, guardian of the kingdom of Scotland and leader of the kingdom’s army, in the name of the magnificent prince, the lord John by God’s grace, illustrious king of Scots, with the consent of the community of the same kingdom, to all men of standing of the said kingdom who come into contact with this present writing, eternal greeting in the Lord.’

What do we learn from this discovery?

G. W. S. Barrow, *Robert Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland*, 4th edn (Edinburgh 2005), p. 179.

- In his treatment of Wallace, Edward I ‘is measured against one of the great spirits of history and found wanting. In Wallace himself ... who alone among Scottish leaders had defeated a full-scale English army in the field, who had roused a nation to a new sense of its unity and freedom, all that Edward I and his subjects could see was an implacable foe (which he was) and a traitor unmindful of his fealty (which he was never).’

What do we learn from this discovery?

For the first time we know how those at the heart of English royal government viewed Wallace:

- They thought he had tried to become king—an outrage for someone of his lowly noble background

We gain a vivid sense of their reaction to Wallace

- By adding the passage about Wallace in the Pipe Roll, they broke generations of routine in keeping financial records

You can read about this at:

- John Reuben Davies, 'The execution of William Wallace: the earliest account'.
- <http://www.breakingofbritain.ac.uk/blogs/feature-of-the-month/may-2011-the-execution-of-william-wallace/>



2. Discover new information in a later manuscript

**Chronicle in Oslo, Schøyen
Collection MS 679**

Morning session

- 3. William Wallace and Scottish resistance
- New information on English government's view of Wallace
- New information on Wallace's role as leader of resistance

Manuscript written in early 16th cent

Fos 1v-4r

- **Early British History**

Fos 4r-5r

- **Material on Scottish origins**

Fos 5r-16v

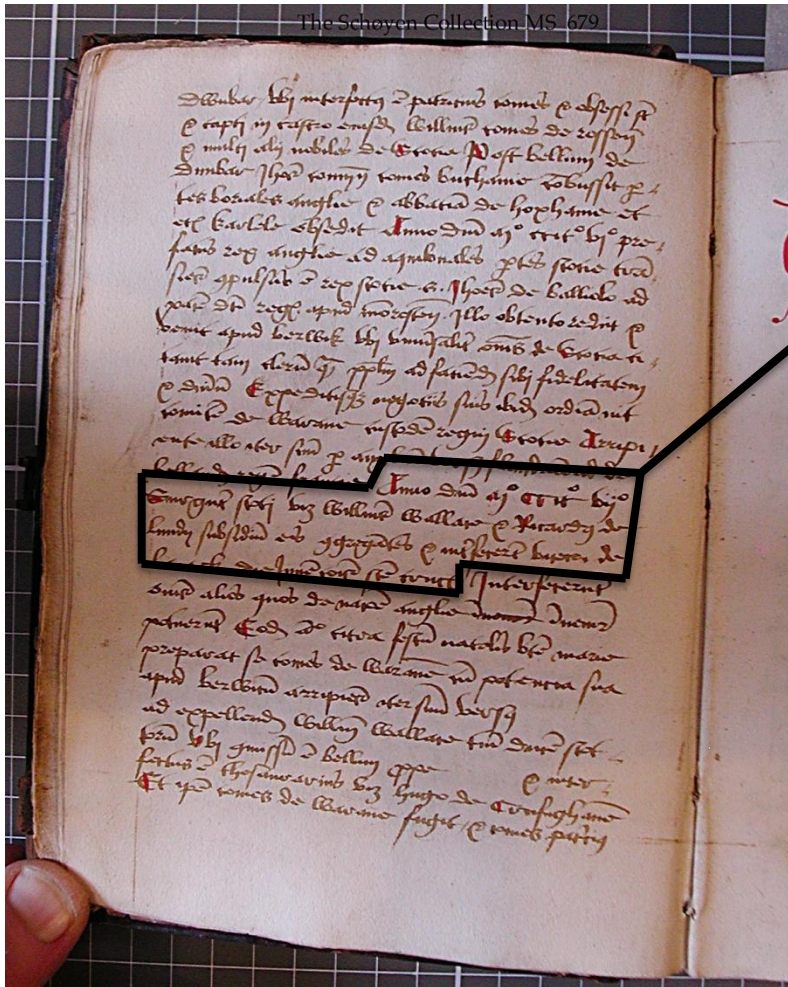
- **List of Scottish kings (to Alexander III) expanded with material on St Margaret's English ancestors**

Fos 16v-17v

- **Descendants of David, earl of Huntingdon; and of Mael Coluim III and Margaret**

Fos 17v-24r

- **Events (chiefly Scottish) 1285–1327** (the 'Schøyen Chronicle')



- *Anno Domini mo ccic^o vii^o
Surgunt Scoti videlicet Willelmus
Wallace et Ricardus de Lundy
subsidium eis congregates et
interfecerunt vicecomitem de
Lanark die Inuentionis Sancte
Crucis*
- 'In the year of Our Lord
1297 the Scots rose up,
namely William Wallace and
Richard of Lundie, who had
gathered together a band of
men, and they killed the
sheriff of Lanark on the day
of the Finding of the Holy
Cross [3 May]'

Wallace begins his rising: **new information**

- ‘In the year of Our Lord 1297 the Scots rose up, namely William Wallace and Richard of Lundie, who had gathered together a band of men, and they killed the sheriff of Lanark on the day of the Finding of the Holy Cross [3 May]’

Some other new information found in the ‘Schøyen Chronicle’

- **Seven** (not six) guardians appointed by parliament on 28 April 1286
- Simon Fraser captured by English *circa 15 August* 1306
- John Lindsay **consecrated** bishop of Glasgow **on 9 October** 1323

New insight on Wallace: **he was regularly joint-leader**

- 3 May 1297: killing of sheriff of Lanark
 - with Sir Richard of Lundie
- Attack on Ormsby, English justiciar, at Scone
 - with Sir William Douglas
- 11 September 1297: Battle of Stirling Bridge
 - with Andrew Murray (heir of Andrew Murray, justiciar)
- Oct-Nov raid into northern England
 - Documents issued with Andrew Murray named first

New insight on Wallace: he became sole guardian by default

- 3 May 1297: killing of sheriff of Lanark
 - with Sir Richard of Lundie
- Attack on Ormsby, English justiciar, at Scone
 - with Sir William Douglas
- 11 September 1297: Battle of Stirling Bridge
 - with Andrew Murray (heir of Andrew Murray, justiciar)
- Oct-Nov raid into northern England
 - Documents issued with Andrew Murray named first
- Becomes Guardian: Wallace the first ever sole guardian

You can read about this at:

- Dauvit Broun, 'A recently discovered chronicle of the Wars of Independence', and 'New information on the Guardians' appointment in 1286 and on Wallace's rising in 1297'
- <http://www.breakingofbritain.ac.uk/blogs/feature-of-the-month/august-2011-a-recently-discovered-chronicle/> and <http://www.breakingofbritain.ac.uk/blogs/feature-of-the-month/september-2011-the-guardians-in-1286-and-wallaces-uprising-in-1297/>