THE WALLACE
Selections

edited by
Anne McKim

TEAMS
Middle English Texts Series

The Wallace: Selections

Middle English Texts

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The Wallace: Selections

Edited by
Anne McKim

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The Wallace

Introduction

One of the very first books printed in Scotland, *The Wallace* is a verse biography, composed c. 1471–79, of the celebrated Scottish national hero, William Wallace. Written more than a century and a half after his subject's death (1305),[1] Hary's largely imaginative account of this real historical personage's role in the Scottish Wars of Independence has nevertheless exerted an enormous influence on representations of Wallace right down to the present day, including the hugely successful recent film *Braveheart*.

The Wallace story had become the stuff of legend long before Hary memorialized his hero. Although Hary claims as his authority an eye-witness account written in Latin by Wallace's chaplain and former schoolmate, John Blair (5.537–41; 12.1410–15), no such text survives nor is its existence attested by any other records. The earliest Scottish account of William Wallace is preserved in brief annals by John of Fordun (*Gesta Annalia* caps. 98–103), later included in his *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* (c. 1380), which was a primary source for the fifteenth-century chroniclers Andrew of Wyntoun (c. 1420) and Walter Bower (c. 1440), whose fuller accounts of Wallace, one written in the vernacular, the other in Latin, Hary almost certainly knew. Like his predecessors, Hary also drew on traditional tales of Wallace's exploits, including perhaps some of the "gret gestis" Wyntoun mentions as circulating in the early fifteenth century (*Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland* 8.2300).

The single most important model and, ironically, the "source" for Hary's composition is a fourteenth-century vernacular verse biography of the other most renowned Scottish national hero, Robert the Bruce. Hary refers to *The Bruce* (1375) and its author, John Barbour, a long-serving archdeacon of Aberdeen, a number of times in *The Wallace* and in such a way as to convey his respect for Barbour's biography of the king. If imitation is indeed the sincerest form of flattery, Hary pays Barbour a considerable compliment by going so far as to "borrow" several episodes from the archdeacon's account of Bruce's military career — in which Wallace is not once mentioned — and assigning them to Wallace! As Lord Hailes so memorably put

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[1] The date and place of his birth remain the subject of considerable debate. A recent biographer argues for 1272 or 1273 in Ellerslie, Ayrshire, although a number of traditions associate him with Elderslie, Renfrewshire. For a recent biography, see James Mackay, *William Wallace: Brave Heart* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1995).

it, Hary "celebrated the actions which Wallace did not perform, as well as those which he did."[2] Early in his poem, Hary reveals his belief that Wallace merits comparison with Bruce, and, while he qualifies this with the acknowledgment that Bruce was the legitimate "heir" of the kingdom, his preference for Wallace is evident in his claim that the latter was the greater hero because he was braver and more patriotic, as witnessed by the number of times he rescued Scotland from the English and even challenged the enemy on their own ground:

All worthi men that has gud witt to waille,	*at command*
Bewar that yhe with mys deyme nocht my taille.	*you do not find fault*
Perchance yhe say that Bruce he was none sik.	*such*
He was als gud quhat deid was to assaill	*as; action; attempt*
As of his handis and bauldar in battaill,	*bolder*
Bot Bruce was knawin weyll ayr of this kynrik;	*heir; kingdom*
For he had rycht we call no man him lik.	
Bot Wallace thris this kynrik conquest haile,	
In Ingland fer socht battaill on that rik.	*far; realm*
(2.351–59)	

Appropriately enough, the only surviving manuscript of *The Wallace*, copied in 1488, is preserved and bound along with one of only two extant manuscripts of *The Bruce*, copied in 1489 (National Library of Scotland MS Advocates 19.2.2). The handwriting and separate colophons at the end of each poem proclaim them to be the work of the same scribe, John Ramsay, whom Neilson identifies as a cleric and notary of St. Andrews' diocese (p. 86). Whether they were commissioned by the same patron, which might suggest early recognition of the affinity between the two works, cannot be established. We do know from one of the colophons that the copy of *The Bruce* was made at the request of Sir Symon Lochmalony, vicar of Auchtermoonzie in Fife.

Like Barbour, Hary's purpose was commemorative and eulogistic. As well as encouraging his readers to honor worthy ancestors, he begins his account of the already renowned Wallace (1.17) with a brief genealogical sketch (1.21–38) in which Wallace's ancestry is traced back through the Crawford line on his mother's side, and on his father's side to the first "gud Wallace" (1.30), whom Hary, following Barbour's lost Genealogy of the Royal House of Stewart (referred to as "The Stewartis Originall" by Wyntoun), identifies as the companion of Walter, the first Scottish Stewart. Introducing his hero in this way is entirely conventional, but Hary also aims to establish beyond doubt Wallace's noble Scottish lineage. In doing so he repudiated received depictions of Wallace as a common thief, rebel, and traitor found in the English records and, at the same

[2] See "Bannatyne Poems" in *Ancient Scottish Poems*, ed. Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes (Edinburgh: A. Murray and J. Cochran, 1770), pp. 271–72.

time, challenged any lingering perception in Scotland that, because of his inferior rank, Wallace had never commanded the full support of the Scottish nobles.

It is above all for his "nobille worthi deid" (1.2) in defense of his country that Hary celebrates Wallace. He portrays him as a great national liberator, "the reskew of Scotland" (1.38), a hero on a mission that is divinely sanctioned — "he fred it weyle throu grace" (1.40). Early in the narrative the famous seer Thomas the Rhymer prophesies that Wallace will liberate Scotland from English domination and restore peace three times (2.346–50). Later Wallace himself is granted a vision in which St. Andrew, Scotland's patron saint, and the Virgin Mary present him with an avenging sword, a parti-coloured wand, and a precious book, interpreted by his chaplain John Blair as confirmation of his divinely ordained mission (7.65–152). As Brown and McDiarmid have noted, while the suggestion for the prophetic dream probably came from *The Alliterative Morte Arthure* in which King Arthur is visited by Lady Fortune in a dream, the religious interpretation does not (Brown, p. 38; McDiarmid 2.200). Indeed there are a number of explicit allusions to Arthur in Hary's poem, including the claim that "Wallace of hand sen Arthour had na mak" (8.845) which, along with allusions to Hector, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Roland, and Godfrey of Boulogne, strongly suggest that Hary wished Wallace to be added as a kind of tenth "noble" or "worthy" to the illustrious "Nine Worthies" celebrated in literature, art, and architecture in the Middle Ages.

As well as ensuring Wallace's place in the house of fame, Hary both rallies and rebukes his contemporaries in a way that has convinced a number of critics of his propagandist purposes. From the beginning of the poem, there is no mistaking his anti-English feeling for "Our ald ennemys cummyn of Saxonys blud, / That nevyr yeit to Scotland wald do gud" (1.7–8). Blaming "sleuthfulnes" (1.3) for the all too prevalent tendency to forget the debt and respect due to ancestors may be a standard *topos* in medieval historiography, but Hary's criticism of those who perversely "honour ennymyis" (1.5) and proffer them "gret kyndnes" (1.10) has been interpreted as referring specifically to contemporary politics of the 1480s (Neilson, pp. 109–10) or the 1470s (McDiarmid, pp. xiv–xxvi). Certainly internal evidence supports McDiarmid's belief that the poem was written sometime in the 1470s, that is, between 1471 — when the two contemporaries, Sir William Wallace of Craigie and Sir James Liddale of Halkerston, to whom Hary refers at the end of his work as persuading him to deviate a little from Blair's account, were knighted — and 1479, when Sir William is known to have died. These were also years in which James III's policy of matrimonial alliances with England may explain Hary's criticism of the misguided friendliness shown to England expressed in the poem's opening lines (lines 5–10). McDiarmid speculates that Hary's patrons were probably those southern magnates most opposed to James' pro-English foreign policy, including the king's brother Alexander, duke of Albany, to whom Sir James Liddale was steward.

Nevertheless, Hary presents himself as a disinterested as well as a patriotic writer. Although he appeals to fellow patriots — at one point calling on "Yhe nobill men that ar of Scottis kind" (7.235) to avenge atrocities that he alleges the English have committed — he claims that he

was not commissioned by "king nor othir lord" (12.1435) to write the book, and that he was not prompted by the prospect of any reward (12.1434). The historian John Major writing in the early sixteenth century informs us that Hary recited his poem in the presence of princes.[3] Whether he ever entertained the king in this way we do not now know, although the royal treasury records reveal that he received gifts of money from James IV on five separate occasions at Linlithgow Palace between 1490 and 1492, indicating that he had connections with the royal court, though in what capacity is not specified.

Indeed, we know very little about the author of *The Wallace*: his name as well as his identity remains something of a mystery. On the authority of John Major (1518) he is said to have been called Henry or Hary, though whether this was his first or last name is not clear. McDiarmid notes that the surname Hare or Henry (with variants such as Henrison) was quite common in the Linlithgow area in the second half of the fifteenth century and ventures the opinion that the writer was born there or thereabouts around 1440, citing in support what he considers to be evidence in *The Wallace* of the author's detailed regional knowledge of Stirlingshire and Perthshire (pp. xxvii–xxviii). Others believe that the name Hary, or Blind Harry as he is often called, was an alias or nickname (Schofield, p.12; Balaban, p. 247). The poet William Dunbar simultaneously attested and perpetuated the currency of the name "blind Hary" when he registered his recent death in the poem best known as "The Lament for the Makars" (c. 1505).

Hary's blindness is confirmed both by the royal records and by John Major, although the latter's claim that the poet was blind from birth has more recently been challenged, particularly by readers who are convinced that only a sighted person could have written the graphic descriptions and detailed topographical accounts which distinguish *The Wallace* (Neilson, p. 85; McDiarmid, pp. xxxiv–xxxvii). The richly allusive and highly literary quality of Hary's writing indicates a widely read man, while a strong respect for reading is also conveyed right from the start of the poem in his references to what readers can learn from books and in his injunctions to his readers to go and read certain books (1.1, 17, 34, 37; see also 7.613, 1293).

Like many other medieval poets, Hary expresses feigned anxiety about the reception of his "nobill buk" (12.1451) which some may dismiss as the "rurall dyt" (12.1431) of a self-confessed rustic or "burel man" (12.1461). In the event, *The Wallace* was an immediate and lasting success. By 1488 it had been copied by John Ramsay, probably as a commission, and — after the first Scottish printing press was set up in Edinburgh in 1507–08 — it was one of the first books printed, almost certainly by Chepman and Myllar. The bibliographer John Miller notes that at least twenty-two other editions were printed before 1707. Adaptations of Hary's work, from the selective revisions of the Protestant printer Lekpreuik (1570) catering to the tastes of a post-Reformation readership to the complete "modernisation" of William Hamilton of Gilbertfield (1722), ensured that *The Wallace* always found an audience. Some

[3] *Historia Majoris Britanniae*, ed. Robert Freebairn (Edinburgh: R. Freebairn, 1740), 4.15.

readers were more critical than others. Early sixteenth-century Scottish historians tended to be skeptical about Hary's reliability even as they drew heavily on his account as a source for Wallace's career. Major was particularly influential in developing the tradition of the blind minstrel dependent for his livelihood on pleasing wealthy patrons by regaling them with stories drawn from popular sources.

Hary himself locates his work within a learned literary tradition when he purports to translate from a Latin life of Wallace; when he cites and recommends particular books to his readers; and again when he alludes to chronicle sources. His primary model as we have seen is Barbour's *Bruce,* which was evidently respected by fifteenth-century chroniclers, and which provided Hary with a suitable structure to emulate — a sequence of linked episodes describing the heroic actions and incidents in the life of a national hero. While the formal ordering of the narrative into twelve books can be clearly detected from Ramsay's transcription (even though he overlooked the start and end of Book 9 with the result that his manuscript has only eleven books), *The Wallace* is essentially structured according to the protagonist's threefold "rescues" of Scotland from English domination, a narrative strategy complemented by a range of rhetorical strategies, including repetition with variation of *motifs*, many of them also deployed by Barbour. Recent scholarship has highlighted the use of traditional material, including folklore, by even respectable medieval historians like Andrew Wyntoun and Walter Bower, so it is not at all surprising to find that Hary too drew on folklore, most strikingly in the Fawdoun episode in which Wallace encounters the ghost of a man he has beheaded. It is the "conscious blending of folk-myth and Chaucerian literary conventions" that perhaps makes *The Wallace* such an interesting work (Balaban, p. 250). Although Hary's knowledge of Chaucer's poetry — which was quite widely available in fifteenth-century Scotland — has long been noted (Skeat, Neilson, Scheps [1970], Harward) with specific echoes of The General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*, The Knight's Tale, The Franklin's Tale, *Troilus and Criseyde*, and *The Legend of Good Women* (all noticed in the explanatory notes section of this edition), critical appreciation of the literary merits of *The Wallace* has come only quite recently.

Familiarity with the great medieval romance cycles of Arthur and Alexander, Scottish translations and derivatives of which were composed and circulated in the fifteenth century, is evident in Hary's poem, particularly in his depiction of Wallace as an exemplary warrior and "chyftayne in wer" (5.842). As well as being handsome, strong, brave, and wise (1.184), as a military leader he inspires loyalty and admiration by his personal prowess, his prudence (e.g., in avoiding open battle when seriously outnumbered), his sound military strategy and tactics, and his generosity to his followers (6.784–86). Wallace, "the flour of armys" (6.56), is almost invariably chivalrous in his treatment of noncombatants, and we are repeatedly told that he refused to harm women, children, and priests. Off the battlefield, he is "curtas, and benyng" (1.202), but because *The Wallace* is so centrally concerned with war, these particular attributes are more stated than demonstrated. Nevertheless, Hary conveys his appreciation of the value that attaches to *courtoisie* when he takes the trouble to praise the son of John Ramsay, one of

Wallace's allies, as the "flour of courtlyness" (7.900) and when he stages a completely unhistorical meeting and conversation between the English queen and his hero in which courtly decorum is displayed (8.1215–1466).

The conflicting claims of war and love exercise the young Wallace (5.611–48) when he is smitten by a young woman in Lanark. Apparently aware of the philosophy that love can spur a warrior on to great feats of prowess, Wallace declares to his friend Kerle that the case is rather different when the liberation of his country is at stake. As a champion of such a cause, he believes love will only distract him from his mission:

. . . he that thinkis on his luff to speid,	*prosper*
He may do weill, haiff he fortoun and grace.	*if he has*
Bot this standis all in ane othir cas:	*things stand differently in this case*
A gret kynryk with feill fayis ourset.	*kingdom [is] with many enemies overrun*
Rycht hard it is amendis for to get	*to obtain amends [from them]*
At anys of thaim and wyrk the observance	*And at the same time perform the duties*
Quhilk langis luff and all his frevill chance.	*belong [to]; fickle fortune*
(5.640–46)	

He also knows from experience how dangerous a distraction love can be, since an earlier liaison with a paramour in Perth had very nearly cost him his life and endangered his men. But despite his asseveration that love is "[n]othing bot folychnes" (5.631), like Troilus, he finds the power of love irresistible once it has made its "prent" (5.606) on his heart. Unlike Troilus, he marries his beloved and comes to regret this only because it costs her her life.

Wallace's personal bereavement serves to deepen his resolve against his enemies, as righteous anger and desire for vengeance unite his personal and political motives:

The saklace slauchtir of hir blith and brycht,	*innocent*
That I avow to the Makar of mycht,	
That of that nacioune I sall nevir forber	*spare*
Yhong nor ald that abill is to wer.	*old; is fit to fight*
(6.215–18)	

He proceeds to kill the sheriff and English inhabitants of Lanark, and his personally motivated reprisal marks the beginning of Scotland's recovery, as Scots who flock to his lead recognize:

Quhen Scottis hard thir fyne tithingis of new	*heard this excellent news*
Out of all part to Wallace fast thai drew,	*From all over*
Plenyst the toun quhilk was thar heretage.	*Settled*
Thus Wallace straiff agayne that gret barnage.	*strove against; barons*
Sa he begane with strenth and stalwart hand	*So*

To chewys agayne sum rowmys of Scotland. *recover; parts*
The worthi Scottis that semblit till him thar *flocked to*
Chesit him for cheyff, thar chyftayne and ledar. *Chose*
(6.265–72)

Hary never lets his readers forget that his hero is a man moved by "pitté" (1.182) for his country and "ire of wrang" (6.224) or the righteous anger caused by wrongs that must be redressed. Provocation ranges from the scorn and insults the young Wallace regularly encounters as he attempts to go about his everyday business in occupied Scotland, to the killing of his kin, which in the course of the narrative includes his father, elder brother, and uncle, as well as his wife. Wallace reacts to these provocations by cutting throats, dashing out brains, shattering bones, striking out eyes and tongues, and beheading others in an orgy of violence described with a relish some readers have found distasteful. Hary's frequently emotive language seems designed not only to express Wallace's rage and Hary's antipathy but also to incite hatred of the English in his readers.

The Wallace catalogues the sheer brutality of war. We are regaled with such detailed accounts of the sacking of towns and the burning down of buildings full of screaming inhabitants that the smells and sounds, as well as the terrible sights of war, are graphically conveyed. The hero may spare women but he gives the severed head of Fitzhugh, Edward I's nephew, to his wife and sends her with it to the English king.

If Hary dwells on the bloodshed in a way that leaves him open to the charge of glorifying slaughter, there is nevertheless a surprising amount of humor in the poem. Much of it, of course, is at the expense of the English. For example, when Edward's drunk and insensible soldiers are burned to death as they sleep in barns outside Ayr, Hary offers an early example of typically Scottish understatement: "Till slepand men that walkand [waking] was nocht soft" (7.440). On other occasions the humor derives from the improbability of the hero successfully passing himself off as a woman to elude capture. Pursued after he kills the constable of Dundee early in his career, Wallace quickly dons a woman's gown, headscarf, and hat, and swaps his bloody knife for a spinning "rok" (1.244), prompting the poet to comment:

. . . thai socht him beselye
Bot he sat still and span full conandly, *skillfully*
As of his tym, for he nocht leryt lang. *Considering his [short learning] time; learned*
(1.247–9)

Hary also gives Wallace a sense of humor as well as a keen sense of injustice. When the captain of Lochmabon scornfully has the tails of Scottish horses docked, Wallace proffers a "[r]eward" (5.756) introducing himself as "a barbour of the best" who has come from the west "[t]o cutt and schaiff" and "lat blud" (5.758–60), before he dispatches the captain and a

companion with his sword. Indeed much of the humor of *The Wallace* is found in the many verbal exchanges that frequently precede physical encounters between the hero and his English enemies, where the jokes are shared with the reader, as when, for example, challenged by the gatekeeper at Perth, Wallace gives his name as "Will Malcomsone" (4.368), which of course he is (Will, son of Malcolm). On another occasion, irreverent humor and witty wordplay are enjoyed by Wallace and his uncle Auchinleck as they prepare to mount a front- and rearguard attack on an army led by Bishop Bek near Glasgow:

"Uncle," he said, "be besy into wer.	*prepare for battle*
Quhethir will yhe the byschoppys taill upber,	*Whether; carry*
Or pas befor and tak his benysone?"	*in front; blessing*
He ansuerd hym with rycht schort provision,	*little hesitation*
"Unbyschoppyt yeit forsuth I trow ye be.	*Not yet blessed by a bishop; believe*
Yourselff sall fyrst his blyssyng tak for me,	
For sekyrly ye servit it best the nycht.	*surely; deserved; tonight*
To ber his taill we sall in all our mycht."	*carry; with all our might*
(7.545–52)	

Wallace may show little respect for an English bishop, but his devoutness is nevertheless illustrated a number of times in the poem when he attends mass, offers up prayers, and finally endures torture by steadfastly reading the psalter he has, we are told, kept on his person since childhood. (Hary adds an ironic touch when he makes the bishop of Canterbury defy Edward I by hearing the last confession of this "rebell.") His execution, following betrayal by a trusted associate and the father of his godchildren, is presented as a martyrdom (12.1305–08) — as it was by Andrew Wyntoun — and divine approbation is conferred through the spirit of an elderly monk who appears in a vision to confirm that Wallace, "a gret slaar of men" and "defendour of Scotland" (12.1278, 1285), will be honored in heaven.

The Wallace has the distinction of being the first extant Middle Scots poem to use the decasyllabic couplet (Scheps, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 1969). Hary also employs a nine-line decasyllabic stanza rhyming *aabaabbab* (2.171–359), first used by Chaucer in *Anelida and Arcite* and later by all the major Middle Scots poets, Robert Henryson (*The Testament of Cresseid*, lines 407–69), William Dunbar (*The Goldyn Targe*), and Gavin Douglas (*Palise of Honour*, Prologue and Parts 1 and 2); and a decasyllabic eight-line stanza rhyming *ababbcbc* (6.1–104), employed by Chaucer in The Monk's Tale and by Dunbar in a number of poems.

This edition of *The Wallace* provides substantial selections from Hary's narrative, which runs to over 11,000 lines. The key episodes are presented and their place in the unfolding account of Wallace's career until his death is preserved by the inclusion of prose summaries of omitted sections. The division into twelve books, found in Lekpreuik's 1570 edition, is adopted here, and only one book (9), which deals with Wallace's first visit to France, is left

out, while several books (1, 2, 7, and 8) are presented in their entirety. Like Matthew P. McDiarmid's complete edition for the Scottish Text Society (1968–69), this edition of selections is based on the sole surviving manuscript, Advocates 19.2.2. Occasionally missing lines and improved readings are supplied from the remaining fragments of the first printed edition (1507–08), preserved in the National Library of Scotland, and its derivative printed by Lekpreuik in 1570. Emendations are recorded in the textual notes, as are different readings from McDiarmid. Spellings have been normalized in accordance with the conventions of the Middle English Texts Series, as stated in the front of each volume: e.g., scribal yogh is transcribed as *y* or *g*; *u*/*v* and *i*/*j* have been normalized; final *-e*, if a long vowel with full syllable value, is marked with an accent (e.g., *charité*). Occasionally, the scribe uses *ff* where we would use *f*; if the *ff* indicates a capital, I have rendered it *F*; I have also changed *ff* to *f* in cases where *of* would be confused with *off*, since the pronunciation of the passage remains unchanged. The scribe regularly uses *w* where we would use *w*, *v*, or *u*. I have followed the practice of modern editors and transcribed such words with the modern vowel. Thus *ws* becomes *us*; *trawaill* becomes *travaill*; and *waill* when it means "weal" or "the good" remains *waill*, while *waill* in the sense of "avail" or "help" becomes *vaill*. Occasionally final *-r* and *-s* have a curl, which I have treated as a mere flourish. Contractions in the manuscript have been silently expanded, and capitalization, word formation, and punctuation follow modern practice.

Select Bibliography

Manuscript

National Library of Scotland MS Advocates 19.2.2, fols. 79r–194r. [Bound along with *The Bruce*, the two parts have been transposed in the binding, so that *The Wallace*, copied in 1488, forms the second part and *The Bruce*, copied in 1489, forms the first. *The Wallace* is written on 124 vellum leaves, in single columns, distributed into 6 quires.]

Early Printed Editions

The Actis and Deidis of the Illuster and Vaiȝeand Campioun, Schir William Wallace, Knicht of Ellerslie. Edinburgh: Robert Lekpreuik, 1570. British Museum.

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The Wallace

Book 1

	Our antecessowris that we suld of reide	*ancestors; should; read*
	And hald in mynde thar nobille worthi deid,	*hold*
	We lat ourslide throw verray sleuthfulnes,	*bypass through very sloth*
	And castis us evir till uthir besynes.	*turn ourselves; other*
5	Till honour ennymyis is our haile entent:	*To; whole intention*
	It has beyne seyne in thir tymys bywent.	*been seen; past*
	Our ald ennemys cummyn of Saxonys blud,	*old*
	That nevyr yeit to Scotland wald do gud	
	Bot evir on fors and contrar haile thar will,	
10	Quhow gret kyndnes thar has beyne kyth thaim till.	*How; shown to them*
	It is weyle knawyne on mony divers syde	
	How thai haff wrocht into thar mychty pryde	*in*
	To hald Scotlande at undyr evirmar,	*perpetually in subjection*
	Bot God abuff has maid thar mycht to par.	*above; diminish*
15	Yhit we suld thynk one our bearis befor;	*Yet; on; forebears*
	Of thar parablys as now I say no mor.	*teachings*
	We reide of ane rycht famous of renowne,	*one [person]*
	Of worthi blude that ryngis in this regioune,	*rules (reigns)*
	And hensfurth I will my proces hald	*narrative*
20	Of Wilyham Wallas yhe haf hard beyne tald.	*I have heard*
	His forbearis, quha likis till understand,	*who*
	Of hale lynage and trew lyne of Scotland,	*good lineage*
	Schir Ranald Crawfurd, rycht schirreff of Ayr,	*Sir; rightful sheriff*
	So in hys tyme he had a dochtir fayr,	*daughter*
25	And yonge Schir Ranald, schirreff of that toune;	
	His systir fair of gud fame and ranoune,	
	Malcom Wallas hir gat in mariage,	
	That Elrisle than had in heretage,	
	Auchinbothe and othir syndry place;	
30	The secund o he was of gud Wallace,	*grandson*
	The quhilk Wallas full worthely at wrocht	*which; acted*

Quhen Waltyr hyr of Waillis fra Warayn socht. *When; heir*
Quha likis till haif mar knawlage in that part *Who; to have more*
Go reid the rycht lyne of the fyrst Stewart. *authentic lineage*
Bot Malcom gat upon this lady brycht
Schir Malcom Wallas, a full gentill knycht,
And Wilyame als, as cornyklis beris on hand, *chronicles tell*
Quhilk efftir was the reskew of Scotland. *Who*
Quhen it was lost with tresoune and falsnas, *by treason*
Ourset be fais, he fred it weyle throu grace. *Overrun; foes; freed*
Quhen Alexander our worthi king had lorn *lost*
Be aventur his liff besid Kyngorn. *By chance; Kinghorn*
Thre yer in pes the realm stude desolate. *stood*
Quharfor thair rais a full grevous debate. *grievous*
Our Prynce Davy, the erle of Huntyntoun,
Thre dochtrys had that war of gret ranoun,
Of quhilk thre com Bruce, Balyoune, and Hastyng. *Balliol*
Twa of the thre desyryt to be kyng.
Balyoune clamyt of fyrst gre lynialy, *as lineal heir by first degree*
And Bruce fyrst male of the secund gre by. *by the second degree*
To Paryse than and in Ingland thai send
Of this gret striff how thai suld haif ane end.
Foly it was forsuth it happynnyt sa, *truly it so happened*
Succour to sek of thar alde mortale fa. *seek; foe*
Eduuarde Langschankis had new begune his wer *war*
Apon Gaskone fell awfull in effer. *Gascony very fearful in array*
Thai landis thane he clamde as heretage
Fra tyme that he had semblit his barnage *assembled; baronage*
And herd tell weyle Scotland stude in sic cace. *such [a] state*
He thocht till hym to mak it playn conquace. *conquest*
Till Noram kirk he come withoutyn mar; *To; without delay*
The consell than of Scotland mett hym thar. *representatives*
Full sutailly he chargit thaim in bandoune *commanded; subjection*
As thar ourlord till hald of hym the croun. *their overlord*
Byschope Robert in his tyme full worthi
Of Glaskow lord, he said that we deny
Ony ourlord bot the gret God abuff. *Any; except*
The king was wrath and maid hym to ramuff. *depart*
Covatus Balyoune folowid on hym fast.
Till hald of hym he granttyt at the last. *hold [land as an inferior]*

In contrar rycht a king he maid hym thar — *Against just practice*
Quhar throuch Scotland rapentyt syne full sar. — *repented afterwards sorely*
To Balyoune yhit our lordis wald nocht consent. — *yet; would*
Eduuard past south and gert sett his parliment. — *arranged*
He callyt Balyoune till ansuer for Scotland.
The wys lordis gert hym sone brek that band. — *caused; bond*
Ane abbot past and gaif our this legiance. — *handed over; allegiance*
King Eduuard than it tuk in gret grevance. — *displeasure*
His ost he rasd and come to Werk on Twede — *host (army); raised*
Bot for to fecht as than he had gret drede. — *fight*
To Corspatryk of Dunbar sone he send,
His consell ast for he the contré kend — *counsel asked; countryside knew*
And he was brocht in presence to the king.
Be sutalle band thai cordyt of this thing. — *secret agreement; accorded*
Erle Patrik than till Berweik couth persew; — *went*
Ressawide he was and trastyt verray trew. — *Received; believed [to be] very loyal*
The king folowid with his host of ranoun; — *army*
Efftir mydnycht at rest wes all the toun.
Corspatrik rais, the keyis weile he knew, — *arose*
Leit breggis doun and portcules thai drew, — *bridges; portcullis; drew [up]*
Sett up gettis, syne couth his baner schaw; — *Opened gates, then displayed his banner*
The ost was war and towart hym thai draw. — *aware*
Eduuard entrit and gert sla hastely — *killed*
Of man and wiff sevyn thousand and fyfty, — *men and women*
And barnys als, be this fals aventur — *children also; bad luck*
Of trew Scottis chapyt na creatur. — *escaped*
A captayne thair this fals Eduuard maid. — *appointed*
Towart Dunbar without restyng thai raid — *rode*
Quhar gaderyt was gret power of Scotland, — *gathered; forces*
Agayne Eduuard in bataill thocht to stand.
Thir four erllis was entrit in that place
Of Mar, Menteith, Adell, Ros upon cace. — *by chance*
In that castell the erle gert hald thaim in, — *prepared for siege*
At to thar men without thai mycht nocht wyn, — *[So] that to their; outside; get to*
Na thai to thaim suppleying for to ma. — *Nor; to bring relief*
The battaillis than togiddyr fast thai ga. — *battalions then; go*
Full gret slauchtyr at pitté was to se — *slaughter*
Of trew Scottis oursett with sutelté. — *cunning*
Erle Patrik than quhen fechtyng was fellast — *fiercest*

Till our fa turnd and harmyng did us mast: *did us most harm*
Is nayne in warld at scaithis ma do mar *none; injuries*
Than weile trastyt in born familiar. *well trusted [associates] in a familiar place*
Our men was slayne withoutyn redempcioune; *ransoming*
Throuch thar dedis all tynt was this regioune. *lost*
King Eduuard past and Corspatrik to Scune *Scone*
And thar he gat homage of Scotland sune, *soon*
For nane was left the realme for to defend.
For Jhon the Balyoune to Munros than he send
And putt hym doune forevir of this kynrik. *kingdom*
Than Eduuarde self was callit a roy full ryk. *king; mighty*
The croune he tuk apon that sammyne stane *same stone [of destiny]*
At Gadalos send with his sone fra Spane, *from*
Quhen Iber Scot fyrst intill Irland come; *When Hibernian Scots (i.e., Irish)*
At Canmor syne King Fergus has it nome, *That; after; taken*
Brocht it till Scune and stapill maid it thar, *established*
Quhar kingis was cround eight hundyr yer and mar
Befor the tyme at King Eduuard it fand. *found*
This jowell he gert turs intill Ingland, *treasure; had [it] packed off to*
In Lund it sett till witnes of this thing, *London*
Be conquest than of Scotland cald hym king. *himself*
Quhar that stayne is Scottis suld mastir be. *should*
God ches the tyme Margretis ayr till see! *heir*
Sevyn scor thai led of the gretast that thai fand
Of ayris with thaim, and Bruce, out of Scotland. *heirs*
Eduuard gayf hym his fadris heretage
Bot he thocht ay till hȧld hym in thrillage. *subjection*
Baith Blacok Mur was his and Huntyntoun.
Till Erle Patrik thai gaif full gret gardoun. *reward*
For the frendschipe King Eduuard wyth hym fand,
Protector haile he maid hym of Scotland.
That office than he brukyt bot schort tyme. *enjoyed but*
I may nocht now putt all thar deid in ryme. *deeds*
Of cornikle quhat suld I tary lang? *Why should I tarry long over general history*
To Wallace agayne now breiffly will I gange. *go*
Scotland was lost quhen he was bot a child *youth*
And ourset throuch with our ennemys wilde. *overthrown through*
His fadyr Malcom in the Lennox fled;
His eldest sone thedir he with hym led.

His modyr fled wyth hym fra Elrisle,
Till Gowry past and duelt in Kilspynde.
The knycht hir fadir thedyr he thaim sent
Till his uncle that with full gud entent — *good intentions*
In Gowry duelt and had gud levyng thar, — *good livelihood*
Ane agyt man the quhilk resavyt thaim far. — *aged*
Intill Dundé Wallace to scule thai send — *Dundee*
Quhill he of witt full worthely was kend. — *learning; taught*
Thus he conteynde intill his tendyr age, — *continued*
In armys syne did mony hie vaslage — *many feats of prowess*
Quhen Saxons blud into this realm cummyng,
Wyrkand the will of Eduuard, that fals king. — *Working*
Mony gret wrang thai wrocht in this regioune:
Distroyed our lordys and brak thar byggynys doun; — *buildings*
Both wiffis, wedowis thai tuk all at thar will,
Nonnys, madyns, quham thai likit to spill. — *despoil*
King Herodis part thai playit into Scotland
Of yong childyr that thai befor thaim fand. — *children*
The byschoprykis that war of gretast waile — *bishoprics; importance*
Thai tuk in hand of thar archybyschops haile. — *took over completely from*
No for the pape thai wald no kyrkis forber — *Nor; would they spare any churches*
Bot gryppyt all be violence of wer. — *seized by violence; war*
Glaskow thai gaif, as it our weile was kend, — *Glasgow; very well was known*
To dyocye in Duram to commend. — *diocese; in commendation*
Small benifice that wald thai nocht persew.
And for the richt full worthy clerkis thai slew,
Hangitt barrownnys and wrocht full mekill cayr. — *caused great suffering*
It was weylle knawyn in the bernys of Ayr, — *barns*
Eighteen score putt to that dispitfull dede. — *cruel death*
Bot God abowyn has send us sum ramede: — *above; remedy*
The remenbrance is forthir in the taile. — *story (i.e., in Book 7)*
I will folow apon my proces haile. — *go on with; narrative*
Willyham Wallace or he was man of armys — *before*
Gret pitté thocht that Scotland tuk sic harmys. — *such*
Mekill dolour it did hym in hys mynd, — *Much distress; caused*
For he was wys, rycht worthy, wicht, and kynd. — *bold*
In Gowry duelt still with this worthy man.
As he encressyt and witt haboundyt than — *knowledge abounded*
Intill his hart he had full mekill cayr.

He saw the Sothroun multipliand mayr, *English multiplying further*
And to hymself offt wald he mak his mayne. *lament*
Of his gud kyne thai had slane mony ane. *kinsmen; many [a] one*
Yhit he was than semly, stark, and bauld, *seemly; strong; bold*
And he of age was bot eighteen yer auld.
Wapynnys he bur, outhir gud suerd or knyff, *bore, either*
For he with thaim hapnyt rycht offt in stryff. *often*
Quhar he fand ane withoutyn othir presance *one alone*
Eftir to Scottis that did no mor grevance. *that [one]; injury*
To cutt his throtт or steik hym sodanlye *stab*
He wayndyt nocht, fand he thaim savely. *hesitated; [if] he found [he could do it] safely*
Syndry wayntyt, bot nane wyst be quhat way, *Many were missing; know by*
For all to him thar couth na man thaim say. *attribute*
Sad of contenance he was bathe auld and ying, *Serious; young*
Litill of spech, wys, curtas, and benyng. *[A man] of few words; kind*
Upon a day to Dundé he was send;
Of cruelnes full litill thai him kend. *Of his warlike nature; knew*
The constable, a felloun man of wer, *fierce*
That to the Scottis he did full mekill der, *great harm*
Selbye he hecht, dispitfull and owtrage. *was called, cruel; violent*
A sone he had ner twenty yer of age,
Into the toun he usyt evirilk day. *was wont [to go]*
Thre men or four thar went with him to play, *to amuse themselves*
A hely schrew, wanton in his entent. *complete wretch, unrestrained*
Wallace he saw and towart him he went.
Likle he was, rycht byge and weyle beseyne *Well-made; well-dressed*
Intill a gyde of gudly ganand greyne. *garment; fine green*
He callyt on hym and said, "Thow Scot, abyde.
Quha devill thee grathis in so gay a gyde? *dresses*
Ane Ersche mantill it war thi kynd to wer, *Irish cloak; nature*
A Scottis thewtill undyr thi belt to ber, *knife*
Rouch rewlyngis apon thi harlot fete. *Rough brogues; worthless feet*
Gyff me thi knyff. Quhat dois thi ger so mete?" *Why do you dress so smartly?*
Till him he yeid his knyff to tak him fra. *To; went*
Fast by the collar Wallace couth him ta. *seized him*
Undyr his hand the knyff he bradit owt, *drew*
For all his men that semblyt him about, *gathered*
Bot help himselff he wyst of no remede. *Unless [he] helped; knew*
Without reskew he stekyt him to dede. *stabbed him to death*

The squier fell, of him thar was na mar.
His men folowid on Wallace wondir sar. *pursued; intently*
The pres was thik and cummirit thaim full fast. *hand to hand fighting; thick; hindered*
Wallace was spedy and gretlye als agast, *quick and also very terrified*
The bludy knyff bar drawin in his hand;
He sparyt nane that he befor him fand.
He knew the hous his eyme had lugit in; *uncle; lodged*
Thedir he fled for owt he mycht nocht wyn. *out; get*
The gude wyff than within the clos saw he *mistress of the house; courtyard*
And "help!" he cryit, "for him that deit on Tre. *(i.e., Jesus); Cross*
The yong captane has fallyn with me at stryff." *got into a fight with me*
In at the dure he went with this gud wiff. *door*
A roussat goun of hir awn scho him gaif *russet; she gave him*
Apon his weyd at coveryt all the layff, *[Put on] over his clothes; rest*
A soudly courche our hed and nek leit fall; *dirty headdress (kerchief) over*
A wovyn quhyt hatt scho brassit on withall, *woven white hat; clasped*
For thai suld nocht lang tary at that in; *house*
Gaiff him a rok, syn set him doun to spyn. *spinning wheel, then*
The Sothroun socht quhar Wallace was in drede. *Englishmen; danger*
Thai wyst nocht weylle at quhat gett he in yeide. *knew; gate; went in*
In that same hous thai socht him beselye
Bot he sat still and span full conandly, *skillfully*
As of his tym, for he nocht leryt lang. *Considering his [short learning] time; learned*
Thai left him swa and furth thar gait can gang *so; thus went their way*
With hevy cheyr and sorowfull in thocht. *sad expression; melancholy*
Mar witt of him as than get couth thai nocht. *More knowledge*
The Inglismen all thus in barrat boune *prepared for a hostile encounter*
Bade byrn all Scottis that war into that toun. *Ordered [that they] burn*
Yhit this gud wiff held Wallace till the nycht, *kept*
Maid him gud cher, syne put hym out with slycht. *Made him welcome, then; stealth*
Throw a dyrk garth scho gydyt him furth fast; *dark garden; led; out*
In covart went and up the watter past, *[He] went into hiding; river*
Forbure the gate for wachis that war thar. *Avoided; sentries*
His modyr bade intill a gret dispar. *waited*
Quhen scho him saw scho thankit hevynnis queyn *heaven's queen (i.e., Mary)*
And said, "Der sone, this lang quhar has thow beyne?" *long [while] where*
He tald his modyr of his sodane cas. *misfortune*
Than wepyt scho and said full oft, "Allas!
Or that thow cess thow will be slayne withall." *Unless; stop*

"Modyr," he said, "God reuller is of all.
Unsoverable ar thir pepille of Ingland. *Insufferable*
Part of thar ire me think we suld gaynstand." *oppose*
His eme wist weyle that he the squier slew; *uncle knew*
For dreid tharof in gret languor he grew. *distress*
This passit our quhill divers dayis war gane. *continued until many*
That gud man dred or Wallace suld be tane, *lest; taken*
For Suthroun ar full sutaille evirilk man. *Englishmen; cunning*
A gret dyttay for Scottis thai ordand than. *indictment*
Be the lawdayis in Dundé set ane ayr. *days for holding trials; justice-ayre*
Than Wallace wald na langar sojorne thar.
His modyr graithit hir in pilgrame weid; *dressed in pilgrim's clothes*
Hym disgysyt, syne glaidlye with hir yeid, *then; went*
A schort swerd undyr his weid prevalé. *clothing; secretly*
In all that land full mony fays had he. *foes*
Baith on thar fute, with thaim may tuk thai nocht. *Both on foot; they took no more*
Quha sperd, scho said to Sanct Margret thai socht: *Whoever asked; went*
Quha servit hir, full gret frendschipe thai fand *Whoever worshiped*
With Sothroun folk, for scho was of Ingland. *English*
Besyd Landoris the ferrye our thai past, *ferry they crossed*
Syn throw the Ochtell sped thaim wonder fast. *Ochil [Hills]*
In Dunfermlyn thai lugyt all that nycht. *lodged*
Apon the morn quhen that the day was brycht,
With gentill wemen hapnyt thaim to pas, *go*
Of Ingland born, in Lithquhow wounnand was. *[who were] dwelling in Linlithgow*
The captans wiff, in pilgramage had beyne,
Fra scho thaim mett and had yong Wallace sene,
Gud cher thaim maid, for he was wondyr fayr,
Nocht large of tong, weille taucht and debonayr. *too free of speech; courteous*
Furth tawkand thus of materis that was wrocht *things that had been done*
Quhill south our Forth with hyr son scho thaim brocht,[1]
Into Lithkow. Thai wald nocht tary lang.
Thar leyff thai tuk, to Dunypace couth gang; *leave; went*
Thar duelt his eyme, a man of gret riches. *uncle; wealth*
This mychty persone, hecht to name Wallas, *parson, was named*
Maid thaim gud cher and was a full kynd man,

[1] *Until south across [the River] Forth she brought them with her right away*

Welcummyt thaim fair and to thaim tald he than,
Dide him to witt, the land was all on ster; *Made him (Wallace) understand; in turmoil*
Trettyt thaim weyle, and said, "My sone so der,
Thi modir and thow rycht heir with me sall bide *here; shall stay*
Quhill better be, for chance at may betyde." *Until [things] improve*
Wallace ansuerd, said, "Westirmar we will. *Further west we will [go]*
Our kyne ar slayne and that me likis ill, *kinsfolk*
And othir worthi mony in that art. *many other worthy [people] in that area*
Will God I leiffe, we sall us wreke on part." *live; avenge in part*
The persone sicht and said, "My sone so fre, *parson sighed; noble*
I can nocht witt how that radres may be." *know; revenge*
Quhat suld I spek of fruster? As this tid *needlessly? At this time*
For gyft of gud with him he wald nocht bide.
His modyr and he till Elrisle thai went.
Upon the morn scho for hir brothir sent,
In Corsby duelt and schirreff was of Ayr. *sheriff*
Hyr fadyr was dede, a lang tyme leyffyt had thar. *had lived*
Hyr husband als at Lowdon Hill was slayn.
Hyr eldest son that mekill was of mayn, *very strong*
Schir Malcom Wallas was his nayme but less, *truly*
His houch senons thai cuttyt in that press. *tough sinews [i.e., behind the knee]*
On kneis he faucht, felle Inglismen he slew. *many*
Till hym thar socht may fechtaris than anew, *more than enough fighters*
On athyr side with speris bar him doun. *either; bore*
Thar stekit thai that gud knycht of renoun. *stabbed*
On to my taile I left. At Elrisle *story*
Schir Ranald come son till his sistir fre, *noble*
Welcummyt thaim hayme and sperd of hir entent. *home; asked*
Scho prayde he wald to the lord Persye went, *She; Percy*
So yrk of wer scho couth no forthir fle *weary of war*
To purches pes in rest at scho mycht be.[1]
Schyr Ranald had the Perseys proteccioune,
As for all part to tak the remissioune. *pardon*
He gert wrytt ane till his systir that tyde. *had one written for his sister*
In that respyt Wallas wald nocht abyde; *reprieve*
Hys modyr kyst; scho wepyt with hart sar; *kissed; heavy heart*

[1] *To obtain a pardon so that she might be at peace*