



The Hammer of the Scots

Jason Wallace

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"The problem with Scotland is that it's full of Scots!" These words may have only been spoken by Patrick McGoohan, the actor that played Edward I in the film Braveheart and never uttered by the real Edward I of England, but they seem to establish quite well the sentiments he felt when discussing his neighbors to the North. Many have heard of the movie Braveheart or seen it, perhaps even read the book, which gives far more detail. Many have heard other stories of William Wallace, of Edward I, the "Longshanks" because of his incredibly long legs, of Wallace's possible inspiration of the character of Robin Hood, but how many know what really happened from 1290 to 1314 to require the Scots to fight for a country that already belonged to them? Scotland was eventually victorious in their war for independence, but what were the causes for the war, and why should an already independent nation need to reestablish its sovereignty? Scots today view Edward I as a cruel tyrant and cannot bear for his name to be spoken, some going so far as to write plays as a testament to his cruelty, while many English view him as a national hero. He was known as the "Hammer of the Scots" for his treatment and ferocity in his Scottish campaign. When his life was reexamined, by the English, for making a statue, Edward I was seen as having done what he did to Scotland to counter its rebelliousness; however, it was not taken into consideration that Scotland never rebelled since it had always been independent. No one has dared in the past century, however, to erect any new statues of Edward.



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