

THE SCOTTISH AND WELSH WARS 1250-1400



CHRISTOPHER ROTHERO

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On 28 September 1066 William of Normandy landed near Hastings and prepared to meet the Anglo-Saxon army of King Harold Godwinson. On 10 October 1066 the two armies met; and after six hours of fighting the Anglo-Saxon army was crushed and their king slain. This was the last successful invasion of England. The Normans then imposed a strong centralised government, backed by a force of 5,000 Norman knights and a few thousand continental adventurers. Castles were set up in strategic positions to control the native population, and four-fifths of all England's land changed ownership. French became the language used at court, and for the next four centuries England was firmly linked with France.

However, despite the initial Norman success, it was fully two centuries before the Anglo-Norman kings managed to penetrate the wild interiors of Wales and Scotland, and many more centuries before the countries of Scotland, Wales and England were united under one crown.

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A considerable area of Wales was already settled by the Anglo-Norman magnates before Edward I became King of England in 1272. These barons, known as the Lords Marchers, although nominally vassals of the English king, ruled their huge estates despotically, enforcing their power from strategically sited castles with war-seasoned mounted knights. They included among their number the Clares and Mortimers, Bohuns and Fitzalans, Braoses, Chaworths and Giffards. Their influence was limited however; and their rule was always disputed by the anarchic Celtic princes of northern Wales.

These independent Welshmen occupied Anglesea, the mountain lands of Snowdon, Merioneth

and the valley of the Dee. They were migrant tribesmen, half warriors, half farmers, often living out meagre lives (when they were not raiding and feuding) by keeping cattle and sheep, as they had done for thousands of years. Not content with their own lands, the men of the tribe left the bards and concealed homes above the valleys each spring to raid and pillage in the lands around their principality. Such was their reputation that pious Englishmen regarded two pilgrimages to St. David's as being equal to the hardship and dangers of one to Jerusalem.

Whenever the kings of England showed that they were not prepared to rule by a combination of intelligence and the sword, the Welsh extended their raids into the Marches and pushed their

Head of an effigy showing a knight of the mid-13th century, wearing complete mail protection. The interesting details visible include a flap of the aventail carried up to the left side of the head, covering the chin and mouth; the suggestion of a lace passing in and out of the mail horizontally, above the brow; and the squared effect at the crown. This indicates that the mail coif was worn over a heavily padded arming-cap, quite possibly with a 'doughnut' ring of padding around the crown. These caps probably extended to the lower jaw.



incursions into Cheshire and Shropshire. In 1257 they even ravaged Cardiff and Hereford. It was fortunate for the English that these wild Celts were frequently weakened by internal squabbles.

On 2 August 1274, Edward of Westminster returned from the Crusades after four years' campaigning. In his absence his father had died, and he had been King of England for nearly two years. Edward I was to become one of the great warrior kings. He was over 6ft 2in tall, a skilled joust, hunter and wrestler and a very experienced soldier. But he was not to be regarded as just another good fighting man: he was intelligent enough to take the broadest view of warfare, and had become a highly skilled tactician. He was to earn his place in the history of armed conflict, if only for recognising the profound military value of the Welsh longbow. As a young prince he had narrowly escaped death at the Battle of Lewes in 1264. Later he defeated the Saracens at Haifa.

In keeping with tradition, the Welsh prince, Llewellyn-ap-Graffyd, was summoned to do homage before the new English king; but this request was ignored. Llewellyn regarded himself as an

equal, being the ruler of his own principality. Negotiations through various ecclesiastical mediators followed, but Llewellyn refused to acknowledge Edward as his liege lord. Edward and the Marchers had now to regard the Welsh as in armed rebellion, since it did not seem possible for the three parties to co-exist.

Edward and the Lords Marchers assembled their armies for a campaign in Wales. It would not be a quick victory: the Welsh were good fighters—when they were not fighting the English, they fought each other. Their tribal laws dictated that there must be six weeks of marauding each summer, and the chief could call the entire population of young men to arms at a moment's notice. Carrying all their equipment and living off the land, these Welsh warriors required no commissariat; they were natural irregulars. To aid them in their struggle they had developed a new and formidable weapon—the longbow. The Norman Welsh ecclesiastic Giraldus Cambrensis described it as 'made of wild elm, unpolished, rude and uncouth'. Its arrows could be fired faster than the crossbow; one arrow could pierce a mail hauberk, breeches and the saddle of an armoured knight, and pin him by his thigh to his horse's flank.

The Welsh fought according to the classical guerilla pattern: a well-planned ambush, a sudden shower of arrows, and a charge down the hillside

This mid-13th century effigy shows the knight's arms executed in bold relief on his shield—whether an artistic convention, or an indication that they were actually modelled on his real shield in relief, is hard to say. The shield is of 'heater' shape, but at about four feet long its origins in the kite-shaped shield of the 11th century are still evident.

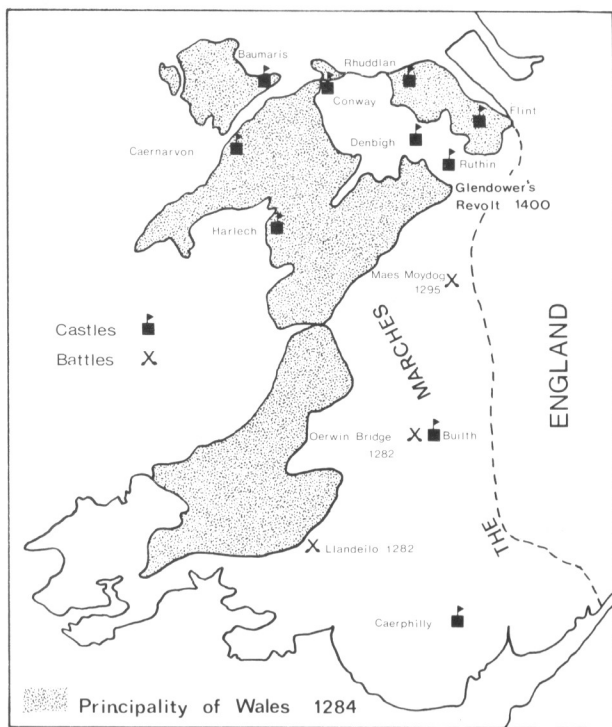


with sword and spear. Their strong, squat bodies wrapped in scarlet plaids, they moved with ease across the rough terrain. A short and bloody skirmish usually followed their ambushes, before they withdrew into the mists. The Anglo-Norman barons launched expedition after expedition, each to return from the Welsh hinterland badly mauled, hungry and humiliated.

Edward was determined to succeed. His notorious Plantagenet temper was thoroughly enflamed, and he began to prepare for the conquest of Wales with the meticulous care to be expected from a commander of international standing. While the Lords Marchers went over to the offensive in Powysland and Cardiganshire, Edward massed the largest and best-equipped army seen in England since the Norman conquest of 1066. Great war horses were ordered from France, costing as much as £100 each. The feudal levy raised a thousand heavily armoured knights, but as in most medieval armies, the great body of fighting men were footsoldiers. They came from Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Radnor and Brecon. Many were raised by the 'commissioners of array'; others, hardened veterans, were brought to the field under captains who had soldiered with Edward in the baronial wars and on the Crusades—men like Reginald de Grey, Otto de Granson and the Northumbrians John de Vesci and Robert Tybotot. There were probably as many as 15,000 footsoldiers in Edward's army, and more than half of them were Welsh. To increase his army's firepower Edward hired mercenary troops: crossbowmen raised in Gascony, and a body of archers from the Macclesfield forest. Despite its size, however, Edward's army lacked experience. Evesham, the last battle on English soil, was 12 years behind them.

A large commissariat and supporting transport train was organised; Edward was determined to defeat Llewellyn in the field or bring him to his knees through starvation. The campaign had its political advantages. The various factions in the kingdom, divided by the destructive animosity of the baronial wars, were now forgotten as king and barons united against a common enemy.

Before Edward's army entered Wales two separate offensives had been launched. Pain de Charworth, Lord of Kidwelly bore down on



Major battles, and castles built by the Plantagenet kings, in Wales and the Marches between 1250 and 1400.

Llewellyn's followers in Cardiganshire, while Roger Mortimer led the Marcher nobles against Llewellyn in central Wales. As these two spearheads advanced, thousands of Welshmen originally loyal to Llewellyn fell in and marched alongside the English troops, leaving Llewellyn with solid support only from the men of Gwynedd.

In July 1277 Edward took command of the main English army at Worcester. Supported by the hereditary Constable, the Earl of Hereford, the Marshal, the Earl of Norfolk, and Llewellyn's brother David, he began his slow march up the valleys of the Severn and the Dee. Edward's strategy was to advance in a series of stages along the north Welsh coast from Chester to Flint and from Rhuddlan to the mouth of the Conway. To ease the passage of the great army and its followers a path, a bowshot wide, was cut across the heavily wooded landscape. At each point where the army rested Edward initiated the construction of a castle.

A shrewd tactician, Edward took advantage of the feudal obligations of the Cinque Ports to provide ships and their crews; committed to serve for 15 days at their own expense, they were used to isolate the grain-rich island of Anglesey, without which

vital source of food Llewellyn could not sustain his tribesmen for long.

By 26 July the English army marched into Flint, where nearly a hundred years before Edward's grandfather, Henry III, had almost been killed in his attempt to subdue Gwynedd. Three weeks later the Royal Standard was raised over the English headquarters in Rhuddlan; and on 29 July victorious English soldiers looked down on the Conway estuary from Deganwy. Waiting ships now carried an expeditionary force, under Lord de Vesci and Otto de Granson, across the Menai Strait and into Anglesey. Here they captured the bulk of Llewellyn's vital winter grain harvest; and with a seaborne assault from Anglesey the English army could strike with ease at the Welsh defensive positions along the south bank of the Conway. Within eight weeks Edward had virtually encircled Llewellyn's mountain strongholds; and with star-

vation or total defeat staring him in the face, Llewellyn surrendered.

By the Treaty of Conway of 9 November 1277, Llewellyn withdrew all his forces to behind the frontiers of Gwynedd and gave up his claim to suzerainty in the Marches. The following day, in Edward's newly constructed castle at Rhuddlan, Llewellyn swore allegiance to his English overlord.

The Second Welsh War 1282

In 1282, after a period of festering calm, the Welsh left their mountains and went on the rampage again. David, rejecting his former alliance with the King of England, joined his brother Llewellyn, and their combined forces struck at the castles of Hawardan, Flint and Rhuddlan. Their increasingly confident attacks in the north took them to the very gates of Chester, and in the south they freely pillaged the lands of the Marchers as far as the Bristol Channel. Everywhere the English were put to the sword, churches and farms were burned, and appalling acts of barbarity were committed.

Edward considered he had been generous in his terms at the end of the First Welsh War; since his generosity had been rejected, he now planned the

Effigy of the splendidly-named Sir William Longsword c.1260, in Salisbury Cathedral. He provides the earliest known example of the addition of small protective plates—'couters'—to the elbows of the mail hauberk. Knee plates—at first small and circular, but later hemispherical and giving both front and lateral protection—appeared slightly earlier than elbow defences. These two features marked the beginnings of the development of medieval plate armour.



final destruction of the independent principality. He intended to use the same general strategy that had been so successful in the first campaign, but now he had to recapture all of Llewellyn's newly conquered land in the south-west before he could enter Gwynedd.

Throughout the month of July 1282 the English fought their way along the northern coast of Wales to relieve the besieged castles of Flint and Rhuddlan. In a large pincer movement, Grey and the Earl of Surrey marched through the Vale of Clwyd, threatening David's position and forcing him to withdraw. Llewellyn, his flank now vulnerable, had to withdraw from his extensive conquests in central and south-western Wales in order to save his principality.

Once again control of the seas proved to be decisive. Edward had at his disposal 40 ships from London and the Cinque Ports and two huge warships from Winchelsea and Romney. As the English army fought its way along the north Welsh coast, the Seneschal of Gascony, Luke de Tany,

Pleasing contemporary drawing of a Welsh archer drawing a broadhead arrow in a short and remarkably knotty bow—after an original in the Public Record Office.



used the fleet to land an expeditionary force on Anglesey. Within a month he had captured the island; he then ordered his engineers to build a bridge of boats across the Menai Straits to attack Llewellyn's position at Penmaenmawr. This, in theory, would turn the Welsh prince's flank and break open his defensive position. In the south, Rutlin and Denbigh had fallen and Edward's army had taken Conway.

Faced with enemy forces on three sides, Llewellyn hastily withdrew from his southern conquests and prepared himself for a last ditch defence of his homeland. However, just as Edward's army was poised to deliver a crushing united attack, the impatient Luke de Tany led his army across the Menai Strait from Anglesey at low tide. The Welsh were waiting for him, and from a carefully prepared ambush near Bangor they charged down the hillside and slaughtered de Tany and his men. Those who escaped the attack were drowned by the rising tide.

With his northern flank secure, and Gwynedd apparently saved, Llewellyn set off into the Marcher lands on another raid. Edward, his chance of victory snatched away, withdrew to Rhuddlan Castle and began to make plans for a long winter campaign. However, events now occurred in mid-Wales which changed everything. On 11 December 1282, while Llewellyn was recruiting some of the minor Welsh chieftains, his army was surprised by a small English force under the command of John Giffard. Giffard showered the Welsh with arrows and then charged the confused enemy with armoured horsemen. In the melée Llewellyn was killed by the leader of the Shropshire levy, Stephen de Frankton. The day after his death Llewellyn's body was decapitated and his head was sent to London, where it was paraded through the streets and finally taken to the Tower to be mounted on a pike and raised above the walls. Thus ended the Welsh struggle for independence.

The First Scottish War of Independence

In 1286 Alexander III of Scotland was killed in a hunting accident. He left as his only heir his

granddaughter Margaret, known as the 'Maid of Norway', the daughter of Erik of Norway and Alexander's daughter Margaret. Alexander's untimely death marked the end of a period of peace and prosperity in Scotland, during which the country's borders had been defined and the differing tribal groups of Celt, Saxon and Norman had at last grown into one recognisable nation.

Having subjugated the Welsh, Edward I saw his

bitter war with France in Gascony and confronted by yet another Welsh rebellion, stormed north to deal with Baliol and his followers.

The English army arrived outside the town of Berwick at the end of March 1296 to find the citizens and the castle prepared for a long siege. So confident were the inhabitants of Berwick that they jeered at the English army over their battlements. But the seasoned English soldiers, now wild with rage, captured the town in a matter of minutes and then spent the rest of the day slaughtering its citizens. Seeing the horrifying result of resistance to the English, the castle opened its gates and surrendered that evening.

With Berwick in his hands, Edward sent north his most senior lieutenant, John de Warenne, to take Dunbar. De Warenne's detachment consisted of the best cavalry, numbers of Welsh bowmen, and a force of good infantry raised in the northern levies. On arriving at Dunbar de Warenne found this castle also prepared for a siege, and the main Scottish army deployed outside its walls at a place called Spottsmuir. It was commanded by John Comyn, Earl of Buchan. De Warenne ignored the castle and offered battle to the main body of Scottish troops. The Scots, not lacking courage but ill-disciplined, broke ranks and hurled themselves at the English troops, only to be showered by thousands of Welsh arrows. Broken and confused, they were trampled into the ground by de Warenne's cavalry, who rode among the Scots slaughtering the few survivors with sword, lance, axe and mace. The result was a total English victory and the death of some 10,000 Scots soldiers. John Comyn, three other Scottish earls and more than a hundred of Comyn's most important followers were captured. Edward followed his victory at Dunbar with a triumphant march through Scotland, taking his army further north than any previous ruler of Britain since the Romans. On the way he demanded Baliol's abdication at Stracathro near Brechin.

This was far from the end of the conflict between the two countries, however. In the spring of 1297 the whole of Scotland, with the possible exception of Lothian, was in a state of armed insurrection. At Lanark a complete garrison of English troops were massacred by troops loyal to a giant of a man named William le Wallace, son of a minor local



Great Seal of Edward I. Although the king's arms are displayed on his shield and horse-trapper, his surcoat is shown as being plain. We follow this in Plate E1.

opportunity to create a peaceful union between England and Scotland through the proposed marriage of the Scottish queen and his son Edward of Caernarvon. However, this idea was frustrated by the premature death of Margaret. The Scottish throne was now open to claims from as many as a dozen possible contenders. Edward, after obtaining from them all an oath of fealty, selected John Baliol for the role of king—though it appears that under Scottish traditions Robert the Bruce probably had the greater claim.

Baliol was in his early forties, not very intelligent and rather weak-willed. Edward treated him with brutal contempt, using him merely as a feudal puppet to carry out English policies in Scotland. Finally, tired of this constant humiliation, Baliol renounced his oath of allegiance and opposed Edward. The English king, deeply embroiled in a

knight from Elderslie. He quickly became the leader of a small army which traversed huge distances across the barren landscape, striking at unsuspecting English outposts. To terrify the enemy Wallace made it a point of principle to kill every Englishman who argued with him, and his continual intimidation and brutal harassment of the civilian population made it impossible for the treasurer of Scotland, Sir Hugh de Cressingham, to raise taxes. At this point John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, Warden of the North, left his comfortable estates in the south and marched upon Scotland at the head of another punitive expedition.

The English did not anticipate strong Scottish resistance. Edward was away in France, but de Warenne assumed that the Scots would crumble quickly, as they had done at Berwick and Dunbar. At the time when de Warenne's troops crossed the border Wallace's small, ragged army was laying siege to Dundee Castle; without siege engines, he could only hope to starve the garrison into surrender. With the English army approaching, he left Dundee and deployed his troops in a good defensive position astride the road from Stirling to the north, where he could prevent the Royal army from retaking the liberated land beyond the Forth.

Wallace's troops waited patiently, approximately a mile north of where the Stirling road crosses a deep tidal river. On 11 September 1297, de Warenne drew up his troops on the southern bank of the river and then sent his armoured knights galloping across the bridge to deploy in front of the Scots. Here they found themselves in a water-logged meadow and, unable to gain enough momentum to

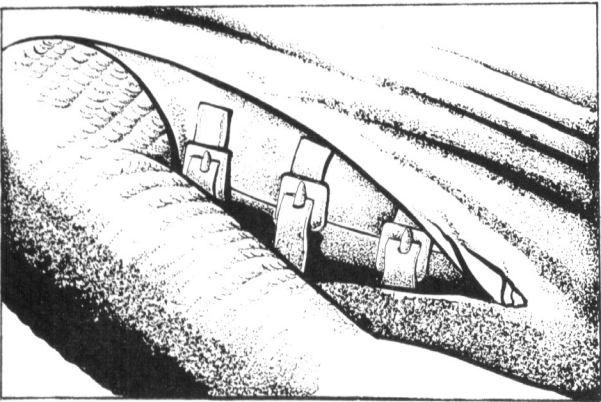
charge the Scots, they squelched about in the deep mud. At the blast of a horn the Scottish infantry rushed forward and seized the bridge, isolating the cavalry, whom they proceeded to drag from their horses and kill. Helplessly, the English soldiers on the southern side watched the terrible slaughter of their own cavalry. As the brief engagement came to an end they broke and ran, not stopping until they reached Berwick—de Warenne himself did not pause until he was safe within the walls of York. So ended the battle of Stirling Bridge. The Scots were once again an independent nation and Wallace, despite his lowly birth, was made 'Guardian of the realm and leader of the armies'.

De Warenne having failed, Edward had to march north himself. He assembled at York the largest invasion force to enter Scotland since the days of Agricola. It consisted of perhaps as many as 2,400 armoured knights and 2,900 infantry. Eight earls joined Edward: the Marshal, the Constable, Ralph de Monthemer, Arundel, Guy of Warwick and the young Earls of Lancaster and Pembroke, each bringing their own large contingents of minor knights and infantry.

As Edward's massive formations crossed the border Wallace withdrew into the hinterland, removing or burning all sources of food. He knew that Edward's army was far too big to be maintained totally by its own commissariat. When he reached Edinburgh Edward was forced to wait 14 days while the Bishop of Durham's troops destroyed Dirlerton and two neighbouring castles. Then the English army trudged on again: hungry, tired and with diminishing prospects of a decisive battle. Desertions increased, and fighting broke out between the English men-at-arms and the Welsh bowmen. Then, on 21 July 1298, Wallace led his army forward to meet the English. In the early dawn of the following morning scouting parties from the two opposing forces met each other near Falkirk, heralding the opening of the battle.

Wallace had badly misjudged the fighting condition of the English army, but he came to the field well prepared. He realised that his infantry must defeat Edward's cavalry. With the experience of Stirling Bridge behind him this seemed possible, although it was a rare event in medieval warfare of that period. He had trained his ferocious soldiers to fight in four tight 'box' formations, called

Detail from an unidentified effigy of c.1275 in Pershore Abbey, Worcestershire; it shows evidence of the development of body armour worn beneath the surcoat.





'schiltrons', protected by triple rows of twelve-foot spears pointing outwards, the front rows kneeling while those behind stood. Around these 'boxes' the Scots had erected a palisade of stakes and ropes, and archers stood ready between each formation. As at Stirling Bridge, Wallace placed his troops behind marshy ground.

By an unusual twist of historical fate, Edward also came to Falkirk with new tactics. He had learned from bitter experience in his Welsh wars of the devastating firepower of the south Welsh longbowmen; and despite the cost and difficulty of dealing with quarrelsome Celtic archers, he now included large numbers of them in his army and began to use them as part of his co-ordinated battle plan.

Before Edward could fully deploy his army the impatient young bloods of the English chivalry charged the Scottish schiltrons. They failed to break the well-disciplined Scots; but they slew the bowmen caught in the open between the formations, and drove away Wallace's small contingent of cavalry. When Edward arrived he found he could marshal his archers in tight ranks without fear of counter-fire or cavalry charges. Once in position the Welsh bowmen poured shower after shower of arrows on the Scottish spearmen,

concentrating their firepower on one schiltron at a time. Each formation was quickly reduced to a pile of dead or dying men; then Edward unleashed his cavalry, who rode over the field hacking down the survivors. Wallace and a few of his supporters managed to escape and seek shelter in the wood of Callander.

Despite this victory at Falkirk, Edward's campaign achieved little, and he soon left Scotland for Carlisle. The spirit of Scottish independence had not been destroyed, and Wallace was still at large.

In the spring of 1300 Edward, now 65 years old and recently married to a French princess, planned his fourth invasion of Scotland. This time he intended to strike at a rebel centre in Galloway. Passing through Ecclefechen and Lochmader, he captured the small castle of Caerlaverock. At Twynholm near Kirkenbright his troops captured Sir Robert Keith, the hereditary Marshal, and drove off the Scottish army commanded by the Earl of Buchan. Apart from these modest gains the campaign was a failure, and by the end of August the English army was back in Carlisle.

A year later, in 1301, two English armies entered Scotland. One, marching north from Carlisle, searched out Robert the Bruce's position in the south-west, but met with little success; once again the Scottish army melted away. Edward himself led the other force up the Tweed valley, through the Selkirk forest to Clydesdale and Linlithgow.

Here, while he wintered with his queen, he set about organising the Scottish Marches on the Welsh model. Castles were constructed and garrisons installed in the lands south of the Forth, and sheriffs and wardens were appointed to administer the area. Edward was then forced to leave Scotland to deal with a controversy over the French church. Free again from the convoluted complications of church and state, he returned to Scotland in 1303, crossing the Forth on three prefabricated floating bridges. From the captured rebel stronghold at Stirling he marched directly north and took Perth. By September his troops were resting on the banks of the Moray Firth. He continued his advance, crushing all resistance and burning barns and crops as he went. Brechin castle held out against the Royal siege engines for five weeks, but in the end this too fell. The rebel Scottish lords now began to sue for peace, leaving Wallace to

stand alone. Eventually, in 1305, he was betrayed and captured. His trial was swift, and he was hung, drawn and quartered. His decapitated head was mounted on a pike over London Bridge, and the four quarters of his disembowelled body were sent to the major cities of the north—Perth, Berwick, Stirling and Newcastle.

Robert the Bruce

Six months after Wallace's execution there was further bad news from north of the border. On 11 February 1306 the Earl of Carrick, better known as Robert the Bruce, murdered John Comyn 'the Red'—a rival for the forfeit Scottish crown—and was crowned Robert I of Scotland on 25 March. When this news reached the ageing English king he was in Hampshire. He immediately ordered the mobilisation of the northern levies and prepared the country for yet another Scottish war. Meanwhile an



Contemporary illustration from a manuscript of c.1290, showing various forms of what appear to be mail and studded fabric armours. (After 'The Massacre of the Innocents', Add.MS. 17,687)

advance force under Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, had crossed the Forth. On 20 June the earl attacked Bruce's force in a wood at Methven, Bruce escaping capture by taking to the hills. For many months he lived as a fugitive, pursued by Scottish chieftains eager to obtain the ransom Edward had placed upon his head. Members of his family—Nigel, Alexander and Thomas—and many of his senior commanders were taken, tried and executed; even the female members of the Bruce family were thrown into dungeons. The Countess of Buchan, who had crowned Bruce at Scone, was placed in an iron cage. Supporters of Bruce subsequently had their lands confiscated and given to Englishmen.

Not unnaturally, these harsh measures produced the opposite result from that desired. The hangings and confiscations produced new support for the Scottish king, and courage in the midst of disaster built him into a national hero. When he finally left his refuge in the spring of 1307 and landed at Carrick he found many armed, embittered Scots ready to support him. Edward I, now a very old and sick man, marched north once again to put down the Scottish upstart. For the last time he mounted his horse at Carlisle and, in great pain, rode as far as Burgh-on-Sands. Here he lingered for four days, and then, on 6 July 1307, he died. Before his death he exacted from his son, Edward of Caernarvon, a promise to continue this campaign against Bruce, and to carry his coffin at the head of the army on its march through Scotland. Edward, now King Edward II, broke both these promises and used his father's funeral as a pretext for returning home. English influence in Scotland was now in the hands of Aymer de Valence.

Edward II was a total contrast to his warrior father. He was incorrigibly idle and apathetic, and refused to take on the burdens of kingship, surrounding himself with favourites. He was neither cruel nor vicious, but the best that could be said of him was that he showed some interest in farming.

Had he continued the campaign initiated by his mighty father he would have probably captured Bruce and destroyed his army. Bruce was still in a precarious position. Most of the land and castles were still in English hands, and many of the Scottish lords had refused to join the so-called 'pretender'.

While Edward II vacillated at home the Scots

gathered strength and began to improve their position. Bruce's brother Edward won a small but spectacular victory on the Cree; and by the summer he and the Countess of Buchan were in control of the whole south-west, with only the castles of Dumfries, Dalswinton, Caerlaverock and Lochmaben still in English hands. By October Ross was in his hands, and even in the border lands, traditionally an English stronghold, Bruce's guerilla bands raided and pillaged virtually unopposed. By the end of 1308 Bruce ruled most of his homeland north of the Tay, and in the early months of 1309 he recaptured most of Fife.

In the summer of 1310 Edward II crossed the Tweed and marched through Roxburgh; he was accompanied by Nicholas Segrave, a Marshal, and the Earls of Gloucester and Surrey. As the royal troops marched through the forests of Selkirk and Lanarkshire, Bruce withdrew before them, employing the usual 'scorched earth' tactics ruthlessly. Without shelter and food the English army could

not survive, and by the beginning of November it had returned to Berwick. A second invasion was planned, this time to be led by the king and his unpopular favourite Piers Gaveston; but this failed even to leave Berwick.

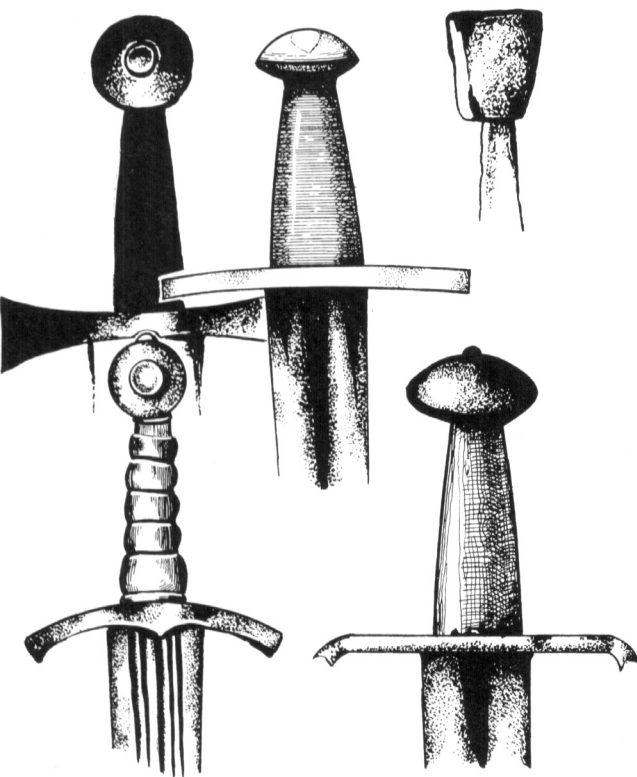
Bruce, now confident that he need fear no retaliation from England, crossed the Solway and began to raid farms and outlying hamlets in upper Tyndale. A month later he extended his raiding parties, wasting Coquetdale and Redesdale, and eventually hammering on the very gates of Durham. The people of Northumberland were reduced to offering him £2,000 to leave their stricken county in peace. The Scottish successes continued. In the spring of 1313 Edward Bruce captured Dundee Castle; all the English castles in the south-west fell to the Scots, further raids were made on Tyndale, Durham was harried and Hartlepool sacked. Out of sheer terror the border counties raised £10,000 to bribe the Scots into a temporary truce. Having bought himself some time, Bruce now set about eliminating the Royal fortresses in Scotland. After a seven-week siege the Scottish leader and his men swam across the icy waters of a moat to take Perth by surprise. In the following month Dumfries and Lochmaben fell; and by the end of the summer the garrison at Linlithgow had been captured by the ruse of jamming the portcullis open with a hay wagon.

Yet the vital royal fortress of Stirling still held out. Eventually Edward Bruce made a pact with the governor of Stirling, Sir Thomas Mowbray, that the castle should be surrendered if it was not relieved by midsummer 1314.

England, now threatened with total ignominy, had to relieve this royal bastion; and Bruce, realising that all his conquests in northern Scotland would be at risk if Stirling fell, had to take the castle—or at least, destroy the relieving force in the field. As the opening months of 1314 passed a huge army was raised in England, while in Scotland Bruce prepared his men for the inevitable battle that was to decide the future of his country.

The Battle of Bannockburn

In preparation for his invasion of Scotland, Edward II assembled a great army of perhaps 100,000 men. There may have been between 2,000 and 3,000 armoured cavalry, 20,000 archers and spearmen,



Sword hilts of the 13th and 14th centuries. Quillons generally became longer than in the 12th century. There was a movement away from simple 'wheel' pommels towards a truncated cone, pyramid or other tapered shape (top right), sometimes elaborated with three or four lobes.

and a great mass of peasant infantry. The Constable, the Earl of Hereford, the Earls of Gloucester and Pembroke, Clifford, Despenser, Nicolas Segrave and the Earl of Angus were in the van of the huge force. The various contingents had gathered at Wark by 10 June 1314, and by the 17th had begun their long journey towards the border to relieve Stirling. Little opposition was met until the advance troops reached the stream of Bannock two miles south of the castle.

Bruce's force, already assembled, consisted of less than a quarter of the English army. He had perhaps 5,000 infantry, chiefly the men equipped with 12-foot spears who formed his schiltrons, with some archers armed with short bows; and a small body of perhaps 500 cavalry. In addition to these, the main body of his fighting force, he gathered several thousand auxiliaries from the surrounding countryside. They were mainly peasants and camp followers—willing to fight well if the battle went in Scotland's favour, but largely untrained. Bruce's best troops were his spearmen, normally trained to fight in a motionless defensive role. He had spent many hours teaching them how to exploit the exhaustion of the English cavalry after the failure of their charges. James Douglas commanded the

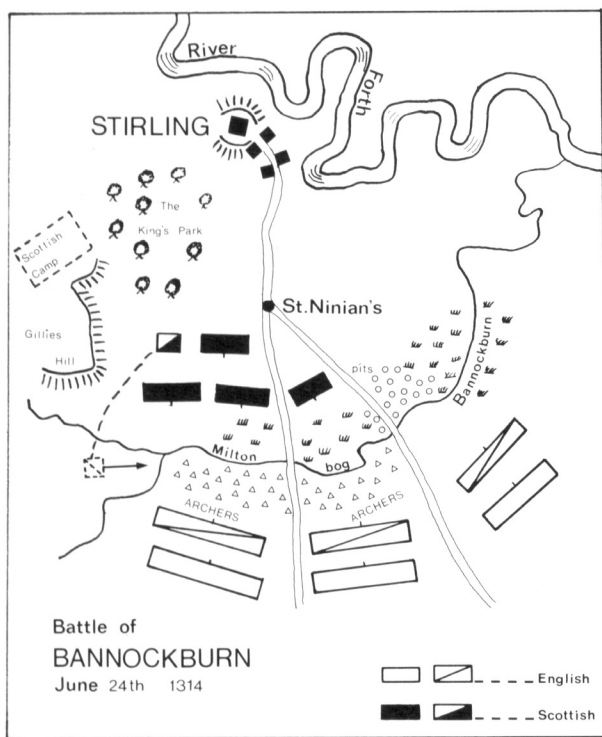
Clydesdale men and those from the western border; Randolph led the troops from Ross, Moray and Inverness; and Bruce's brother Edward led contingents from Buchan, Angus, Menteith and Lennox. Bruce himself stood amongst the Scottish reserves, where he controlled the pace and tactics of the ensuing battle.

Bruce's army was deployed in three large divisions or 'battles', each division consisting of two schiltrons. Douglas's division stood on the left flank, Randolph took the centre and Edward Bruce the right. The small body of Scots cavalry was placed under the command of the Marshal, Sir Robert Keith, and was deployed on the right at the rear of the army.

The Scots expected the battle to open with an English cavalry charge, and had protected their front by digging small pits and covering them with branches and turf. Between these pits they had scattered hundreds of deadly calthrops—devices consisting of four metal spikes so arranged that

Robert de Vere, 5th Earl of Oxford, died c.1296 after being taken prisoner at the battle of Evesham, and fighting in the Welsh Wars. The armour consists of the usual long mail hauberk, with a coif exposing most of the face in this case. The surcoat is gathered by a narrow waist belt, and the broad sword belt hangs much lower.





however they lay on the ground one spike was always erect; these would lame the English horses and throw their charge into disarray.

The first English troops to arrive on the field of battle were the young and inexperienced knights. Eager to get their first taste of glory, they did not wait for the army to deploy, but charged through the shallow burn at the Scottish positions. They were met by small bodies of Scottish troops out reconnoitering the ground before their positions. It was here that Sir Humphrey de Bohun discovered the Scottish king inspecting the ground in front of his waiting army. Realising that he had a chance to slay Bruce in single combat, de Bohun lowered his lance and charged. Bruce neatly side-stepped his horse, and swung his battle-axe down on de Bohun's head, splitting his helmet and skull in two. He then rode back to join the reserves.

This initial cavalry 'charge'—if we may call it that—was a failure. The Earl of Gloucester had been unhorsed, and the Scottish army had not wavered at any point.

In the meantime a small detachment of English cavalry under Clifford and de Beaumont, perhaps some 700 strong, felt their way along the withdrawn Scottish eastern flank, gradually easing themselves into a narrow funnel between Stirling and Bruce's

army. Bruce, realising that he could not fill this gap, had left it open to trap this small force and destroy them before the main English army could exploit this weakness. The Scottish troops on this right flank now fell upon the English cavalry; and instead of making a tactical withdrawal, Clifford foolishly engaged two of the waiting schiltrons. He was killed immediately, and the few survivors of his force were driven off—some to return to their positions in the main body of the army, others to take shelter in Stirling Castle.

The day was already drawing to a close, and the English army, its nose bloodied and its morale shaken, sheltered for the night in the marshy ground around the Bannock. The following morning, Sunday 24 June, Midsummer Day, the priests said mass before each of the Scottish schiltrons. The English also prepared themselves. Despite the difficulties of the previous day it was still possible that Bruce would follow the pattern of Fabian, withdrawing his army and surrendering his position before Stirling. But Bruce had decided to risk all in one battle, and as the English took up their fighting positions they found the three Scottish divisions advancing towards them.

Displaying all the hallmarks of bad generalship, Edward recklessly ordered the Earl of Gloucester to lead his cavalry forward. This was a pointless attack: the Scottish spearmen stood their ground, and soon Gloucester and much of the best blood of English chivalry were impaled on the hedge of 12-foot spears. The Welsh and English archers, whom Edward's father had used so skilfully to break the schiltrons at Falkirk, were still in their night position. At best they could only fire over the heads of the charging English knights; at worst, they shot into their backs.

Bruce's spearmen advanced steadily, gradually pressing the English army into the marshy ground where they could not manoeuvre. With superb generalship he brought his right flank forward and turned it north-east to force its way along the banks of the burn. Archers in the English army began to assemble at last, their lethal torrents of steel-tipped arrows falling on the advancing Scots; but before they could break the ranks of spearmen, Bruce's cavalry charged from the rear and cut them to pieces. Bruce threw in his reserve, hidden until now in the dense undergrowth near the Stirling road.

Then the great mass of Scottish peasants and camp followers joined the conflict, rushing among the English knights to kill and plunder the wounded English chivalry where they sank and suffocated in the sodden peat. Sensing imminent defeat, Edward's great army broke and fled. The king, hacking his way through the wild Scots with his great battle-axe, was first off the field, and did not stop until he reached the castle at Dunbar.

After Hastings, Bannockburn was the greatest and most humiliating English defeat in medieval history. The Earl of Gloucester, six barons, 200 knights and thousands of common soldiers were killed that day. The Earls of Hereford and Angus and some 70 knights were captured, and ransom negotiations for their release went on for a whole year after the battle. The 'Battle of the Pools', as the English called it, completely destroyed any chance of union between England and Scotland. The English castles now surrendered, and for many years to come Robert the Bruce was the undisputed ruler beyond the Tweed.

Scotland after Bannockburn

Having totally defeated the English at Bannockburn, the Scots had the scent of victory in their nostrils. They had suffered invasion after invasion: now they went over to the offensive. The English and their Scottish sympathisers were driven out of Scotland, with the exception of the royal stronghold close to the border at Berwick. With Randolph and Douglas at their head, Scottish raiding parties spilled over the borders, burning Appleby, laying waste the whole of Tynedale, and on one occasion attacking the doors of Richmond Castle. A year later Durham was burned and Hartlepool sacked.

This could not go on. Under pressure from the peers of the northern counties, Edward II began to prepare for yet another campaign; but Bruce, with his usual brilliance, was one jump ahead of the English. After an eleven-week siege he captured Berwick, the last bastion of English influence in his homeland; and in the early summer, as Edward's army ponderously assembled, he crossed the border and in a number of lightning raids burned Northallerton, Boroughbridge and Knaresborough, his incursions only ceasing when they reached York. By the time the English army were in the borderlands Bruce was safely back in Scotland,

his efforts richly rewarded with English cattle and booty. Having understandably little confidence in their royal general, the various commanders in Edward's army would not enter Scotland, and eventually took their contingents home.

In 1319 Edward gathered yet another army at Newcastle. This time the most important earls of the realm were there—Pembroke, Surrey, Hereford, Arundel and Lancaster, each bringing to the field his own feudal levy. Once again the Fabian Bruce did not offer battle, but instead sent Douglas through the western Marches to attack York. Here he almost captured Edward's queen, the royal exchequer, and important members of the judiciary. A small force was raised locally to oppose the Scottish raid, but Douglas's men swept them aside and sped south to threaten the Earl of Lancaster's castle at Pontefract. With his home and family in danger, Lancaster deserted the English host and rushed south to meet the threat. He was quickly followed by the remainder of the English army, which gave up its strong siege positions around Berwick. Bruce, without fighting a single major battle, had triumphed again.

In 1322 Bruce repeated these tactics. As a fresh English army marched out of Newcastle, Bruce's men crossed the border, by-passed Carlisle, sacked Allerdale and burned Lancaster and Preston, returning home victorious with vast sums of money and plunder. On this occasion the English did in fact enter Scotland and advance to Melrose and Edinburgh; but the Scots melted away before them, wasting the countryside as they went. After two weeks of beating the heather on the barren hills of Lothian an exhausted and starving English army turned and trudged south. Bruce did not allow them to go unscathed. He took his troops over the Solway, through the Marches into Yorkshire, and surprised and totally defeated the English at Byland Abbey. The English king and his half-brother the Earl of Kent only just escaped capture by riding non-stop to Bridlington, and from there ignominiously hiding on a fishing boat bound for Holderness.

On 21 September 1327 the tragic Edward II was brutally murdered at Berkeley Castle. He was followed to the throne by his young son Edward III. Eventually, constantly plagued by the destructive border incursions of the Scots, Edward III was



forced—as the only way to save the north of England from complete ruin—to take the unpopular but necessary step of recognising Robert the Bruce as the king of an independent Scotland. On 1 March 1328 the two monarchs concluded an agreement giving a 13-year truce between the two nations.

Being too young to rule Edward III was guided by a regent, Roger Mortimer, whose first act in office was to seek to renew the conflict between Scotland and England. Bruce, now growing old, and slowly being eaten away by the hideous disease of leprosy, sent south a fresh Scottish army under James, 'the Black Douglas'. It was a large force consisting of 4,000 armoured knights and squires and 20,000 common soldiers, all mounted on light but hardy Galloway ponies. They freely raided the borderlands as far south as the Tees, all the time carefully avoiding direct contact with the main English army under Mortimer. Having raided Tynedale they returned home. The English, having once again suffered defeat without battle, disbanded and new peace terms were made with the Scots.

In 1329 King Robert and Sir James Douglas died, leaving Scotland only one experienced senior

Unidentified effigy in a Northamptonshire church, dating from c.1300. The shape of the bascinet is strange: it appears to have raised ribs fore and aft and from side to side; a brow sweeping down to a point in the middle; and extensions covering the ears. Note also the peculiar shape of the shield, rounded at both top and narrower bottom, and the arms modelled in high relief.

commander: Randolf, Earl of Moray, who became Regent for Bruce's young son David II.

The recent Treaty of Northampton between the Scots and English had not healed the feud between the houses of Bruce and Baliol, nor did it restore the estates of the disinherited Scottish barons. His forced agreement to it had also wounded the pride of the young Edward III, who clearly took after his warrior grandfather. Against a coalition of these two enemies, incompetent Scottish generals, failing to comprehend the genius of Bruce at Bannockburn, blundered from one defeat to another through blind imitation of his deployment of infantry, regardless of circumstances. It is probable that Scotland had been saved in her first War for Independence by the death of Edward I. She would now be saved again, though on ambiguous terms, by the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War between England and France.



The same figure, showing small plates at elbow and knee, and the padded edge of the gambeson showing beneath the skirt of the mail hauberk and surcoat.

The Second War of Independence

A new invasion of Scotland was mounted in 1332. Once again the new English king did not lead the army in person. The campaign was organised by English peers and 'disinherited' Scottish barons and led by Edward Baliol. The English army was small, consisting of little more than 500 knights and 15,000 archers. Under the terms of the Treaty of Northampton English soldiers were not permitted to cross the Tweed, so the invasion force landed in Scotland from the sea and marched directly on Perth. The news of their advance had preceded them, and they found their route barred by a large Scottish army, perhaps 10,000 strong, under the Regent, the Earl of Mar. The armies met at a place called Duplin Muir, on 12 August 1332.

Uncharacteristically, the whole English army

dismounted and took up its battle positions on foot, the armoured knights and men-at-arms stringing themselves out into one long division. At either end of the division stood a triangular body of archers, each group of archers making a long salient extending like a horn beyond the central division of armoured troops. Soon after first light the whole Scottish force of massed spearmen advanced up a long slope towards the waiting English. Shoulder to shoulder, they pushed at the English centre, but could not find a point of weakness. Gradually the English men-at-arms, taking full advantage of the slope, began to force the Scots back. Quickly the archers on either English flank began to pour volley after volley into the tight formations of spearmen, the rain of shafts forcing them into an ever-decreasing area. Before long the Scottish schiltrons became one mass of heaving bodies: many men who were not killed by the arrows suffocated beneath their dying comrades. Within a few minutes the mound of Scottish dead was several feet high, and the few survivors broke and fled. Seeing their quarry escaping, the English knights mounted; they flushed the last few Scots out of the undergrowth and killed them with their lances.

There was no accurate record of the Scottish dead, but it is thought that at least 70 knights and some 2,000 men-at-arms perished that day, and an uncounted mass of common infantry lay piled on the slope where they had been slaughtered. The English casualties reputedly amounted to 33 knights and men-at-arms, and not one archer. From this point on, whenever the Scots and English fought, the combined use of archers and men-at-arms carried the day for England.

Edward III now responded to the Scottish challenge by leading his own invasion north of the border. The spring of 1333 found his troops laying siege to Berwick. When a strong Scottish force attempted to relieve the town Edward decided to give battle. On 19 July the English army once again deployed on foot on the crest of a hill: Halidon Hill. On this occasion the English fought in three divisions, each division having its own salient of flanking archers. Behind the army were small groups of reserves and mounted troops, prepared to deal with any surprise attacks from the small contingents of Scottish cavalry.

Sadly, the Scottish commanders had learnt nothing from the defeat at Duplin Muir. They still believed that the well-trained schiltron was the paramount tactical unit on the battlefield. When the battle opened Edward's troops waited stoically on the crest of their hill: they did not intend to attack the enemy, or to be driven around the field of battle on the points of those inexorably-moving pikes to a position where they could be hacked to pieces by the Scottish cavalry.

The Scottish attack was slow to gather its vital momentum. Their passage was hampered by deep mud at the foot of the slope, but once started the Scots pressed on, their lethal pikes lowered for action. As soon as they came within bow range, a steady rain of arrows began to fall among them. Hundreds of brave men died as the steel-tipped arrows tore through their leather jerkins; but still they pressed on. Those who reached the crest of the hill, muddy and breathless after the ascent, were hacked down by the men-at-arms with sword, mace and battle-axe; the few survivors were soon forced back down into the storm of arrows. The Scots suffered a terrible defeat. The Regent Douglas, six earls, 70 barons, some 500 knights and squires, and thousands of common soldiers were slaughtered



The brass of Sir Robert de Setvans, c.1306, from Chartham, Kent. Sir Robert served in Wales and Scotland, and was probably present at Falkirk and Caerlaverock. His arms were Azure, three winnowing fans Or.

that day. It is said that the English suffered no more than 14 deaths, 12 of them being archers. For the second time the Scots had suffered the same fate which was to befall the great armies of France over the next hundred years.

It was only months after the victory of Crécy, in fact, while the main English host was engaged in the siege of Calais, that the Scots made their final attempt to defeat the English in this second War for Independence. The young King David Bruce, grateful for the shelter which Philip VI of France had given him in his years of exile between 1334 and 1341, crossed the Tweed with an invasion force in 1346, in an attempt to bring Edward III home and thus rob him of the fruits of his campaign in France. However, Henry Percy and a number of English nobles who had not gone to France raised the northern levy and rushed to meet the Scots. The two armies clashed at Neville's Cross, near Durham, on 17 October 1346. Once again the English combined men-at-arms and archers; but on this occasion the English attacked, the men-at-arms and archers advancing together. English archery broke the Scottish light troops, and then ravaged the schiltrons, opening the way for a direct frontal assault by the dismounted men-at-arms. The result was a decisive English victory. The Scottish king

was taken prisoner, and remained in captivity for eleven years. Scotland was unable to pay his ransom, so David offered instead to acknowledge as his heir a son of Edward III of England. Edward's preoccupations in France made this acceptable to him, and Scotland retained her independence—though uneasily.

These events ended this particular phase in the long war between England and Scotland. Though the struggle continued, it is beyond the scope of a book of this size to describe it.

Owen Glendower

In the period of unrest following the bitter war between Richard II and Henry of Bolingbroke, there followed the last Welsh uprising.

The Welsh had in general supported Richard's cause and had opposed his deposition; and in 1400 a Welsh knight named Owan-ap-Griffith, of Glendower, who had been one of Richard's squires, led an uprising in North Wales against Henry IV. Glendower claimed he could trace his princely blood back to the house of Llewellyn, and styled himself 'Prince of North Wales' under the suzerainty of his master Richard, whom he decided was still alive and in refuge in Scotland. He was a skilled military commander, and initially his rebellion was crowned with success. The greater part of Wales quickly fell under the rebels' control. In fact, Glendower did more to unite the ancient divisions of the principality than Llewellyn had ever achieved: Llewellyn had never been accepted in Powys, while Glendower was a man of Powys. He summoned a national parliament, and planned to set up a separate Welsh church and university. He made treaties of alliance with France and Scotland, and even with the king's enemies in England. His military incursions penetrated as far as Worcester and Shrewsbury, and no town or village west of the Severn was safe from a surprise raid.

After 1406 the English forces gradually began to regain their lost ground in Wales, and Glendower was forced into the central area of the principality. Young Henry of Monmouth, later to become Henry V, served his military apprenticeship in the hard school of these Welsh wars, and personally led



Contemporary illustration from the Painted Chamber, Westminster Abbey. An interesting variety of headgear and weapons are shown, including a simple coif, a simple steel cap over a coif, and an old-fashioned nasal helmet, as well as an elaborate war-hat of *spangenhelm* construction worn by the figure wielding the heavy falchion.

many of the expeditions against Glendower.

After 1412 the Welsh prince seems to have faded into obscurity, though it seems likely that he lived for some four years longer, probably at Monnington, a quiet place in Herefordshire, in the home of one of his daughters.

Arms and Armour, 1250-1400

Throughout the 13th century the wealthy mounted knights still relied on mail as their main form of body defence, though other forms, such as coats of metal plates or various padded garments, were also in use. The mail hauberk, now improved over that shown on the Bayeux Tapestry, had tight-fitting sleeves and mittens of mail. Over his head the knight wore a separate coif of mail, often laced at the side or rear to hold it in position. The sword was slung at a convenient position across his body from a complicated decorated waist belt. Over the mail went the long coloured surcoat; and a large shield hung from the shoulder, bearing the coat of arms. During the second half of the 13th century helmets went through a period of experimentation, eventually arriving at two distinct styles: the *chappelle-de-fer* or 'war hat', and the 'great helm'. The cylindrical 'great helm' covered the whole head, sometimes curving under the chin to protect the throat. The slits for the eyes were strengthened by bars of steel and the lower section was pierced by patterns of small holes to provide ventilation.

By degrees armourers became more skilled, and small pieces of metal plate were added to mail armour. These first appeared on the knee—always vulnerable to the attack of the foot soldier and unable to be protected on both sides of the horse at once by the shield. It was not long, however, before the knee defences were extended downwards to form greaves; and by the beginning of the 14th century plate was being added all over the body. Rerebraces protected the arm above the elbow, vambraces below it, sabatons the feet, and roundels at the elbow and armpit. Helmets also changed around this period: the heavy, uncomfortable great helm began to be replaced by the smaller, close-fitting bascinet. This sometimes boasted a movable

visor, though at this date they were often poorly hinged.

The elegant, colourful surcoat remained in fashion, often richly decorated with the wearer's coat of arms; but beneath this new defences were now worn, consisting of breast and back plates united by straps down the side. These were probably made of 'cuir-bouilli', a type of armour made from leather hardened by soaking and shaping it in boiling wax. Many knights, from the last quarter of the 13th century, adopted surcoats actually lined with plates; or poncho-shaped garments, the upper half containing plates which passed under the arms and strapped together down the back. The enveloping surcoat makes it difficult



Another interesting illustration from the Painted Chamber, showing wide variety in helmets: this group includes an early example of the 'great helm' with cruciform reinforces and ventilation holes; and rounded steel caps with nasals. Note shape of flags, with long dimension along the staff.



to be sure of details of these torso defences even when they seem to be indicated on brasses and effigies.

With the British Isles torn by constant warfare during the 13th and 14th centuries, there emerged a large class of professional infantry who—since war had become their trade—took a great interest in armour. Naturally their armour was lighter than that worn by the cavalry, but the wealthier wore mail hauberks, quilted gambesons and coats of scale armour. For head protection they wore the ‘kettle hat’, or the brimless iron skull cap.

During the first half of the 14th century the appearance of the knight changed considerably. The long, flowing surcoat was at first shortened, then abandoned completely, to be replaced by the shorter and more functional jupon. Military costume became even more brilliant. Plate armour was engraved or inlaid with gold or brass; and sword belts, now worn horizontally about the hips, were decorated with precious metals and jewels. The evolution in plate armour continued, and metal plates were added to the shortened mail hauberk. Horizontal plates of body armour were

Foot and spur on an unidentified effigy of c.1290. The simple prick spurs were either pyramid shaped, or had a ball behind the spike, to prevent them sinking too deeply into the horse's flank.

riveted to a leather jacket now worn under the jupon.

The ‘great helm’ was by this time used only in tournaments: in war the close-fitting, conical bascinet was preferred. This had a curtain of mail either riveted or laced to it, which hung down to give protection to the neck and shoulders. Various forms of face protection had been developed, ranging from a narrow nasal visor attached to the mail beneath the chin and hooked on to studs on the brow of the bascinet, to a full visor hinged either at the side of the bascinet or to the forehead.

By the year 1400 a complete suit of plate had evolved. The head was protected by the bascinet, to which was attached the mail aventail. The body was covered by a short hauberk; the arms, by laminated plates riveted together to allow ease of movement; the lower legs, knees and thighs were completely enclosed in plate, and the feet were covered by laminated solerets. The only area of

armour hidden was on the torso, covered by the jupon; but from the form of this latter we can assume that rigid breast plates (and probably back plates) were worn.

Weapons

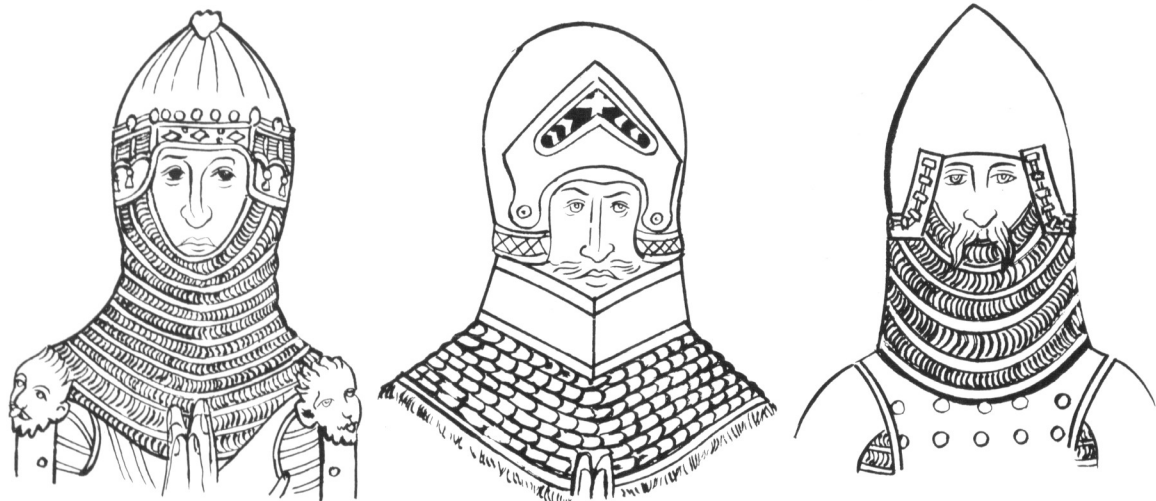
The primary weapon of all warrior classes was the sword. This had changed little in the 12th and 13th centuries, still retaining the simple crosshilt shape. A typical sword of the period had quite long quillons, usually straight but not infrequently turning slightly upwards towards the pommel or downwards towards the blade. Pommels also varied, including wheel-shapes, trefoils, quatrefoils or simple spheres. Blades were longer than those found on earlier Norman weapons, and still had a 'fuller' running their full length.

As armour improved so swords became heavier and longer, allowing more room on the hilt so that a two-handed grip could be used. Gradually, during the 14th century, swordsmiths began to produce sharp-pointed weapons with thinner, stiffer blades of diamond cross-section, used solely for thrusting at the weak points in armour. Short stabbing daggers, following the form of the sword, were often worn over the right hip. Various experimental swords were developed, perhaps the most notable being the falchion, which had a short, single-edged blade widening towards the point. With its weight distributed at the end of the blade it had immense cutting force, like a cleaver.

Since many battles during this period were fought on foot, the long-handled 'Danish' axe was popular for its leverage and reach. Mounted troops used shorter axes, which were frequently found with a long spike on the back of the head. A great variety of clubs, maces and war hammers were used: these were often extremely effective, being able to buckle or stove in the strongest armour. They ranged from crude bludgeons covered in iron studs and spikes, to thick wooden shafts mounted with flanged steel

Damaged brass (damage indicated by solid shading) of Sir John Giffard, died c.1348 and buried at Bowers Giffard, Essex. This is typical of the armour of a wealthy knight at the beginning of Edward III's reign. The hauberk has loose, elbow-length sleeves over some kind of forearm defence, with plate roundels at the elbows. The knees have elaborate poyeins; and there is a suggestion of plate or perhaps cuir-bouilli defences at the point of the shoulder. The surcoat is cut relatively short and square at front and back. Giffard's arms were Sable, six fleurs-de-lis Or.





heads, or spheres studded with fearsome-looking pyramidal points.

The common infantry used pole weapons. Spears of various lengths were widely used throughout the period. More rudimentary weapons were based on agricultural implements such as hayforks, flails and hedging bills.

Throughout the second half of the 13th century the longbow became an increasingly significant weapon, its true value being discovered by the English during the protracted wars fought against the Welsh. After 1280 Edward I always used large bodies of archers in his army, trained to fire volleys of arrows *en masse*: before this the longbow had generally been used as a weapon of ambush and skirmish.

Continental crossbowmen were often employed in English armies until about the reign of Edward III. The early crossbow could be spanned by hand, but as the bowstave developed greater strength it required the crossbowman to span it by attaching the string to a hook on the front of his belt. To hold the bow in position while it was being spanned, the crossbowman placed his foot in a metal stirrup mounted on the front end of the stock, and pulled back the string by straightening his body.

By the end of the 14th century the parallel use of both broadswords for cut-and-thrust fighting, and the narrow 'estocs' for thrusting at chinks in plate armour, can be seen. Knights often carried both types of sword into battle, hanging one from their

These 14th-century brasses remind us that this was a period of experimentation in helmet design. (Left) Sir John de Creke, c.1325, wearing an ornate decorated bascinet. (Centre) Sir Hugh Hastings, c.1347, wearing a bascinet with a movable visor, and an early example of a gorget plate. (Right) An unidentified knight from Ingham, Norfolk, wearing a simple pointed bascinet with an aventail laced to it by means of vervelles.

hip and the other from the saddle. During the latter part of the century we find knights attaching sword, dagger and sometimes helm to their chests by long chains to prevent their loss in combat. This strongly suggests—since the chain needed a firm anchor point—that some form of rigid body armour of plate or leather was worn beneath the surcoat for some considerable time before the surcoat was discarded and it became visible.

As the English and Scottish armies increasingly fought each other on foot the long-handled axe remained a popular weapon. With the exception of the huge ten- or 12-foot 'pikes' used with great effect by the Scottish schiltrons, the spear was generally reduced to about five feet long. By about 1300 a spear-point was being added to the end of the bill-hook or axe, producing a new breed of combination weapons. Mounted troops still carried the short axe or war hammer, frequently hanging it from their saddle and using it as a secondary weapon after the spear or sword.

By the mid-14th century the English army had firmly adopted the longbow, and the practice of combining archers and dismounted men-at-arms in the tactical plan. This practice was to shape the

course of European history for the next 150 years, and brought about the resounding victories of Falkirk, Duplin Muir, Halidon Hill, Morlaix, Crécy, Poitiers, Najera and Agincourt. The weapon was usually made of yew, elm, ash or wychelm, and was about the height of the archer. It was common practice to tip each end of the weapon with a cowhorn groove to take the linen string. When out of battle the archer carefully sheathed his bow, unstrung, in a canvas sleeve.

The English archer was by definition a fine muscular man, with a large chest and strong arms and shoulders. The skill and strength required to use the bow was acquired through long and patient training. He had to learn to shoot quickly and accurately, each arrow fitted to the string and drawn to the ear, while the left arm and the shoulder pushed the stave away from the body in a continuous smooth movement using all the muscles of the arms, chest and back. The natural stance was side-on to the target, allowing the use of archers in fairly closely packed ranks, often consisting of thousands of men.

The Scots had few bowmen; those they had used the short bow, and most came from the Etterick Forest area. They did, however, have great respect for the bow, and passed laws banning football and golf in favour of regular practice in the butts.

The crossbow remained an important weapon throughout the whole period, and small but significant improvements continually increased their range so that by 1400 a crossbow was probably capable of achieving some 200 yards. The single major disadvantage of this formidable weapon was its painfully slow rate of fire: at best it could not shoot more than three bolts a minute. There are examples of the crossbowman having a second soldier to carry a large rectangular shield about five feet high to shelter him while reloading. By the early 15th century the crossbow—often fitted with a flat steel stave—had become so powerful it required a windlass with pulleys and cords to span it.

Historians still argue about the effective range of medieval bows, and some interesting penetration tests have been carried out in recent years. While capable of killing an unarmoured man at its maximum range of 300 yards, the longbow could not penetrate armour at anything like that range. At medium to close range it could punch a bodkin-

headed shaft through mail; but penetration of plate was probably unknown at most battle ranges, and depended upon point-blank delivery and impact at close to a 90° angle. The short-range penetration and impact of the mechanical crossbow was superior; but, like the longbow, it naturally suffered from a sharp falling-off of velocity as the range increased.

In the context of the Scottish and Welsh Wars, of course, the finer points of armour-penetration were largely irrelevant. The infantry mass of the Scots and Welsh armies of the day were unarmoured, or protected only by mail. With a shooting rate of at least ten per man per minute, a massed formation of English longbowmen could lay down a devastating arrow-storm, which became ever more effective as the range closed. At anything approaching hand-to-hand range the effect on a closely packed mass would have been little less lethal than a machine gun.

The seal of Robert the Bruce, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale. There is an equestrian statue of Bruce at Bannockburn, made by C.d'O.Pilkington Jackson and erected in 1964; the head was modelled from a cast of Bruce's skull.



Tactics

Until the Baronial wars of the mid-13th century military commanders relied on the cavalry to obtain the victory, this usually being achieved by a headlong charge at the enemy. The most elementary military tactics—such as pre-selecting sound battle positions, or holding troops in reserve to take the enemy from the rear or flank—were regarded as examples of military genius. Contemporary military excellence was defined in terms of striking individual feats of combat rather than good generalship.

However, we find at the campaign of Evesham (1265) the future Edward I beginning to demonstrate a grasp of tactical skill unusual in the 13th century; and throughout the remainder of this century we see the evolution of a coherent military system which used in a single tactical scheme the distinctive power of archery or the monumental stubbornness of the schiltrons, combined, when

necessary, with the rapid offensive power of mounted cavalry.

In the Welsh Wars Edward I gradually brought these tactics to perfection. We find at Orewin Bridge (1281) the fierce tribesmen of Prince Llewellyn ready to stand their ground against a mixed force of English cavalry and archers. The firepower of the archers was sufficient to cause the Welsh to lose their confidence and become confused so that the English cavalry could destroy them easily. In 1295 at Maes Maydog, near Conway, the Earl of Warwick repeated these tactics with equal success.

As the English developed the tactical combination of archery and cavalry, so the Scots, always lacking a strong cavalry force, became specialists in the deployment of massed spearmen. Their success was derived from their ability to

Contemporary drawings of Scottish spearmen, after originals in the Public Record Office. Like the Welsh bowman in a similar drawing reproduced earlier in this book, one of these men has one foot bare. Could this have been to give better purchase in muddy ground?



- 1: Edmund Crouchback, 1270s-80s
- 2: Welsh chieftain, 1270s-80s
- 3: John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, 1290s
- 4: Banner of the Earl of Hereford, Constable of England



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1: Robert Fitzwalter, c. 1300
2: Aymer de Valence, early 14th C.
3: John Comyn 'the Red', c. 1300



- 1: Scottish archer
- 2: Prince John of Eltham, 1336
- 3: Scottish spearman, early 14th C.



1: William Wallace,
Guardian of Scotland, c. 1300
2: Robert the Bruce,
King of Scotland, c. 1315

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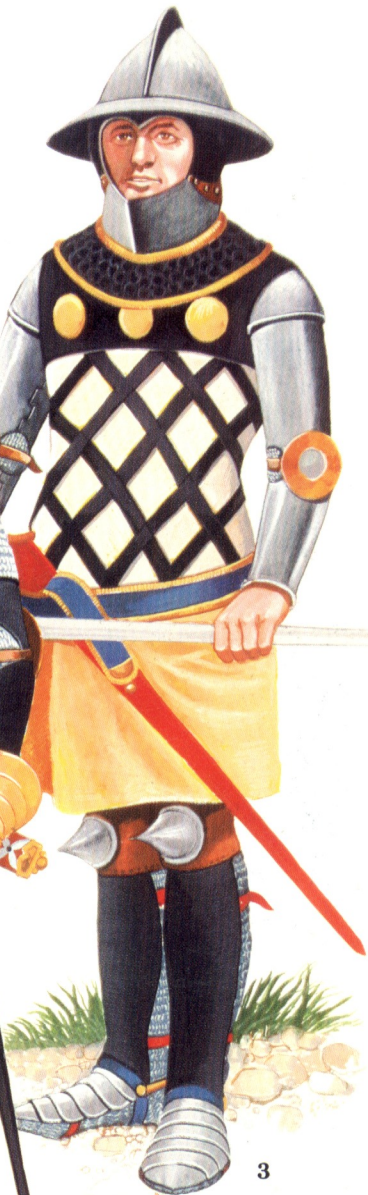
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- 1: Ralph, Lord Stafford, 1350s
2: Oliver d'Ingham, first half 14th C.
3: Almaric de Saint Amand, first half 14th C.



- 1: English crossbowman
- 2: Guy, Lord Bryan, 1330s
- 3: English archer



A1: Edmund Crouchback, 1270s–80s

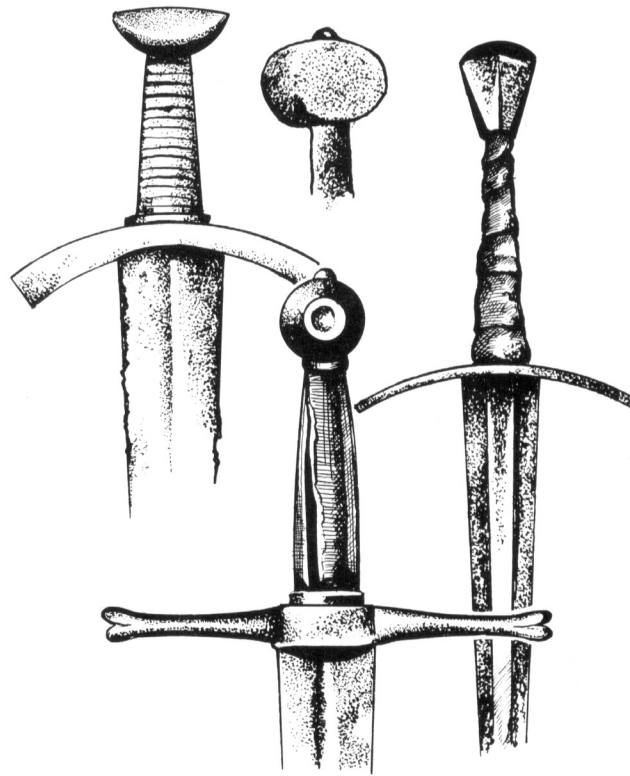
Edmund Crouchback was born on 16 January 1224, the youngest son of Henry III and younger brother of Edward I. He did not participate in the war between Simon de Montfort and his father, but did take the Crusader's Cross, and fought with distinction at Acre. At the age of 21 he was given the three vast earldoms of Derby, Lancaster and Leicester, together with large areas of land in the Welsh Marches. In 1276 Edmund was called upon to serve in the Welsh Wars, and in the following year became a senior commander. In 1280–81 he supervised the construction of Aberystwyth Castle; and in 1282, with Roger Mortimer, he campaigned against the Welsh leader Llewellyn. Edmund died while on military service in France, being made

present a solid hedge of spear-points, and to drive before them superior numbers of the enemy who were unable to withstand the steady pressure and the final appalling impact. Initially the Scots used the schiltrons with great success. In September 1297, as we have seen, Wallace and Andrew de Moray totally defeated Warenne and Cressingham at Stirling Bridge; but their fortunes were reversed at Falkirk a year later, when Edward I used archers against the spearmen (though it is worth noting that the English almost lost the battle through a pointless opening cavalry charge, and the late deployment of archers).

At Bannockburn in 1314 Edward II seems to have forgotten the lessons taught by his father, and allowed the small body of Scottish cavalry to drive away the English bowmen before they could use their weapons effectively. After this the English cavalry, unable to recognise the total futility of massed charges, were destroyed on the points of the Scottish pikes.

At Duplin Muir (1332) and Halidon Hill (1333) the English had modified the combined use of cavalry and archers. They now copied the Scots and dismounted to fight from a defensive position using, if possible, the top of a hill or a long slope. The men-at-arms were now flanked by massed archers. The Scots were forced to attack, and were destroyed by archery almost before they reached the men-at-arms.

With the notable exception of Bannockburn, we may say that for 200 years after Falkirk, whenever the Scots and English fought each other, the final outcome was the same. Halidon Hill, Neville's Cross, Homildon and Flodden all followed the same basic pattern. If the Scottish spearmen waited for the attack they were decimated by arrows where they stood, and were then finished off by an attack from the English men-at-arms. If the Scots attacked, the flanking archers destroyed them before they reached the men-at-arms. In these protracted wars against the Scots and Welsh the English had acquired the essential tactical formula and organisation which brought them success in the Hundred Years War against France.



Hilts of 13th- and 14th-century swords. The blades were as much as 38in long, usually with a fuller running the whole length. 'Brazil nut', 'wheel', and tapered pommels are shown here. The so-called 'hand-and-a-half' sword, with a hilt long enough for a two-handed grip, was also so well balanced that it could be used with ease with one hand: the length of the grip and the weight of the pommel counterbalanced the weight of the blade.

Lieutenant of Aquitaine three weeks before his death. This figure is based on his effigy in Westminster Abbey.

The prince wears a long mail hauberk with fingered gloves (hidden here) and detachable coif. His surcoat is long, nearly reaching the ankles at the rear. It could have been manufactured from linen, canvas or even silk, its possible functions being to protect the hauberk from the weather or the heat of the sun. It must be remembered that rain could make the iron links of the hauberk rust. The surcoat was also a convenient surface on which to display the wearer's personal arms. The legs and feet are enclosed in mail 'stockings' with metal or hardened leather poleyns at the knees. It seems likely that, apart from covering the knees, the poleyns probably formed a point of separation for the mail on the upper and lower legs, thus reducing the heavy drag of the mass of links.

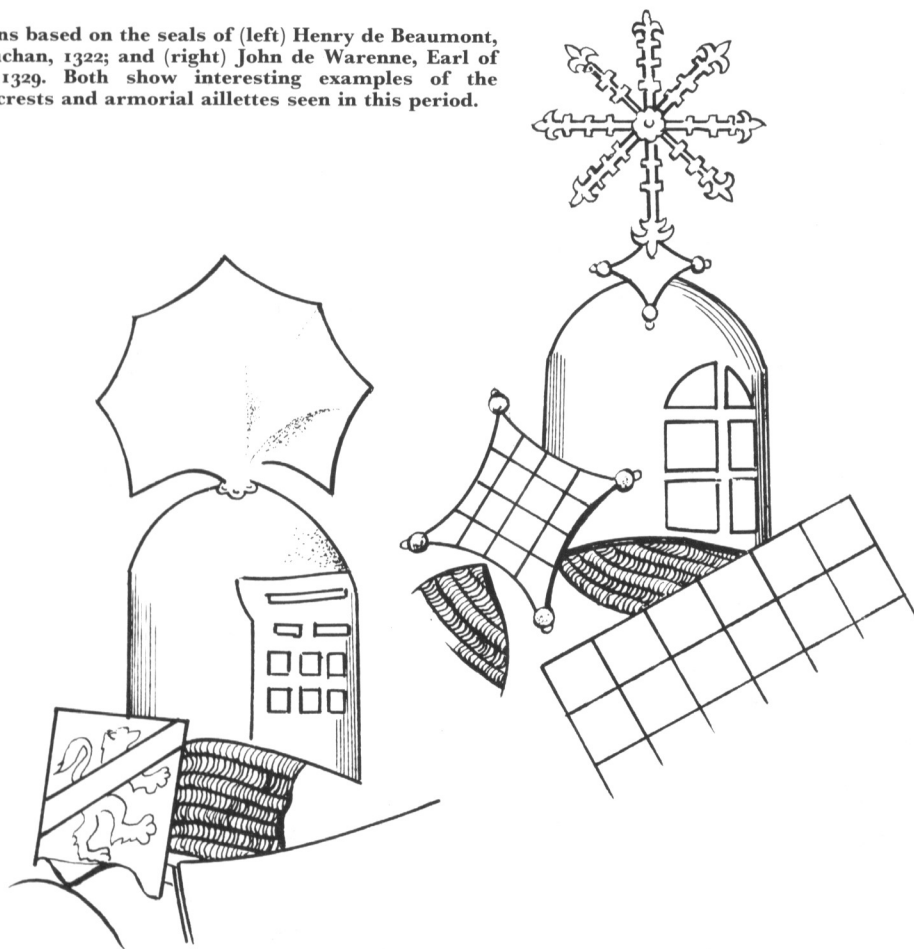
The handsome sword has a curved crossguard turned towards the blade, and the pommel is spherical with an ornate quatrefoil mounted in its centre. The weapon is suspended from a broad belt decorated with alternating plaques showing Edmund's coat of arms and what appears to be a single red lion rampant on a gold field.

The arms displayed on shield and surcoat are Gules, three lions passant guardant Or, and differenced with a label of three points Azure each charged with three fleur-de-lys Or.

A2: Welsh Chieftain, 1270s-80s

When Edward I began his campaign to crush the Welsh the Marches had been more or less under Anglo-Norman domination for some time: from Chester in the north to Nether Gwent on the Severn estuary in the south, the Welsh could largely be considered as allies. However, as Giraldus

Illustrations based on the seals of (left) Henry de Beaumont, Earl of Buchan, 1322; and (right) John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, c.1329. Both show interesting examples of the elaborate crests and armorial aillettes seen in this period.



Cambrensis pointed out, the tribesmen of the mountainous north were very different people from their countrymen in south and central Wales. These men from the north were ferocious Celtic spearmen and bowmen. Much of their costume and weaponry had a strong Celtic influence, which is revealed particularly in the cloak clasps and sword. The body armour consists of a short-sleeved leather jerkin with applied iron scales. The scales, which are made to a standard pattern, are arranged into horizontal rows and sewn onto the leather surface, each row overlapping the row beneath by about a quarter. Accounts of fighting with the Welsh suggest that each warrior carried two spears, the first to throw at the beginning of the engagement,

Unidentified effigy from Essex, showing a knight of the late 14th century. The hauberk shows a straight edge of mail beneath the surcoat or jupon; and note the globular appearance of the torso, suggesting body armour beneath the surcoat. The horizontal belt originally supported both sword and dagger, now lost.

the other to be retained and wielded in the hand. The shield is oval, with a hemispherical boss covering the recess for the central grip; it is probably constructed from wood and covered with goatskin or some other animal hide.

A3: John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey, 1290s

John de Warenne was born in 1235. He fought in the royal army in the Baronial Wars, and at the battle of Lewes served with Prince Edward, later Edward I, at the head of the army. In 1295 he became custodian of Banburgh Castle; and in 1296 he commanded the English army in the successful siege of Dunbar Castle, and totally defeated the strong Scottish force sent to relieve the castle. Within two years of this event he was appointed the English regent in Scotland and general of all the English forces north of the Trent. However, his good fortune deserted him in September 1297 when he was badly beaten at the battle of Stirling Bridge.



The earl's body is protected entirely by mail, the sleeves and mittens being part of the hauberk. Over the mail is a heraldic surcoat, with splits up either side. On each shoulder there are rectangular aillettes. Their function is difficult to ascertain: some authorities suggest that they served to deflect slashing sword blows at the neck or head, but it seems more likely that they were made from some weak material, purely to display heraldic arms. A padded arming cap is worn on the earl's head, giving essential protection from the rough mail coif which was laced over it at the side or rear. The sword is typical of the period, and is worn in a leather scabbard slung from an elaborate belt low about the waist, forcing the sword to hang across the front of the body.

Arms: Checky Or and Azure.

A4: Banner of the Earl of Hereford, Constable of England

Out of the various crusades between 1096 and 1270 there developed a military hierarchy which revealed its various levels in a series of banners, pennons and standards. A knight banneret had command of a large body of men and carried a square or rectangular banner displaying his own armorial bearing, its long side being closest to the staff. All other knights, barons and pursuivants used triangular lance-pennons also displaying their arms, but smaller than a banner. A knight banneret created on the field of battle sometimes had the tail of his long pennon cut off to make it a square banner and the symbol of his new rank.

The Arms of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex and Constable of England were Azure a bend Argent, cotised Or, between six lions rampant of the second.

B1: Robert Fitzwalter, c.1300

Robert Fitzwalter was born in 1248, and his first important office was Constable of the Castle of London. The first time he is recorded is in the English army which left Carlisle with Edward I in 1299, and he was present at the siege of Caerlaverock in 1300. Here he served in the retinue of the Earl of Lancaster and later in that of the Prince of Wales. By the time he died he had taken part in no less than eight Scottish campaigns.

He wears a mail hauberk, which was the knight's primary body defence throughout the 12th and

13th centuries. It has long sleeves terminating in mail fingers; these were fitted with a laced wrist or palm opening to allow for the withdrawal of the hand. The legs and feet are covered with mail and fitted with simple prick-type spurs. A long surcoat with a wide vent front and rear covers the hauberk and body, reaching below the knees. The lacing around the coif keeps it tight; when protection for the head was not required the flaps under the chin could be released and the coif thrown back to rest on the shoulders. The kite-shaped shield depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry began to decrease in height towards the end of the 12th century, but until the development of plate armour for the legs it remained long enough to cover most of the mounted man's body.

Arms: Or, a fess between two chevrons Gules.

B2: Aymer de Valence, early 14th century

It is thought that Aymer de Valence was born in the year 1270 and died in 1324. The son of William de Valence and cousin of Edward I, he played a major part in the political and military events of his time. In 1297 he served Edward I in Flanders; the following year he was in Scotland, where he received a grant of land and built himself a castle at Selkirk. In 1306 de Valence was made Guardian of the Scottish Marches and therefore became embroiled in the war between England and Scotland. He fought at Falkirk, losing four valets at his side, and was present at the siege of Caerlaverock. Later in 1306 de Valence commanded the force that defeated Robert the Bruce at Methven, his fortunes being reversed a year later when he suffered defeat at Bruce's hands at Loudon Hill. In 1314 he was in the English army at Bannockburn.

De Valence's beautiful tomb is on the north side of the choir in Westminster Abbey. The legs are crossed and the feet rest on a lion. His surcoat is painted with the Lusignan arms, which his father William assumed; his father's tomb can also be found in Westminster Abbey. The arms were: Burelly Argent and Azure arcyry orle of martlets Gules. It is interesting to note that these arms vary slightly in different sources.

This knight wears a hauberk with marl mittens and a detachable coif-de-mailles. His surcoat reaches the calves of his legs, the whole garment

displaying his arms. The sword is suspended from a broad belt which is simply decorated, the decoration being repeated on the scabbard bands. The knees, always vulnerable to the footsoldier, have rounded caps of plate, or perhaps cuir-bouilli. The shield, which has disappeared on the monument, was probably about two feet long and supported by a guige. Like the surcoat, it displayed the knight's arms.

B3: John Comyn, called 'the Red', Lord of Badenoch, c.1300

John Comyn was one of the Scottish Regents selected to rule Scotland before the proposed marriage between Prince Edward of England and Margaret, the child Queen of Scotland. He fought as a senior commander in many of the Scottish campaigns. Eventually he became a rival with Robert the Bruce for the forfeit crown of Scotland, and was murdered by Bruce at Greyfriars Church, Dumfries in 1306.

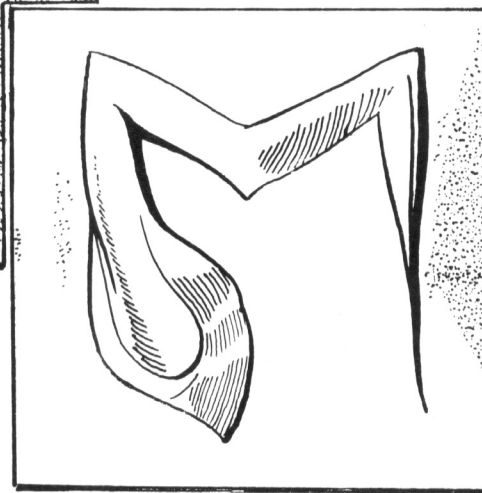
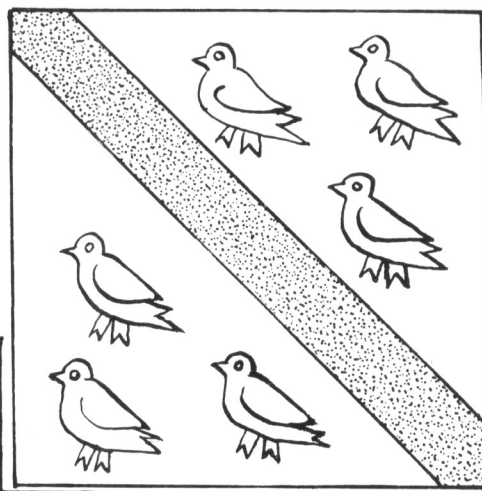
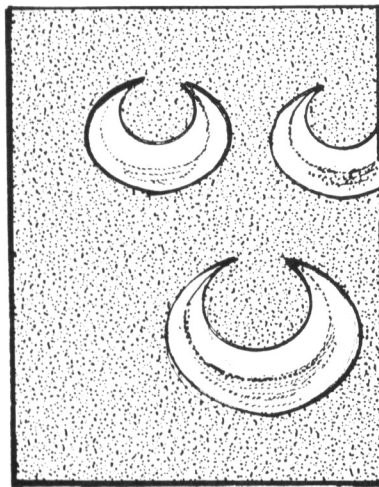
Similar features can be distinguished on this effigy of the second Earl of Warwick, who fought in Scotland with Edward III. The 'coat armour' shows heraldic charges in high relief, which suggests that this was merely an artistic convention, since the effect could hardly be reproduced on the cloth of the jupon.

The Scottish lord wears his hauberk with the coif thrown back. Under it he wears the small hemispherical skull cap known as a cervellier, which gradually replaced the various forms of *spangenhelm* favoured by the Normans. Some had a nasal bar riveted to the brim; they were held in position by straps which tied under the chin. From the middle of the 13th century onwards knights increasingly wore them as additional protection beneath the coif. Below the hauberk one can see the lower edge of the thick protective padding over each thigh. This took the form of tapering tubes sewn in vertical sections and secured to a waist-belt worn under the hauberk. The axe shown here was a popular weapon at all levels in medieval armies.

C1: Scottish archer

This archer is typical of many who came in from the Eterrick Forest to fight for Wallace and Bruce. The Scottish commanders tended to deploy them piecemeal, and did not appreciate their potential firepower when used collectively. At Falkirk, for example, they were placed in the most vulnerable positions between the huge schiltrons of Scottish spearmen.





He is armed with a short bow with a limited range, his arrows being carried in a leather scabbard strapped across the back. He wears a crude homespun dyed shirt and woollen hose. His long knife, used both as an eating utensil and a weapon, has a stag's-horn handle. The poorer Scottish troops often used patchwork garments of pitched linen or deerskin for protection and warmth.

C2: Prince John of Eltham, 1336

The monumental effigy of Prince John of Eltham, Earl of Cornwall lies in Westminster Abbey. His harness is a combination of plate and mail, the mail giving protection to the torso and the plate covering

The arms of (top) Thomas de Furnival, who served in Wales, Gascony, and six times in Scotland: Argent, a bend between six martlets Gules. (Left) William de Ridre, who served four times in Scotland: Azure, three crescents Or. (Bottom) John de la Mare, who served in Gascony and at least once in Scotland: Gules, a maunch Argent.

the limbs. His arms are emblazoned on his surcoat and shield: Gules, three lions passant guardant Or, within a border seme-de-lys of the last. This border differenced John's arms from those of his father, Edward II, and also indicated his descent from the royal house of France through his mother.

The prince's slightly pointed bascinet is encircled by a coronet, beneath which is a fringe of dagged material with tassels on each point. The mail aventail flares out to give ample protection to the

shoulders; the hauberk can be seen beneath the shortened front of the surcoat, and terminates in a point. The hands and wrist are protected by a series of small articulating plates. A thin belt gathers the surcoat at the waist, while a broad decorated belt is worn diagonally across the hips. Though the poleyns are ornamented, the plate areas of the body are smooth and generally free from decoration.

Prince John took part in the expedition against Scotland in 1335. He assisted in the fortification of Styvelyn and the town of Berwick, but became ill at Berwick, and died there in October 1336.

The effigy of Sir Hugh Despenser, 1349, in Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, shows a globular bascinet with the mail aventail attached by a cord through tubular staples known as 'vervelles'.

C3: Scottish spearman, early 14th century

Typical of the majority of the Scottish troops, this warrior is equipped in a somewhat improvised manner. He wears an old form of helmet, reminiscent of the Normans, which belongs to the group known by the modern German name *spangenhelm*, which means it was constructed with segments and bands. These were usually conical and had a nose guard (nasal). Over his homespun shirt he wears a leather jerkin covered with iron rings. He carries a 12-foot spear or pike, a simple sword, and a round wooden shield. Many of these troops who fought in the Scottish schiltrons sewed chains to their clothing, to protect themselves from sword slashes.



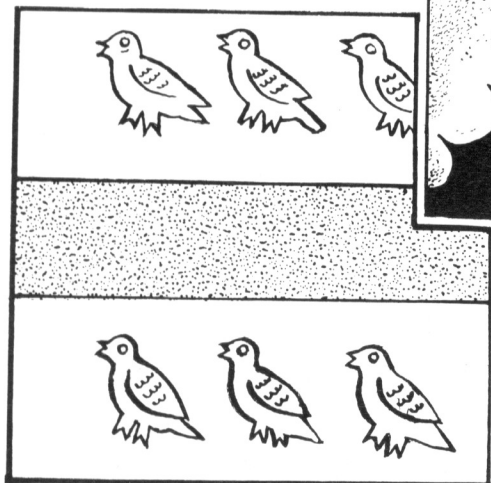
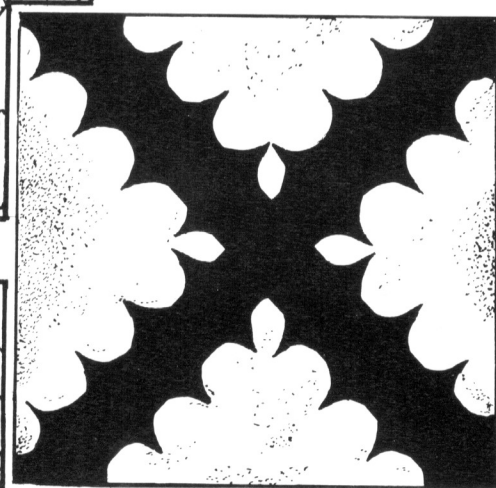
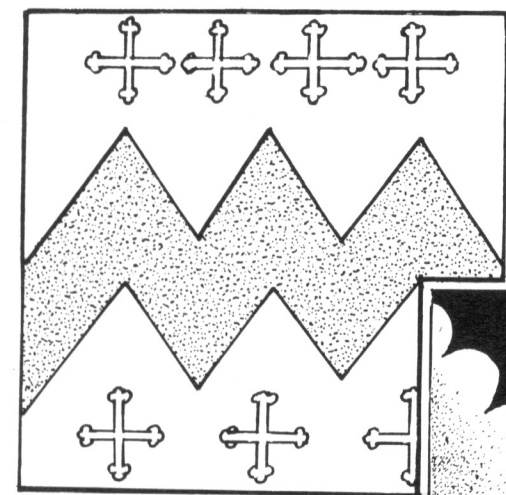
Dr: William Wallace, *Guardian of Scotland*,
c.1270-1305

William Wallace is depicted wearing a mail hauberk with detachable coif; over this he wears a long loose-fitting white surcoat. His sword has a crossguard turned towards the blade and a spherical pommel. During this period swords became longer, some eventually having 38in blades and hilts long enough to be gripped with both hands.

Sir William's 'great helm' hangs from a chain secured to the horse furniture; there are also contemporary examples of helmet being attached to a girdle around the surcoat. The chain made the recovery of the helm easier if it was knocked off in action.

Sir William's mount is shown wearing an all-enveloping cloth trapper on which he displayed his coat of arms. By the middle of the 13th century mail coverings for horses had begun to appear, but these were fairly rare, probably due to the high cost of manufacturing mail. When used they were made in two parts and divided at the knee, leaving holes for the eyes, nose and muzzle, and the rear section protected the horse down to its hocks. On the rare occasions when horse armour was used during this

The arms of (top) John de Engaigne, who was present at Caerlaverock in 1300 and served again in Scotland in 1308: Gules, cruissilly and a fess Or. (Right) John Botetourte, who served six times in Scotland between 1297 and 1319: Or, a saltire engrailed Sable. (Bottom) Walter Beauchamp, who fought at Falkirk in 1289, at Caerlaverock in 1300 and again in Scotland the following year: Gules, a fess between six martlets Or.



period it was probably made from leather, or fabric quilting.

Arms: There is no contemporary record of the arms of Sir William Wallace, but earlier and later records suggest that they were Gules, a lion rampant Argent.

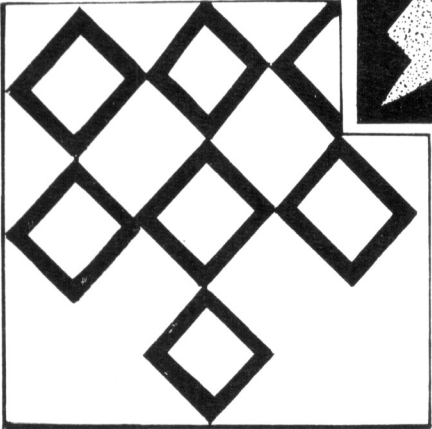
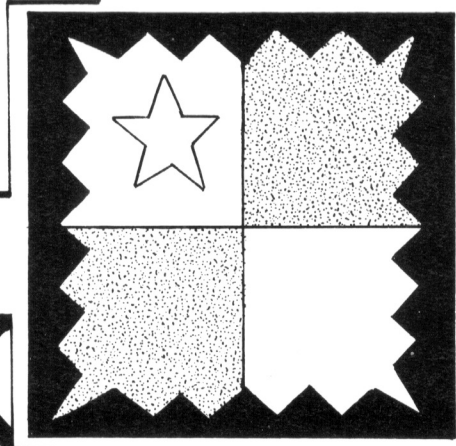
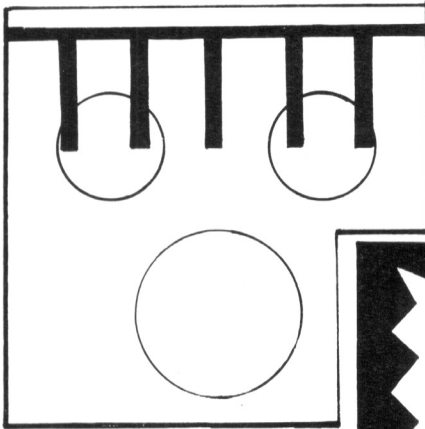
D2: Robert the Bruce

The harness worn by King Robert is a mixture of mail and plate. The surcoat is shorter at the front

The arms of (top) Hugh de Courtney, who served five times in Scotland and once in Wales: Or, three torteaux, a label Azure. (Right) Hugh de Vere, who served in the third squadron at Caerlaverock, 1300, and again in Scotland in 1305: quarterly Gules and Or, first quarter a mullet Argent, the whole within a border indented Sable. The black border is assumed to difference this knight's arms from those of his brother, the Earl of Oxford. (Bottom) John de Rivers, who fought at Caerlaverock: mascally, Or and Gules.

than behind; it is laced at the sides, and slit at the sides instead of front and rear. The old *coif-de-mailles* had been generally superseded, for the wealthy nobleman at least, by the *aventail*, fastening to the pointed *bascinet* by a lace passing through staples called *vervelles*. Mail protects the upper arms, while the shoulders and fronts of the elbows are guarded by *roundels*, these being attached by laces known as *arming points*.

Throughout the 14th century there was a gradual development of plate armour used to protect the great war horses. At first it appeared over the animal's head: this was the *chamfron*, and consisted of a shaped leather, iron or steel plate, either covering the front or enveloping the whole of the animal's head. Vision was normally provided by cut-out eye-pieces, but on other occasions the



animal was ridden at the enemy 'blind'. Protection for the neck was later added using articulating plates, leather or mail. In the early 14th century knights also protected the flanks of their horses with leather straps, decorating the joints of these straps with ornamental metal plates riveted to the leather.

Robert the Bruce's arms were Scotland: Or, a lion rampant within a double tressure flory counterflory Gules.

E1: Edward I, 1239–1307

Edward I, the 'Hammer of the Scots', is depicted wearing a hauberk with attached mail mittens. His surcoat reaches the calves of his legs. The 'great helm' shown here was introduced about the middle of the 13th century; it gradually developed a more pointed top. Laces were used to hold the helm in position, and imposing crests were mounted on them—in this case the king wears a simple crown.

The king's horse is covered by the all-enveloping cloth trapper, which carries his coat of arms. Specially large, powerful horses called destriers were bred for war and tournament. On the march these horses were not ridden, the knight keeping a small horse for everyday use; the charger was led by the squire on the knight's right hand—hence the name 'destrier', derived from *dextra*, the Latin for 'right'.

The arms shown on the trapper are described generally, but inaccurately, as 'England'. The two gold lions were regarded as having been the arms of all the English kings from William I to Henry II; the third lion was first used by Richard I when it was placed on his seal in 1149.

E2: Owen Glendower, c.1354–c.1416

Owen Glendower's harness is typical of that worn by the wealthy noble in the late 14th century. The covering of plate is almost complete, showing only small areas of mail at the armpit and knee. The sword and dagger are finished with Gothic ornamentation, thus reflecting the architectural style of the period. The armour of the limbs is clean, and closely follows the body contours. The gauntlets are steel and have small metal knobs called gadlings mounted on the back, the cuff area being flared out to protect the wrist. Over the armour on the torso is a tight-fitting surcoat.

The arms of shield, coat and trapper are Quarterly Or and Gules, four lions rampant counterchanged, and the crest a dragon (or wyvern) Gules.

F1, F2, F3: Footsoldiers

Throughout the 14th century there emerged in most medieval armies a large body of professional troops. Though they lacked any particular uniform, they were clearly better armed and protected than their forefathers, who had been forced to serve through the feudal system. Naturally their body protection was lighter than that worn by the flower of the nobility; they tended to discard all superfluous body armour, preferring ease of movement when fighting, but the better-off wore hauberks, jacks, quilted gambesons or coats of scale armour. Typical of their helmets were the broad-rimmed 'kettle hat' and the iron skull cap laced beneath the chin. Much infantry armour was stolen from the corpses of the wealthy knights on the battlefield and was often adapted to meet the needs of the new owner.

Spears of various lengths were popular weapons for these soldiers, either used as a thrusting weapon in attack or, as used by the Scottish schiltrons to provide a hedge of points in defence. The English particularly favoured one or other of the many varieties of bill; these were initially based on the adaption of the agricultural billhook, having a hook to pull down the horseman and a point for stabbing the victim on the ground.

Round shields known as *targes* were widely used. They were often manufactured by fastening together layers of close-grained wood at right angles to each other. This made the shield very difficult to penetrate and also maintained its shape. Since neither archers nor billmen could conveniently carry large shields, they often favoured small round shields called bucklers. These were used as an adjunct to the primary weapon in close combat, for parrying enemy blows.

Four- to six-foot shafted axes were effective and popular infantry weapons. Some had heavy beaks or hammer heads. With these weapons soldiers could smash their way into the strongest plate armour, crushing and buckling it where they could not pierce it.

G1: Ralph, Lord Stafford, 1350s

One of the most distinguished soldiers of his age, Ralph, Lord Stafford, served almost all his adult life on various campaigns in Scotland, Flanders and Brittany. He was appointed Seneschal of Aquitaine in 1345. He fought at Crécy, and assisted at the siege and surrender of Calais in 1347. In the next year he was created a founder member of the Order of the Garter. In 1356 he fought at Poitiers, and towards the end of the same year he was fighting beside the king in Scotland.

Sir Ralph's harness is splendidly depicted on his brass in Elsing Church, Norfolk. Typical of the period, it is a mixture of plate and mail. The hauberk can be seen on the insides of the arms and below the straight edge of the surcoat. Gutter-shaped greaves cover the front of the lower leg, with large, pointed, rather ungainly poleyns over the knees. The thigh defences are studded with rivets, suggesting that they were constructed like a brigandine. This consisted of silk, velvet or some other fabric covering a heavier under-layer; the rivets attached small metal plates to the fabric. Of particular interest is the deep-pointed visor, which pivots on either side of the bascinet. This would protect the face and throat when lowered. It is one of many unusual forms of helmet worn during this period of experimentation.

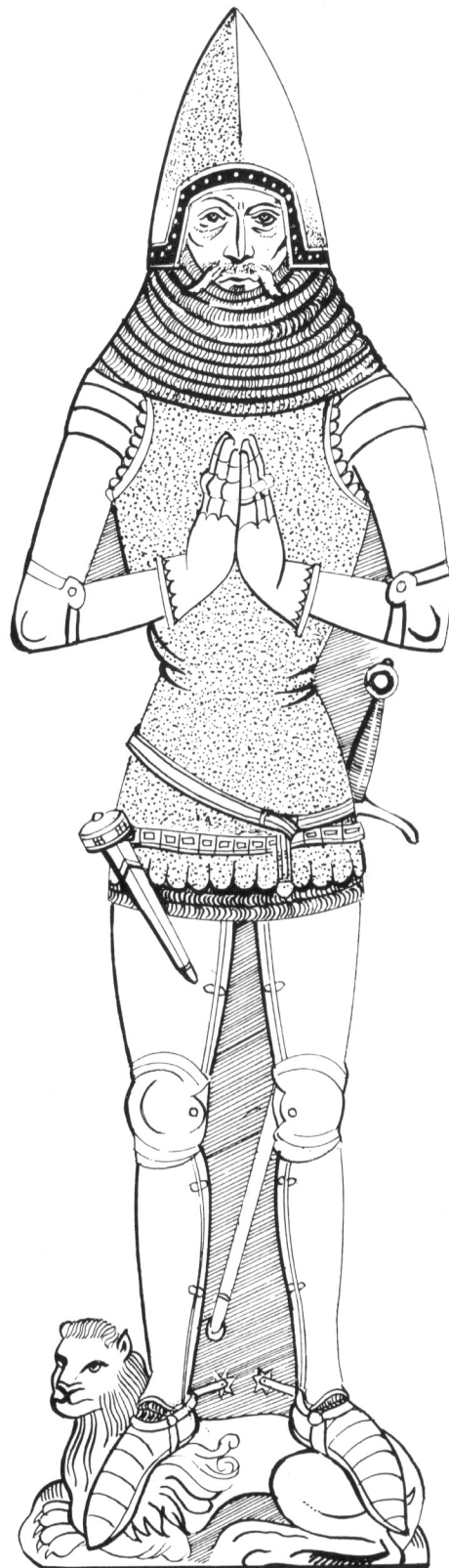
Arms: Or, a chevron Gules.

G2: Oliver d'Ingham, first half of 14th century

This illustration is based on an effigy found in Ingham Church, Norfolk. Sir Oliver served twice in Scotland in the early years of Edward II's reign. In 1321 he was appointed governor of Ellesmere Castle, Shropshire, and was involved in the virtual civil war between the king and the barons, Sir Oliver supporting the royalist cause. In 1324 he fought in Gascony, and four years later he held the important office of Seneschal of Aquitaine and fought against the Angevois. He died on 29 January 1344. His arms displayed on his surcoat are: per pale, Or and Vert a cross moline Gules.

Sir Oliver's harness consists primarily of mail.

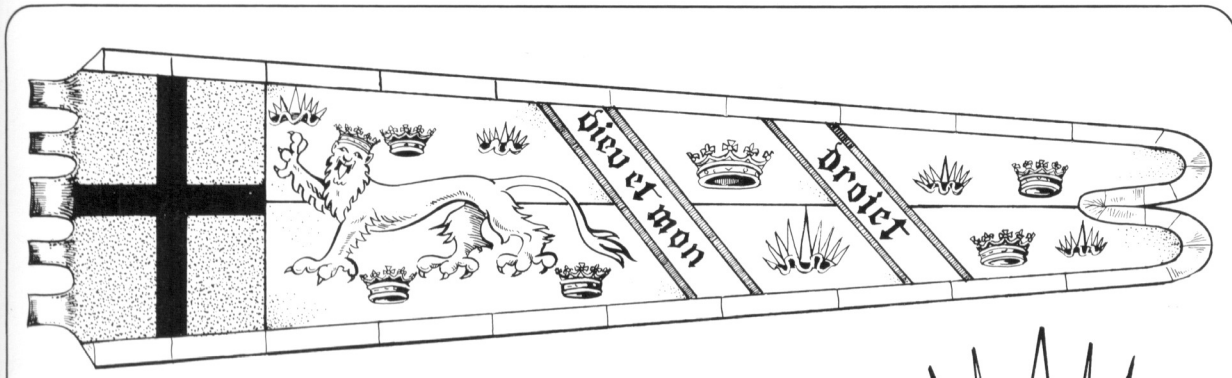
The brass of Sir Robert Albyn of Hertfordshire shows typical English armour at the end of the 14th century. The only mail visible is now the aventail, and the edge of the hauberk showing beneath the short surcoat or jupon, which is tightly tailored to the body.



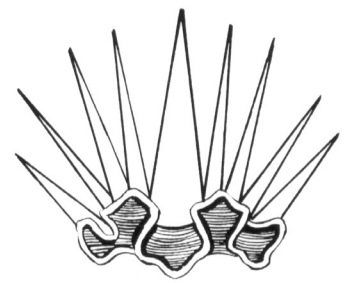
The hauberk is unorthodox in that it has short, tight-fitting sleeves drawn over the upper arms. Much of this knee-length garment is covered by the surcoat, which is deeply dagged along the front and hangs longer at the rear. It is impossible to tell whether the protective covering for the limbs is of cuir-bouilli or steel. Circular plates, typical of the period, cover the elbows and the armpits. After 1340 these were to disappear, but they were widely used again on the 'white' armour worn in the early 15th century. The construction of the gauntlets is of particular interest, the fingers being covered by small overlapping scales and the wrist having four articulated plates secured by riveting to leather or fabric gloves. The bascinet is slightly eastern in

served in Scotland again in 1355, and was appointed justiciar of Ireland, with an annual fee of £500 for his distinguished services.

The figure shown here is based on his brass at Elsing Church, Norfolk. The harness is a good example of the transitional period between mail and plate. Tubular plates protect the arms and gutter-shaped greaves cover the shins, while a series of laminated plates cover the upper surfaces of the feet. The peculiar bascinet worn by this noble is topped by a ridged chappelle-de-fer, the brim appearing to be movable on pivots on either side so that it could be raised or lowered. To protect the chin and throat a plate collar covers these vital areas. The mail around this gorget plate is is



The standard, and detail of the sunburst badge, of Edward III. The standard did not carry the whole arms of its owner, but only his personal badges and devices; about six feet long, it was displayed in front of its owner's tent. In the 'hoist' is the red cross on white of St. George. The 'fly' is halved blue over red, with alternating blue and red borders; the white diagonal bands have gold edges and lettering. The charges are all gold, the sunbursts with white clouds; the lion's claws are red against blue ground, blue against red ground.



appearance, rising to a point at its apex; the staples holding the tippet cord in position can be seen clearly.

The long 'hand-and-a-half' sword is suspended at a convenient angle over the left hip from a heavily ornamented belt. The feet are protected by articulated plates; and the spurs, still the early prick variety, are attached by long straps round the instep.

G3: Almaric de Saint Amand, first half of the 14th century
Almaric de Saint Amand served in Scotland in 1338, with the Earl of Lancaster in France in 1342 and 1345, and may have been at Crécy in 1346. He

universally large, showing only a few rows of very big links, where at least twice as many rows might have been expected.

Arms: Or, fretty Sable, on a chief of the second three bezants.

H1: English crossbowman

The crossbow was used in all European armies as early as the First Crusade, and its origins can be found in the Gallo-Roman period. Mercenary crossbowmen, usually from Gascony, were employed by the Plantagenet kings in most of the Welsh and Scottish campaigns. The weapon consisted of a strong stave made of horn, wood,

sinew or—latterly—of steel, attached to the end of a wooden stock. A pivoting nut held by a trigger-catch kept the drawn string back. It was a very accurate weapon, but slower, heavier and more difficult to load than the conventional bow. The arrows or quarrels could penetrate armour, and could be used as incendiary projectiles in siege work. They carried wooden, leather or parchment flights which gave them a rotary action in flight, increasing their velocity and penetration.

The crossbowman shown here is well equipped with a 'kettle hat', hauberk and coif, and flexible lames over his knees. His bolts are carried in a leather quiver. A double spanning hook can be seen attached to a broad studded belt around his waist.

H2: Guy, Lord Bryan, KG, 1330s

Guy, Lord Bryan was one of the founder members of the Order of the Garter and a standard bearer at the Battle of Crécy in 1346. His armour is a combination of plate and mail, though many important noblemen of this period were beginning to wear harnesses of complete plate. The mail hauberk is short, with a straight edge to the skirt showing beneath the jupon, and the mail sleeves

The effigy of the 11th Earl of Oxford, c.1400, shows a good example of the armour worn at the very end of our period. The pointed bascinet, fitted with a jewelled orle, is decorated with brass, gilt or lateen above the brow. The armpits are protected by concave plates and the elbows by roundels. The arms are displayed on the coat armour: quarterly Gules and Or, in the first quarter a mullet Argent. This earl fought in Scotland.



over the upper arms are exposed. The chausses, which were gradually being replaced by plate, seem to have reinforcing longitudinal strips of leather, possibly supported by lengths of metal. The metal poleyns are globular and completely enclose the knees. The aventail is tight and forms a protective funnel over the shoulders and neck; it is secured in the usual way by a cord passing through vervelles on the rim of the pointed bascinet. Over the body armour is worn a heraldic surcoat, the lower edge being ornamented with gold. The waistbelt is narrow and worn horizontally on the hips, the end being looped and left to fall at the front.

Guy, Lord Bryan served with great distinction in many of Edward III's campaigns both in Scotland and on the Continent. As a young man he fought beside the king in 1327 near Stanhope Park in Durham, when Scottish troops under the Earl of Douglas made a surprise attack. He returned to Scotland in the 1330s and fought in several campaigns. His badly damaged effigy, though still bearing some of the original paint, is in the Abbey Church at Tewksbury. His arms were Or, three piles, conjoined in base Azure.

H3: English archer

The cradle of the longbow is believed to have been South Wales. Edward I and the Lords Marcher acquired a healthy respect for this weapon when they attempted to subjugate the Welsh tribesmen, and increasingly used Welsh and later English archers in the Scottish campaigns and on the Continent.

The illustration depicts a well-equipped archer of the mid-14th century. Beneath his quilted jerkin he wears a homespun shirt. Around his hips he wears a leather belt, from which hangs a simple sword in a leather scabbard. The hose follows a general fashion to wear parti-coloured clothes, not only divided completely into two halves of two colours, but striped diagonally, vertically and horizontally. The helmet is worn over a fabric neckpiece. The bowstave is carried unstrung in a canvas sleeve to protect it from the weather.

Unknown effigy of c.1290, showing the sword belt and scabbard. The buckle-end of the belt is attached to the decorated scabbard by means of a ring; the other end of the belt passes round the knight's back a few inches lower, causing the scabbard to hang at a convenient angle.

