

## **Andrew Murray and William Wallace Co-Commanders at the Battle of Stirling**

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Andrew Murray, also known as Andrew Moray, was born about 1270 into one of Scotland's most powerful families. As the oldest son of Sir Andrew Moray of Petty, he had the advantages of family connections to the most powerful Scottish families. Andrew's education included instruction in military strategy to prepare him for his place in the knighthood.



*Sir Andrew Murray*

In April 1296, Andrew Murray was part of the Scottish army defeated by Edward I's forces near Dunbar. After the battle, Sir Andrew Murray, Andrew's father, was captured by the English and was locked up in The Tower of London. Rather than imprisoning Andrew in London, he was held captive at Chester Castle, from which he escaped.

After his escape, he returned to Avoch, his father's castle, overlooking the Firth of Moray and where he built forces in opposition to Edward I. He attacked many of the main castles in Moray including laying siege to Urquhart Castle. While most of these actions were not considered momentous, a few of them certainly caught the attention of Edward. In one incident, Andrew attacked and killed several soldiers of Sir William fitz Warin,

Constable of Urquhart Castle, as he was returning from a meeting with Sir Reginald Cheyne – Edward’s main supporter in Moray. Upon receiving the report of this attack, Edward I directed several Scottish notables, including John Comyn, the Earl of Buchan, to deal with Andrew Murray – Andrew was the stepson of Euphemia Comyn. Using his connections to the Comyn family through Euphemia, Andrew managed to ‘escape’ to the wilds of Moray and avoided capture by Edwards’ men. The King’s men decided not to pursue him in this area; it is worth noting that all of Andrew’s pursuers had intimate knowledge of the land in Moray, but used the rough terrain as an excuse for inaction. Some say that the Scottish nobility tacitly supported Andrew and supplied him with cash, weapons, and horses.

During the autumn of 1297, Andrew Murray and William Wallace joined their 2 armies at the Battle of Stirling. Andrew was one of the few soldiers from the Wallace/Murray army who died during the battle. Many say that Andrew was merely wounded; historians have found 2 letters sent by William Wallace after Stirling that bear both the Murray seal and Wallace’s seal. The first letter was sent from Haddington on 11 October to the mayors of Lübeck and Hamburg, two of the towns of the Hanseatic League, by "*Andrew de Moray and William Wallace, leaders of the kingdom of Scotland and the community of the realm.*" The second was issued to the Prior of Hexham on 7 November by: "*Andrew de Moray and William Wallace, the leaders of the army and of the realm of Scotland.*" Since the name of Andrew Moray does not appear on any other later document, it is deduced that he must have succumbed to his wounds around this time. But the importance of these letters is undermined by the lack of any mention in English or Scottish chronicle-sources of Moray's presence at Hexham during the invasion of northern England when this latter letter was issued. Walter Guisborough's chronicle, which contains a detailed account of this invasion, makes it clear that it was led by William Wallace; he makes no mention of Moray.



*Stirling Bridge*

It has been suggested that Wallace needed to issue documents jointly in the name of his deceased co-commander until such time as he was able to consolidate his position as Guardian of Scotland. Willam Wallace, as a former outlaw, was vulnerable to the machinations of Scotland's politically elite. He needed the protection offered by Andrew Murray's name and influence, even after death, to keep his position secure.

A few months after his death, Andrew Murray's widow gave birth to a son, also named Andrew. This child would rise to the lordships of Petty and Bothwell and play a crucial part in resisting the efforts of Edward III to control Scotland. He would be entrusted twice by King David II, the son of King Robert I, to lead and protect the realm in the King's absence. Like his father, he would be a gifted military strategist and leader, and, like his father, he would die too young in the defense of his beloved Scotland.



*Murray Clan Badge*