

**King Robert the Bruce, 1274-1329, his skull and portraiture / by Karl Pearson, with sixteen plates and three contours in the text.**

**Contributors**

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KING ROBERT THE BRUCE, 1274—1329  
HIS SKULL AND PORTRAITURE

BY  
KARL PEARSON, F.R.S.

WITH SIXTEEN PLATES AND THREE CONTOURS IN TEXT

For auld storyse, that men redys,  
Repraisents to thaim the dedys  
Of stalwart folk, that lywyt ar,  
Rycht as thai than in prescence war.

*The Bruce*, i. 17.

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BRUCE, Robert, King of Scotland [1274-1329]

FAMOUS PATIENTS : Bruce, Robert

ERHANIUM : Mediaeval

320342

*Of this separately printed Monograph  
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No. ....




(FOLIO) BZPXA (Bruce)

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## THE SKULL OF ROBERT THE BRUCE, KING OF SCOTLAND, 1274—1329.

By KARL PEARSON, F.R.S.

The king ansuer has maid thaim nane,  
Bot menyit hys hand-ax shaft sua  
Wes with the strak brokyn in twa.

BARBOUR'S *The Bruce*, XII, 96.

ROBERT THE BRUCE VIII was the seventh lineal descendant of Robert de Brus (or de Bréaux) I who came over with the Conqueror and was rewarded by him with 94 manors in England, among others that of Danby in Cleveland, where his castle is still in existence, symbolic of the rugged sturdiness of the stirp. The third Robert was the founder of the Scottish branch, holding the fief of Annandale. Of the seven Roberts who preceded King Robert, nearly all were stalwart fighters, wealthy and even generous men, but scarcely of the stuff out of which great statesmen even in those days were made. The fifth Robert, who died in 1245, married Isabel daughter of David, the son of Henry of Scotland and brother of William the Lion. On this marriage was based the claim of the eighth Robert to the crown of Scotland. Robert the Fourth had also married into the Scottish Royal blood, having for wife a daughter of William the Lion himself. The sixth Robert married a daughter\* of Gilbert de Clare of Gloucester; the seventh Robert a Scots-woman, Marjory, Countess of Carrick†, the mother of our Robert the Bruce. Thus our Bruce was a mixture of Scottish and Norman blood, as his allegiance was divided between Scotland and England by his fiefs in both countries. We cannot therefore look upon Bruce as of pure race; on the father's side he should have been a Norseman, but on the mother's side he came from the Celtic blood of Galloway. To judge him by his skull we should say that he was a man of great muscular strength and energy; the frontal would not popularly indicate great intellectual power, but the acts passed in his reign seem to suggest that besides urging the efficient training in arms and the provision of arms for the nation, he had a considerable sense of the importance of justice between class and class and the need of restraining the great nobles from oppressing the commonalty. Among the people he went by the name of the "Good King Robert."

After Bruce's assassination of John Comyn and Comyn's uncle in the church of

\* Isabel (b. 1226). Her mother was Isabella, daughter of William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke.

† She was a daughter of Walter, the Steward of Scotland, and this was the first link between Bruce and Stewart blood. I presume he was Walter the Steward of Scotland who died in 1246 and was the great-grandfather of Walter the Steward who married Bruce's daughter Margaret. Thus Margaret and her husband were second cousins and Bruce already had Stewart blood in his veins. It is owing to these marriages that H.R.H. the Prince of Wales bears the titles of Earl of Carrick and Great Steward of Scotland.



## 2 *The Skull of Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland, 1274-1329*

the Friars Minor in Dumfries and after his assumption of the crown (1305) he suffered many hardships, but slowly pulled the Scots together, until he won the freedom of Scotland by the great victory of Bannockburn in 1314. The full story of Bruce does not concern us here, but there is little doubt that beyond his great strength, he was a man of marked character, who could determine a great policy, and had the power to carry it through not only by brute force, but by foresight and apt choice of lieutenants. Riding his pony, or "litill palfrey," he could fell

Schyr Henry the Boune\*, the worthy  
That wes a wycht knyght, and a hardy,

with one stroke of his battle-axe, and make no other reply to the remonstrance of his friends at the risk he ran, than to regret the broken shaft. But there were other sides to his nature; he could encourage ship-building, lay out his palace gardens, and reform the law. Like most of the Scottish kings, and nobles, and not a few of the like classes in other countries, he had a very considerable progeny born out of wedlock. He was probably a man of strong passions, of strong hatreds and firm friendships. His murder of John Comyn in an ecclesiastical building was not incompatible with strong religious feeling, nor with a vow to visit the Holy Sepulchre, nor with his desire on its non-fulfilment that Douglas should carry his heart there.

In the later years of his relatively short life Bruce is said to have suffered from "leprosy," which Dr Mackay somewhat quaintly describes as "contracted during the hard life of his earlier struggles." Leprosy could scarcely be due to a hard life unless such life brought a man into contact with lepers. Except for the date of his death, 1329, we might more readily imagine it a case of sporadic syphilis, which appears in early times to have been confused not infrequently with leprosy. Chalmers in 1844 had some suspicion that Bruce's disease was not leprosy, for he writes that Bruce died "at Cardross near Dumbarton, on the 7th June, 1329, from a severe disease, then termed leprosy." (*Hist. and Statist. Account of Dunfermline*, Vol. I. p. 148.)

That Bruce's body was brought from Cardross and buried before the high altar in the Abbey Church of Dunfermline seems quite certain†. But a new church was built in 1250 and the old church appears to have become then a vestibule church. There is therefore some doubt as to the positions of the earlier and later *Locum sepulture Regum*. The matter has been discussed at length by Dr Ebenezer Henderson in his two books‡, and the very good plan of the Abbey by Frances C. Eeles§, together with the work of David Macgibbon and Thomas Ross||, seem to leave little doubt that the body was found before the high altar of the church

\* Sir Henry de Bohun. See *The Bruce*, XII. 29.

† "Sepultusque est rex apud monasterium de Dunfermelyn in medio chori, debito cum honore." Fordun's *Scotichronicon*, Vol. II. p. 292 (see Note § p. 4). See also Barbour's *The Bruce*, xx. 285-7.

‡ *The Royal Tombs at Dunfermline*, Dunfermline, 1856, and the *Annals of Dunfermline, from the Earliest Authentic Period to the Present Time*, A.D. 1069 to 1878, Glasgow, 1879. The latter deals with the tomb on p. 130.

§ See p. xxxi of Dr Erskine Beveridge's *Burgh Records of Dunfermline*, Edinburgh, 1917. The plan is enlightening for the relationships of the three churches.

|| *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1896. See Vol. I. pp. 230-258. This gives an excellent description of the Abbey and the Abbey Churches, and shows that much is still left of the older buildings.



as it existed at Bruce's death. Peter Chalmers in his *Historical and Statistical Account of Dunfermline* (Vol. I. 1844, Vol. II. 1859) gives much information in a discursive way which it would not be easy to find elsewhere, but the reliability of which may be open occasionally to question\*. When Edward I in 1304 burnt Dunfermline Abbey, the great church seems to have escaped. It is not so certain whether that church also escaped in 1385 when according to Froissart, Richard II and his lords leaving Edinburgh went to Dunfermline where is a large and fair abbey of black monks in which the Kings of Scotland have been accustomed to be buried. The King was lodged in the Abbey, but after his departure the army seized it and burnt both that and the town†. This does not directly state that the great church was destroyed, although the English army was not likely to be desirous of sparing Bruce's tomb. On the other hand more modern historians deny that Richard II ever crossed the Forth‡. It is accordingly possible that Bruce's monument escaped foreign foes. Henderson holds that the shrines, *tombs*, crosses, relics and images of Dunfermline Abbey were destroyed and the greater part of the buildings razed to the ground by the reforming bigots of 1560. Thus Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie writes§:

Upoun the 28 day thair of [March 1560] the wholl lordis and barones that war on thys syd of Forth passed to Stirling and be the way kest down the Abbey of Dumfermling.

The "lordis and barones" were armed with a general order or warrant, and "in their mistaken zeal"—a somewhat charitable method of expression—they appear faithfully to have done "their taske til ye leter"—or rather somewhat beyond it||!—

The warrant runs:

To our traist friendis—Traist friendis, after maist harty commendacioun, we praye you to faille not to pass incontinent to the Kirk of Dunfermline and tak down the hail imagis thereof, and bring them furth to the kirkyard, and burn them openley and sicklyk cast down the altaris and purge the kirk of all kynd of monumentis of idolatrye. And this ze faille not to do as ze will do us singulare empiresair, and so commitis you to the protection of God. (Signed) Ar. Argyle. James Stewart. Ruthven.—(See Henderson's *The Royal Tombs at Dunfermline*, p. 25.)

Three names of ill omen in Scottish History! There is added a postscript: "Faille not, bot ye tak guid hyd that neither the dasks windochs nor durris be ony wayis hart or broken either glassin wark or iron wark." But what if the "glassin wark" and "windochs" contained the images of saints, and what if the lead of the roofing was desirable for bullets? Anyhow the second church seems shortly after this

\* Thus on Plate IV, p. 71 of Vol. I we are given an engraving of a coin of Robert Bruce, which is very unlike the coins reproduced on our Plate VII. Either it was from a very different die, or the engraver has thought it right to add a strong jaw and a chin which inspire some respect! Cf. also Pinkerton's engraving of the Bruce coin in his edition of Barbour's *Bruce*, Vol. I. p. 3. In his second volume Chalmers provides a plate of fragments from Bruce's tomb, but no evidence is given that they are such, or that indeed they are parts of a tomb at all.

† *Histoire et Chronique de Messire Jehan Froissart*. Ed. Denis Sauvage, Paris, 1574. T. I. p. 275. See my Note p. 24.

‡ See Fernie's *History of Dunfermline*, pp. 11, 132, 133 and Henderson's *Annals of Dunfermline*, pp. 142-3.

§ *The Chronicles of Scotland*, Vol. II. p. 555, Ed. Dalzell, 1814.

|| It must be remembered always that the reforming Lords were expropriating lords and had every reason for leaving the ecclesiastical buildings uninhabitable and worthless, in case their former owners desired to return.



visitation to have perished. The question I have been unable to answer is whether Father Time, Richard the Second, or Moray's "lordis and barones" destroyed the monument to Bruce in the Abbey Church. As that monument was almost certain to have included an effigy of the king, a traditional portrait may have existed up to the time of the Scottish Reformation, if indeed the "lordis and barones" were really the despoilers of the tomb of their greatest king as they were the defamers of their most noteworthy queen. Bruce before his death during his long illness gave an order to sculptors in Paris to prepare a monument for him, and we know from the still extant accounts that this was erected after his death. That it must have been of marked importance and splendour can hardly be doubted. It was brought to Scotland by way of Bruges, and the Chamberlain's Rolls refer to considerable sums paid for the gold purchased in Newcastle and York to gild it. Fragments of black and white marble and some stone carvings showing signs of gilding have been preserved at Dunfermline and in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries\*, and are *said* to be from Bruce's tomb. In the same Museum is a small head cut in soft bluish stone, apparently "calm" stone, the same kind of stone as many of the ornaments presumed to be from the tomb are reported to be made of. On Plate VIII the reader will find a representation from four aspects of this stone. It will be seen that, although the head has been badly damaged, it bears a crown. It has been suggested that this is the head of the king's effigy from the tomb. This seems to me improbable; not only do the large curls suggest a child†, but the main effigy of the monument would be likely to be of greater size; it is more reasonable to suppose it represented Bruce's son, David II, who was crowned in his father's lifetime, attendant at his father's tomb. However this may be, the head is not helpful for the portraiture of Bruce, nor have we any real information as to the design of and the effigies associated with the monument. We might not unnaturally expect to find not only Bruce, but his two wives who both died before him‡ and his two children—Margaret and David—represented. If so, not a fragment of the larger figures has survived. It is possible that the one thing from the tomb which has been preserved is an epitaph, which is provided by Fordun§:

Hic jacet invictus ROBERTUS, Rex benedictus,  
Qui sua gesta legit, repetit quot bella peregit.  
Ad libertatem perduxit, per probitatem,  
Regnum Scotorum; nunc vivat in arce polorum.

Sir Henry Jardine in his *Report* favours the view that the monument was either pillaged at the time of the Reformation or destroyed by the falling ruins of the church. But he gives no arguments for this opinion.

\* There are also fragments of the cloth of gold in which the body was wrapped.

† Chalmers (*loc. cit.* Vol. I. p. 149), following Jardine in his *Report*, suggests that the curls are similar in form to those on Bruce's coins. But not only are the coins not portraits of Bruce, but the French sculptors would hardly work from coins.

‡ Bruce's first wife was Isabella, daughter of the Earl of Mar; his second wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Aylmer de Burgh, Earl of Ulster, who died in 1327 (Fordun). Some works erroneously give her name as Mary (e.g. H. G. George's *Genealogical Tables*, 1904); the armorials sometimes as Isobell.

§ *Scotichronicon cum Supplementis et Continuatione Walteri Boweri*. Ed. Goodall. Tom. II. p. 293. This brief epitaph is followed by a much longer one.



In 1817 that part of the Abbey Church of Dunfermline in use as the parish kirk having become ruinous a new building was designed, which extended over the area of the royal tombs. In the course of building operations the workmen on February 17, 1818 struck a vault in line with the centre of the ancient choir and in front of where the high altar had formerly stood. This vault covered by two large slabs was pronounced to be a royal vault. It was reclosed and more formally opened on November 5, 1819 after the erection of the new kirk, in the presence of the King's Remembrancer, Sir Henry Jardine, of several Barons of the Exchequer, of Dr Munro, Professor of Anatomy in Edinburgh and of Dr Gregory, His Majesty's First Physician for Scotland; it was decided by them to be the tomb of Robert Bruce\*.

The vault or grave was about seven feet long, of regular masonry, situated within a larger vault. It contained a human skeleton, wrapped up in two separate coverings of lead. At the time the grave was first opened, there was at the top of this lead covering, something which had the appearance of a rude crown. Under this lead was a covering of linen cloth interwoven with gold thread, but which, on the second opening, was found in a state of great decay. The whole being removed from over the body, the skull was taken up, and found in a most perfect state. The *os hyoides* was entire, and several cartilages of the larynx were visible, from having, it is supposed, been ossified. The whole teeth in the under jaw were entire, and in their places; but there were four or five in the upper jaw wanting, with a fracture of the jaw-bone in front, probably occasioned by a blow which the king had received in one of his military adventures†.

But the most remarkable circumstance which we observed upon examining the skeleton, was the state of the sternum, which we found had been sawed asunder longitudinally from top to bottom, the most satisfactory evidence that it was the body of King Robert Bruce, as it proved beyond a doubt that it had taken place previous to his interment, in order to get at the heart, which he had directed to be carried by Douglas to the Holy Land, and which the ignorance of the Anatomists of those days had made them perform, in order to enable them to comply with their Sovereign's last commands.

We now turn to a singular matter which is described in the following paragraph:

The workmen, in the course of their operations a few days afterwards, found among the rubbish of the vault a plate of copper, which had escaped notice at the previous examination, having engraved upon it a cross bearing the inscription "*Robertus Scotorum Rex.*" Above the inscription is the figure of a crown; and beneath it a crosslet with four stars or mullets inserted in the angles. The letters of the inscription resemble those on the coins of BRUCE. Upon the whole, there cannot be conceived more satisfactory evidence of any fact of the kind, than that the skeleton thus discovered was that of King ROBERT BRUCE‡.

\* Jardine's *Report* lays no doubt on the Tomb being that of Robert Bruce, but then he and others of that date accepted the coffin-plate as genuine. Chalmers (*loc. cit.* Vol. i. pp. 146—150) sums up the arguments, I think, fairly conclusively in favour of Bruce. Extracts from Jardine's account of the opening of the tomb are given in the *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. II. pp. 435—455, 1822. Dr Gregory wrote a more humorous account of the proceedings, and detailed how a friend who accompanied him stole a metatarsal. See *Quarterly Journal of Science, Literature and Arts*, Vol. IX. p. 138, 1820. Chalmers (*loc. cit.* Vol. II. pp. 190—1) states that several individuals (himself included!) procured and still possess relics of Robert Bruce's body, leaden covering, shroud or Tomb.

† See our *Norma facialis*, Plate I.

‡ *Transactions of the Phrenological Society*, Edinburgh, 1824, pp. 247—8. This Society was instituted in 1820, on February 22nd. It is therefore not possible that the cast of Bruce's skull, discovered on November 5, 1819, was taken on the Society's initiative. In the paper: "Remarks on the Cerebral



Unfortunately this identity-clinching coffin-plate—accepted by the excavators and many subsequent writers—was the production of two practical jokers who wished to convince the good folk of Dunfermline that the tomb must be that of Robert Bruce. The copper plate is represented on our Plate VII. As Chalmers says (*loc. cit.* Vol. I. p. 150) it is “a well executed and appropriate plate bearing the appearances of antiquity.” The culprits who designed and carried out the forgery were a young artist, Thom, a young brother of the new kirk architect, Bush, and one Nimmo, the son of an Edinburgh printer, who had in 1821 to flee from Edinburgh to Paris for being concerned with a scurrilous newspaper *The Beacon*. An amusing account of the matter is given in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. XII. pp. 466 *et seq.*, 1878. See also the Secretary's remarks in Vol. VIII. pp. 360 and 413, 1870. The coffin-plate is now in a case of “Fakes” in the Society's Museum. The chief evil done by the escapade and its long concealment was the reaction from certitude to a really unjustifiable conviction in some minds that the tomb was not that of Bruce.

We now come to the step which saved Bruce's physiognomy for posterity:

The Skull after being prepared was given to Mr Scoular, an artist of talent brought for the purpose, who proceeded to make a cast of it in Paris Plaster, which he executed with great skill (*Jardine's Report*).

W. Scoular was a pupil and assistant of Chantry, and there is no doubt of the high order of his work on this cast.

The skull and skeleton were reported upon by Robert Liston, at that time surgeon in Edinburgh, but clearly Liston had very little craniometric interest, and Bruce's skull was reinterred in 1819—the year of its exhumation—within a few weeks and without any fitting craniometric study. Liston gives a drawing of the skeleton and a few not adequately defined measurements of the long bones, of which, perhaps, the most important are those of the femur as 17·5 inches and the tibia as 15·5 inches\*. Assuming this to be the maximum length of femur and the tibia to include the spine, the lengths would be 44·45 cms. and less spine 38·41 cms. respectively. The reconstruction of the stature from the femur is 64"·95, from the tibia 66"·9 and from both 65"·8. Our values indicate that Bruce

Development of King Robert Bruce, compared with his Character as appearing from History” by William Scott (Writer to the Signet) there are three drawings of a cast of Bruce's skull by William Douglas. These are the *normae verticalis*, *lateralis* and *occipitalis*; each about the size of a square inch. They are very poor, and it is quite impossible to judge from them whether they were taken from the cast of the skull discussed in the present memoir. The paper has singularly little craniological value; there are nine measurements given, obviously of a very crude character. Thus “Philoprogenitiveness to lower Individuality” is said to be 8 inches and “Secretiveness to Secretiveness” is given as 6 inches; these correspond, as nearly as anything in the phrenological system can, to maximum length and maximum breadth, and would give for them 203 mm. and 152 mm. against our 198 and 154 respectively. I am unable to test any of the other seven measurements, because they are said to be taken from “the middle of the surface of each organ”; it is impossible to determine the boundary of an area not defined by any recognizable anatomical characters of the skull, and how the “middle” of such an area as, say, *Cautiousness* is to be determined, if its boundary indeed were ascertainable, remains an enigma.

\* Liston's report will be found in the *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, Vol. II. pp. 450—455.



was a short man of about 5' 6", which may account for his choice of a pony as war-steed\*.

Liston remarks that four or five teeth were wanting in the upper jaw and that the jaw-bone in front had received a considerable fracture which would no doubt have occurred in some of Bruce's early, bold and hazardous adventures. We have already seen that Sir Henry Jardine was of the same opinion (our p. 257). We can hardly suppose that a surgeon of Liston's eminence would confuse a post-mortem fracture of the upper jaw with a fracture obtained in early life with time for subsidence of the alveolar process. The cast seems to favour Liston's surmise of an ante-mortem injury. Yet among the individuals whom Chalmers reports in 1859 (*loc. cit.* Vol. II. p. 190) as still possessing fragments of Bruce was one "known to possess two of the front teeth or scissors and part of the alveolar process, along with some of the substance found in the small leaden box, which was at a little distance from the tomb, but not being in it, considered to be the bowels of some person of rank." It seems most probable that bone fragments would be pretty plentiful on the site of the excavations and that when Bruce's defect was noticed some such fragment might easily be passed off as that of his missing upper jaw. If the fragment were what it claimed to be we have only another instance of the manner in which the mob is allowed access to excavations of the highest historical importance, and by its ignorant and ruthless spoliation to destroy evidence of high archaeological value. The present owner, if there be one, might now perhaps be willing that his fragment should be compared with the cast, and if it be genuine the defective upper jaw could be completed.

Liston does not even mention that the cast was taken of the skull, but it may be that we owe W. Scouler's engagement to his initiative, and if so we must pardon Liston's lack of measurements for the sake of the excellent reproduction thus provided. The Scouler cast seems to me a work of the highest order of merit, and provides us with a veritable cranial portrait, from which we see the Bruce emerging before our very eyes. The cast must have been made quickly, for the pedestal bears the words Interred 1329—Reinterred 1819. Thus unless the skull was really retained as in the case of Sir Thomas Browne, Scouler had not very long for his task. The original cast appears to be that in the Anatomical Department of Edinburgh University. There is a much inferior cast from this cast in the Royal College of Surgeons, England. I owe my opportunity for studying and photographing the cast to the kindness of Professor Arthur Robinson, for which I am most grateful. The one drawback to the cast for craniometric purposes is the fact that it is placed upon a pedestal to which it is firmly united, so that no examination and measurements of the base of the skull are feasible. Thus while experience of many crania shows approximately where the opisthion lies in reference to the border line of the

\* Liston's method of estimating the stature seems to me very unsatisfactory, while Gregory's statement that the femur may be taken as  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the stature is quite erroneous. Both make Bruce 5' 11", a tall instead of a short man. Jardine probably follows Liston when he writes: "King Robert was a man of about 5 feet 11 inches to 6 feet in stature." The populace likes its national heroes to be big physically; it is noteworthy that many of them were in reality *small* men!



mastoid in the *norma lateralis*, still the occipital sagittal arc and chord and the total height of the skull must remain largely conjectural. Whatever objections may be taken to measurements on a cast—and they are not few or slight—Scouler's work is still so extraordinarily well done and he had a skull of such marked individuality to work upon, that there can be no doubt of the value of a study of this particular cast. I feel quite convinced that a great sculptor could from it restore the personality of Bruce to the Scottish nation and provide an ideal far more correct than the fancy portraits of the 17th and 18th centuries. I can imagine a time, when public opinion being sufficiently educated, it shall be looked upon not as a desecration, but as a solemn duty reverently to exhume and study the crania of the departed great with a view of adequately correcting portraiture, or of supplying it where it is deficient. No doubt some critics will assert that the present writer is singularly wanting in moral sense, if he maintains that a study of Shakespere's skull so far from being ghoulish would lead to a higher appreciation of the personality of our national hero than can ever be provided by the bust over his tomb or the conflicting evidence of the poor contemporary portraiture.

We may now turn to the examination of Bruce's skull itself. Table I provides the measurements, which it has been feasible to take either accurately or approximately on the cast\*. For purposes of comparison I have added our Laboratory measurements on the heads of Jeremy Bentham and Sir Thomas Browne. In the fifth and sixth columns are given the means and variations of English crania of the 17th century; in the seventh column the deviations of Bruce's characteristics from this English type and in the last column a rough appreciation of Bruce's degree of individuality.

The contours of Bruce's skull are inserted here as Figs. 1-3; they can be compared usefully with the tissues of the 17th century English provided in *Biometrika*, Vol. VIII. pp. 143-147.

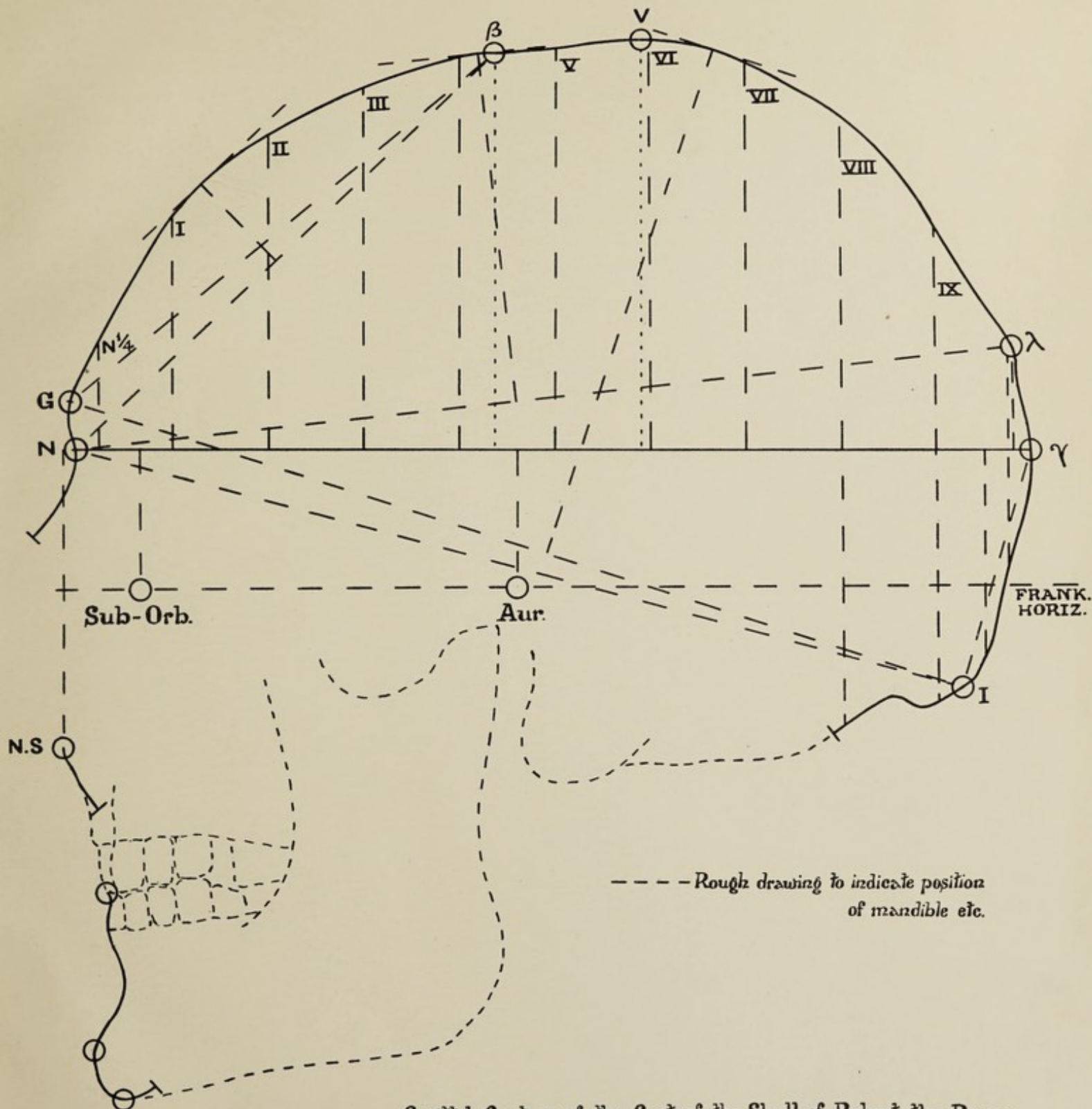
The following table will indicate the degree of flattening of the forehead in the case of Bruce.

Individuals	Frontal Angle $\psi^\dagger$	Frontal Index $\ddagger$
Eskimos ... ..	51°·9	23·0
Guanches ... ..	48°·8	22·7
Thurtell, the murderer	45°·4	23·6
17th century English ...	47°·6	22·6
Robert the Bruce ...	43°·5	18·4
Sir Thomas Browne ...	39°·1	12·0
Henry Stewart (Darnley)	37°·3	19·1

\* I have to thank my colleague, Mr G. M. Morant, for much aid in this matter. I have occasionally added a few of the more doubtful measurements to his results.

† Angle between nasio-bregmatic chord and the horizontal,  $N\gamma$ , nasio-gammatic line.

‡ Ratio of subtense of frontal arc to length of frontal or nasio-bregmatic chord; of course multiplied as usual by 100.

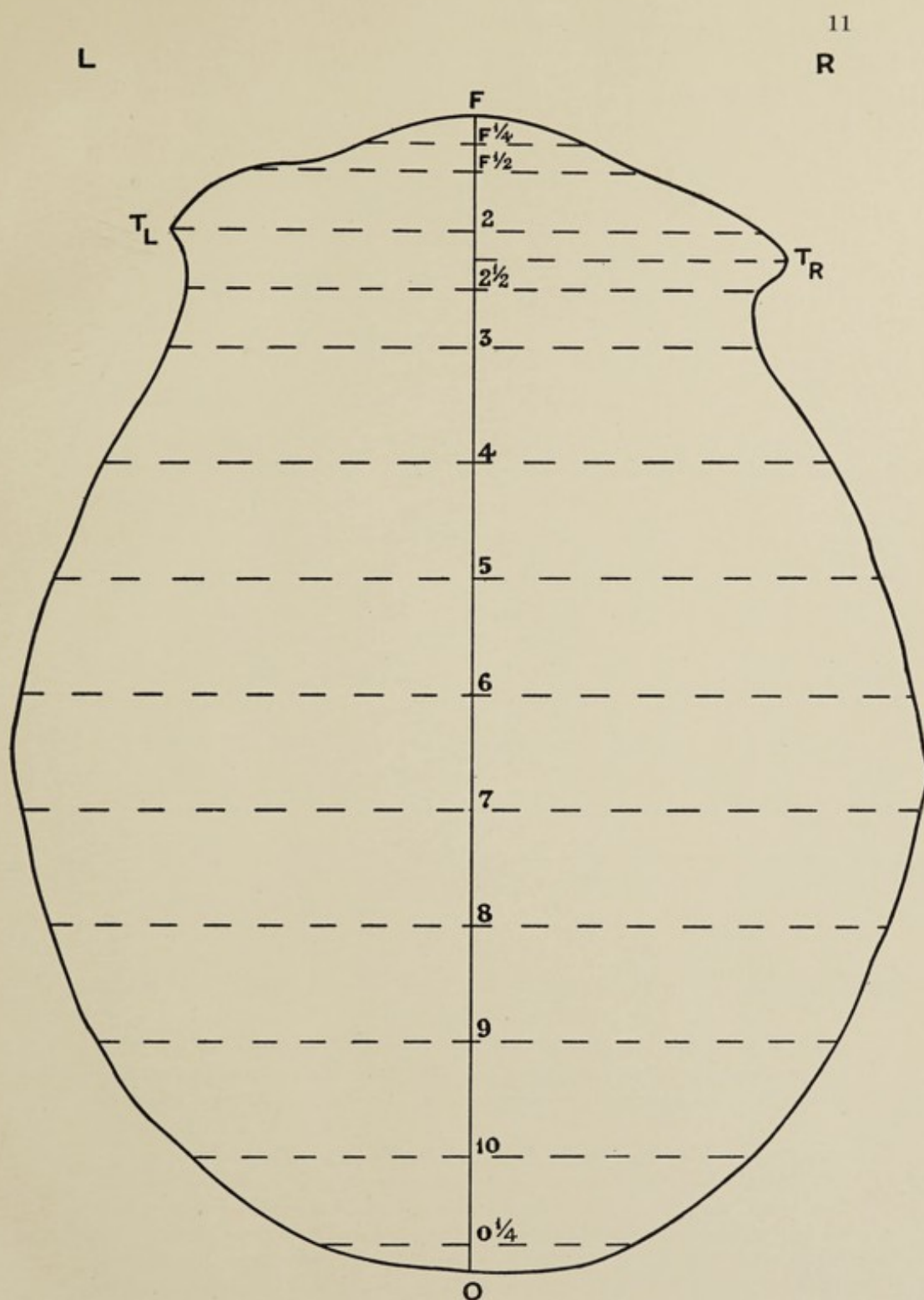


Sagittal Contour of the Cast of the Skull of Robert the Bruce

Fig. 1.





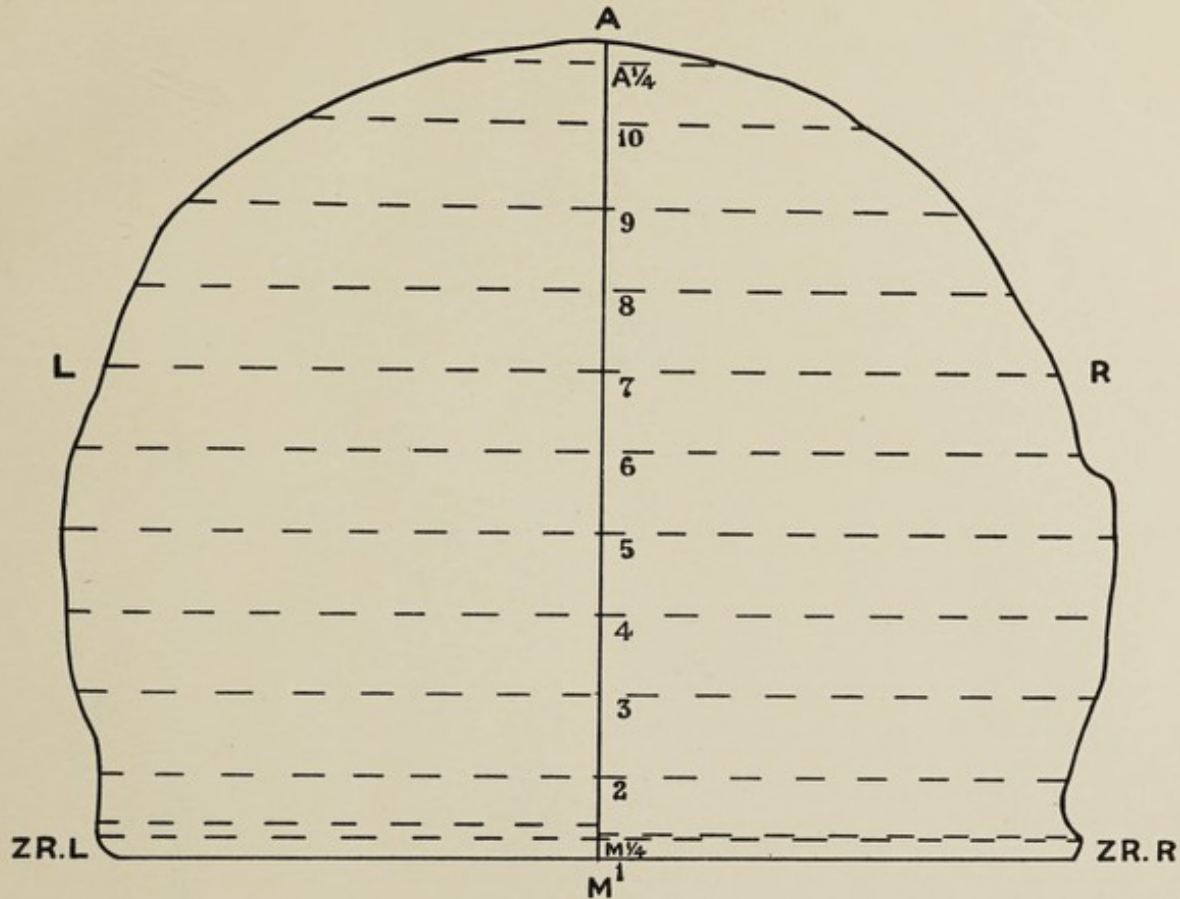


Horizontal Contour of the Cast of the Skull of Robert the Bruce

Fig. 2.







### Transverse Vertical Contour of the Cast of the Skull of Robert the Bruce

Fig. 3.

It will be seen that the flatness of Bruce's frontal bone and its small angle with the horizontal ( $\psi$ ) are far below the average English values, being only exceeded by those of Sir Thomas Browne and in the case of the frontal angle by Bruce's descendant, Lord Darnley.

The outstanding features of Bruce's skull are its great parietal and bizygomatic breadths, its large orbits, its want of harmony in the proportion of breadth to height exhibited not only in the 100  $B/H$  index, but also in the facial index, and the relatively long nose. The mandible is remarkably massive, the chin one of great strength and protuberant, the ramus broad and edges vertical, there being as yet no senile shrinkage at the angles. The teeth are large and to some extent irregular



TABLE I.

*Measurements of the Cast of the Skull of Robert Bruce, and comparison with those of Jeremy Bentham, Sir Thomas Browne and the Average English Skull.*

Character	Jeremy Bentham	Sir Thomas Browne	Robert Bruce	17th century English		Ratio of Bruce—English Mean to Standard Deviation	Expected Frequency
				Means	Standard Deviations		
<i>C</i>	1475	1509	1595	1476.9	122.37	+ .96	—
<i>F</i>	—	190	191	187.4	6.17	+ .58	—
<i>L</i>	192	194.6	198	189.1	6.27	+1.42	—
<i>B</i>	153	143.7	154 <sup>a</sup>	140.7	5.28	+2.52	1 in 167
<i>B'</i>	105	87.4	98.0	98.0	4.20	0	—
<i>H</i>	135	121.9	132.0	132.0	5.56	0	—
<i>OH</i>	118.5	102.6	112	112.1	4.28	- .02	—
<i>LB</i>	105	102.7	—	101.6	4.13	—	—
<i>Q</i>	335	297.0	325	307.9	11.40	+1.50	—
<i>S</i>	380	380	389.3 <sup>b</sup>	377.1	13.69	+ .89	—
<i>s<sub>1</sub></i>	—	129	134.5	129.3 <sup>d</sup>	5.55 <sup>d</sup>	+ .85	—
<i>s<sub>2</sub></i>	—	123	125	128.7 <sup>d</sup>	7.61 <sup>d</sup>	- .49	—
<i>s<sub>3</sub></i>	—	128	129.8 <sup>b</sup>	120.5 <sup>d</sup>	8.48 <sup>d</sup>	+1.10	—
<i>U</i>	560	549	552	524.3	15.02	+1.84	1 in 29
<i>G'H</i>	73 ?	73.1	72.2?	70.2	3.86	+ .52	—
<i>GH</i>	144?	—	132	—	—	—	—
<i>GB</i>	—	90.9	110?	90.9	5.07	+1.79	—
<i>J</i>	133?	132.3	149?	130.1	5.57	+3.39 ?	1 in 2860 ?
<i>NH, R</i>	551	52.2	56.0	51.2	2.60	+1.85	1 in 30
<i>NH, L</i>	—	52.2	56.4	—	—	—	—
<i>NB</i>	31?	22.6	25.9	24.3	2.16	+ .78	—
<i>O<sub>1</sub> R</i>	—	43.7	46.8 <sup>c</sup>	43.0	2.02	+1.88	1 in 33
<i>O<sub>1</sub> L</i>	—	42.8	46.2	43.1	1.81	+1.71	—
<i>O<sub>2</sub> R</i>	—	36.3	38.3	33.4	2.22	+2.21	1 in 71
<i>O<sub>2</sub> L</i>	—	36.7	39.0	33.5	1.88	+2.93	1 in 500
<i>GL</i>	89?	98.3	—	95.9	4.49	—	—
<i>P L</i>	93?	84.7	91 <sup>e</sup>	86.1	3.92	+1.25	—
100 <i>B/L</i>	79.7	73.7	77.8	74.3	3.26	+1.07	—
100 <i>H/L</i>	70.3	62.7	66.7	70.0	3.22	-1.02	—
100 <i>B/H</i>	113.3	117.8	116.7	106.3	5.11	+2.04	1 in 50
100 <i>G'H/GB</i>	—	80.4	65.6?	76.5	5.39	-2.02	1 in 45
100 <i>NB/NH, R</i>	56?	43.3	46.3	47.6	4.58	- .28	—
100 <i>NB/NH, L</i>	—	43.3	45.9	—	—	—	—
100 <i>O<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>1</sub>, R</i>	—	83.1	81.8	77.7	4.66	+ .88	—
100 <i>O<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>1</sub>, L</i>	—	85.7	84.4	77.9	3.78	+1.72	—
<i>Oc. I.</i>	—	55.8	57.2?	58.52 <sup>d</sup>	2.15 <sup>d</sup>	- .61	—
<i>Mandible</i>							
<i>w<sub>1</sub></i>	—	120.8	138	120.0 <sup>e</sup>	—	—	—
<i>w<sub>2</sub></i>	—	100.2	114.6	99.4 <sup>e</sup>	—	—	—
<i>g<sub>0</sub>p<sub>0</sub>g<sub>0</sub></i>	—	202.5	234?	201.0 <sup>e</sup>	—	—	—
<i>rb, L</i>	—	32.0	37.0	37.3 <sup>e</sup>	—	—	—
<i>rb, R</i>	—	32.0	40.9	—	—	—	—
<i>m<sub>2</sub>p<sub>1</sub>, R</i>	—	—	28.8	—	—	—	—
<i>m<sub>2</sub>p, L</i>	—	—	29.6	29.2 <sup>e</sup>	—	—	—

*a.* The greatest temporal breadth is 157; there may have been a slight post-mortem displacement of the right temporal squama. *b.* The opisthion is inaccessible; the positions of the bregma and lambda are not very certain. *c.* The exact margins of the orbits are somewhat doubtful. *d.* Unfortunately the separate arcs were not taken on the Whitechapel crania, but are here supplied from the Liverpool Street crania. *e.* The values here given are for Tibetans *B*-type, the mandibles of which are those of a massive jawed race. The values of  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  for the 17th century English are about 115.5 and 98.6 mm. respectively. Both these results and those for the Tibetans *B*-type suffice to indicate the massive character of Bruce's jaw.

*C*=Cranial capacity; *F*=Ophryon-occipital length; *L*=maximum length; *B*=maximum parietal breadth; *B'*=minimum frontal breadth; *H*=basio-bregmatic height; *OH*=auricular height; *LB*=skull-base; *Q*=transverse arc; *S*=total sagittal arc,  $s_1$ =frontal,  $s_2$ =parietal,  $s_3$ =occipital sub-arcs; *U*=horizontal circumference; *G'H*=upper face height; *GH*=total face height; *GB*=facial breadth; *J*=bizygomatic breadth; *NH*=nasal height; *NB*=nasal breadth; *O<sub>1</sub>*=horizontal, *O<sub>2</sub>*=vertical orbital diameter; *GL*=profile length; *P L*=profile angle; *Oc. I.*=occipital index; the three cephalic, upper face and orbital indices are adequately described by their symbols;  $w_1$ =maximum width at condyles,  $w_2$  at angles;  $g_0p_0g_0$ =mandibular horizontal arc, from gonion to gonion through the pogonion; *rb*=minimum breadth of ramus;  $m_2p_1$ =chord from alveolar margin at mid 2nd molar to the same at 1st premolar. *R.* and *L.* refer to right and left sides. Fuller descriptions of methods of measurement will be found in *Biometrika*, Vol. I. p. 430, Vol. VIII. p. 311 and Vol. XV. p. 8. The capacity of Bruce's skull was determined by the Lee-Pearson formula, *Phil. Trans.* Vol. 196 A, p. 253.



the alveolar margins appearing to have receded during life. The upper incisors and a portion of the upper jaw have been broken away possibly by a blow from battle-axe or spear. The mastoids are extremely massive and I doubt if I have ever seen a skull so extraordinarily developed in the region of theinion. The *norma occipitalis* is a most striking one, bringing out the great breadth and general solidity of the skull. The frontal sinuses are markedly developed\* and the forehead retreating. The very considerable length of the skull is dwarfed in the *norma verticalis* by the greater relative breadth, but it comes out well in the *normae laterales*, where the contour from bregma to vertex and thence to the lambda is most striking. What Bruce missed in the frontal he more than regained in the post-coronal regions. Studying heads like those of Bruce, Darwin† or Sir Thomas Browne, one begins gravely to doubt whether "high-browedness" has been justly correlated with intellectual capacity, or at any rate with strength of character and imaginative power. One may even question whether the "high-brow" should not lead us to suspect that with the infantile forehead some of the mental characters of infantilism may have been retained. Among men of action, men of great imagination, or men of marked intellectual power high-brows are not by any means the universal rule; it would not surprise me to find a higher percentage of them among minor poets or artists of the cubist school.

Bruce's skull suggests a man of most exceptional muscularity and strength, with a bull-neck and ardent passions‡. And yet none can assert that its massiveness is of a purely animal type, its development in the region of the obelion, its lateral and posterior aspects show developments which at any rate general impression associates with strong mental qualities, i.e. they are distinctly human as opposed to anthropoid characters.

Bruce had great personal prowess and large powers of organisation and imagination. His skull is not disappointing; it is a fit one for a strong leader of those

\* The zygomatic ridges except in the immediate neighbourhood of the orbits are not as massive as might be anticipated. The cast lacks the left zygomatic ridge, whether broken off in the skull or more recently from the cast is not clear.

† John Morley once described Darwin as "high-browed," but such an adjective does not seem to me to accord well with his portraits.

‡ If we were to trust phrenology we must conclude that Bruce's *Amativeness* and *Philoprogenitiveness* were most markedly developed. According to Barbour Bruce always got warning of proposed treachery,

And mony tyme, as I herd say  
Throw wemen that he wyth wald play,  
That wald tell all that thai mycht hér;

See v. 531 *et seq.*

Thus Bruce like Caesar made his *Amativeness* serve political ends! Our worthy Archdeacon was a child of his times, or he might have found as much difficulty in reconciling this conduct of Bruce with his hero-worship as he did in the case of Bruce's slaughter of "Schyr Ihone the Cumyn" and "Schyr Edmund" "in the freris at the hye Awter"—not of course because he assassinated them, but because he "gave na gyrth to the Awter," i.e. disregarded the Friars' privilege of giving sanctuary. It must also be noted that his son King David Bruce was equally amative, but although he lived to be forty left no offspring—possibly owing to the sins of his father. This Bruce characteristic reinforced by Tudor blood may be noted throughout the Scottish Stewart kings. It culminated, perhaps, in Darnley, who as Ruthven expressed it, at a critical moment turned "effeminate," thereby meaning amative.

days. If we admit the justice of that rather vague phrase—it is disharmonic—, but is that not what we might anticipate from a union of Nordic and Celtic blood? Are not those two elements in combination the source of Bruce's success? He was able by Celtic imagination with a certain dash of slimness to win the Scottish nation to his side, and by aid of Nordic physique and persistency to be triumphant over his opponents. It was a grave loss to Scotland that the Nordic element was weakened in his descendants by too great an infusion of Stewart blood\*.

Bruce died when he was 55 and the usual account given is that he suffered much pain in his later years, which incapacitated him for action in the field, and that this was due to the leprosy of which he died. I have already referred to the possibility of syphilis rather than leprosy being the source of his troubles. Due weight is not always given to the manner in which disease changes its nature in the course of centuries, and the nature of the syphilitic epidemic at the end of the 15th century was at least very different from the syphilis of today†. There is little doubt that syphilis was sporadic in Europe long before the great outbreak of that century, and that probably its symptoms were more those of the 15th century than those of modern syphilis. The cast of Bruce's skull seems to indicate that the original was to some extent "pitted" and these pits have been brought to light in the cast by the settlement of dust in them. It would be difficult in the absence of the original skull to assert definitely that the "pitting" exists in it; they might correspond to flaws in the casting, or to injuries to the cast, as some markings certainly do. We have, however, also to remember that Bruce's skeleton was found wrapped up in two coats of lead in a sealed vault, so that there was relatively little chance of post-mortem action on the skull. It is even possible that the peculiarities of the teeth and of the defective upper jaw might have to be viewed from a standpoint other than that of war-time injury. We must also note

\* Since writing this monograph my attention has been drawn to Sir Arthur Keith's singularly graceful *Henderson Trust Lecture* III, published in the summer of this year. I fear, however, that I must protest very strongly against his method of *orientating* crania, which produces in all cases a very unnatural receding position of the chin and renders any appreciation of a receding forehead impossible. Further considering what we actually know of Bruce's ancestry for eight generations the following words are open to question: "one has but to look at the skull to recognise in him the kind of men who began to settle about the eastern shores of England and Scotland towards the close of the neolithic age—about 2000 B.C.—bringing with them continental forms of food-vessels or beakers, and hence often spoken of as the 'beaker' men." As far as I can trace them the bulk of Bruce's ancestors certainly did not settle on the eastern shores of England and Scotland in 2000 B.C. If on the other hand all Norsemen (including Normans), all Celts (Welsh and Scottish), all Anglo-Saxons are 'beaker' men, then some explanation is required of the great diversity of skull-shape amongst these groups.

My objections are not to Sir Arthur choosing any line he pleases for measuring characteristics of the brain, but that in *orientating* his very artificial line to the horizontal he gives, I hold, a very erroneous idea of the physiognomy of his subject, and so absolutely disregards the needs of comparative portraiture. As minor criticisms, I may remark, that a comparison of his Figs. 1 and 10 seems to show that he would have reached somewhat different results by orientating from Sir Thomas Browne's right or left profile; and that a "rectangularisation" for his purposes on the nasio-inional line of Schwalbe would have surmounted this alternative and, as far as I can judge, have been an equally good "brain floor." I pass over the difficulty—to the biometrician at least—of what is meant by "bisecting" either the fronto-malar or masto-parietal sutures (note his Fig. 2!).

† This matter will be more fully discussed in a paper shortly to appear in *Biometrika*.



Liston's statement: "There is a kind of mark on the right side of the sagittal suture, most probably the consequence of a severe injury and of subsequent exfoliation." But without the original skull no real stress can be laid on these points; it did not seem, however, proper to pass them entirely by. Considering the habits and ideas of those days there does not seem any greater slur on Bruce for having incurred syphilis than leprosy. Bruce would not have been the first king to be a leper, but then he would not be the only king who has been syphilitic. If we have to consider the probabilities—or better improbabilities—of Bruce's incurring either disease, we are met at once by the difficulty that while we know that leprosy was fairly common, we do not know to what extent syphilis was confused with it and screened by it. Both are about equally probable if we suppose them as originating in the hardships Bruce had to undergo. On this point we cannot pretend that the cast (nor indeed possibly the skull itself) can provide any definite information, until the whole subject of "pitting" in mediaeval crania has been more thoroughly investigated. In two crania of historical importance, where in one case leprosy and in the other more than a rumour of syphilis has been asserted, this pitting occurs. In neither case was it at all likely that the crania had been subjected to post-mortem "root action."

Barbour does not give us much enlightenment; leprosy could hardly be produced by lying in the damp\*:

This malice of endfundeyng  
Begouth, for throw hys cald lying;  
Quhen in hys gret myscheiff wes he,  
Hym fell that hard perplexité. (xx. 75-78.)

When we turn to the portraiture of Bruce the chance of discovering anything of value is very slight; it is not to be expected that paintings would be made in Scotland before 1329. The only possibility is that there may have been a real portrait in the monument prepared for his tomb by the French masons during his life, and that this semblance of Bruce had become traditional, or again that at Dunfermline or Stirling some traces of portraiture remained for 300 years. I can bring forward no definite evidence of this.

Assuming that an effigy of Bruce once existed on his monument we may ask what chances there were of an iconographic tradition. Where could Jamesone in the early or de Witt in the late seventeenth century have picked up their traditions? According to John Pinkerton speaking of the Taymouth Bruce: "It is said that the prototypes of this and some other Royal Portraits by Jamesone were old limnings in the palace at Dunfermline†." I have not succeeded in finding

\* On the word *endfundeyng* consult Skeat's not very conclusive note *The Bruce*, p. 609. Raynaud's Disease is worth considering as resulting from cold and just possibly might then be confused with leprosy. It would account for Bruce's severe pains.

† *The Scottish Gallery or Portraits of Eminent Persons of Scotland; many of them after Pictures of the celebrated Jamesone at Taymouth and other Places*, London, 1799, *sub capite*, Robert Bruce. The writer on Pinkerton in the *Dictionary of National Biography* states that Pinkerton's works are of value because of the portraits of Scottish celebrities there engraved for the first time from pictures in private collections. This applies to the engraving of Bruce, but there are to my knowledge other cases, where Pinkerton has reproduced as a portrait what is no portrait at all.



any other reference to these "linnings in the palace at Dunfermline." There may be evidence for them, or they may be a product of Pinkerton's imagination, for he possessed a veritable Scottish capacity for the production of literary and artistic antiques. A second source of possible inspiration were the thirty-eight Stirling heads, or circular oak panels originally on the roof of the Presence Chamber in Stirling Palace, erected by James V about 1529 and taken down in 1777. Blackwood published in Edinburgh, 1817, a book with no author's name entitled:

*Lacunar Strevelinense, a Collection of Heads etched and engraved after the carved Work which formerly decorated the King's Room in Stirling Castle.*

The book has a short introduction and the writer judging from their appearance assigns names to about half-a-dozen heads, but to none does he give that of Bruce.

The oak carvings to judge by the reproductions were rather noteworthy work, but if there was a Bruce among them it did not serve as a type for Jamesone. That Jamesone painted a picture of Bruce for Sir Colin Campbell at Taymouth Castle is demonstrated by an extract from the "Black Book of Taymouth\*":

Item, the said Sir Coline Campbell gave unto George Jamesone, painter in Edinburgh, for King Robert and King David Bruysse, Kings of Scotland, and Charles 1st King of Great Brittain, France and Ireland, and his majesties Quein and for nine more of the Queins of Scotland their portraits, quhilks are set up in the halls of Balloch the sum of twa hundredth thrie scor punds.

The date of this payment seems to have been about 1635. When Mr John Bulloch saw the Jamesone pictures at Taymouth Castle before 1885, the picture of King David Bruce was still extant, but that of King Robert Bruce was no longer among the 19 Jamesone's pictures preserved there†. That it had been there in 1795 is certain for Pinkerton then engraved it for his *Scottish Gallery*. Pinkerton tells us that Johnston in 1796 made "an exquisite Drawing in colours" of Jamesone's Bruce. This drawing and the original picture ought to be searched for diligently; both can hardly have perished. As to Jamesone's picture itself assuming it adequately reproduced by the engraving, we should have anticipated that Robert would be clothed in mail or ring armour instead of plate, which only begins to appear in Italy about 1328. Pinkerton gets over this by remarking that Robert Bruce highly encouraged the commerce between Scotland and Flanders, whence he might be supplied with a painter and with his plate armour which it is supposed was invented in Germany and hence called German plate and German rivets. But it may be questioned whether this pleading is really necessary. Jamesone need not have troubled himself much about the armour, and the question

\* See that excellent work: *George Jamesone, The Scottish Vandyck*, by John Bulloch, Edinburgh, 1885, p. 130. Balloch is an ancient name for Taymouth. Bulloch believes that all Jamesone's pictures of early Scottish Kings, notwithstanding his antiquarian tastes, were fanciful. Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, Vol. II. pp. 243—251 gives some account of Jamesone and the extract from the Vellum MS. cited above on p. 247.

† A letter dated Ardmaddy, July 21, 1924, from Mr F. Morrison replying to my inquiries as to the picture says that the Marchioness of Breadalbane has informed him that no such picture had to her knowledge existed at Taymouth. Nor does this picture appear to have been removed with certain of the Taymouth Jamesones to Langton House with the part of the Breadalbane Collection inherited by Lady Elizabeth Pringle.

is whether he had any iconographic tradition—more probably carving than painting—for the features of Bruce. The armour does not settle the question of whether Jamesone at Dunfermline, Stirling or elsewhere had seen any prototype of his Bruce.

There is still another series of Scottish Kings at Holyrood Palace. These were painted by Jacob de Witte a half-century later than the Jamesone Bruce. The contract for the pictures has survived to this day, and is between Hugh Wallace, his Majesty's Cashkeeper on the one part and "James de Witte, Painter, Indweller in the Cannogate" on the other. The said James "binds and obleidges him to compleatly draw, finish and perfyte the Pictures of the haill Kings who have Reigned over this Kingdome of Scotland, from King Fergus the first King to King Charles the Second, our Gracious Sovereigne who now Reignes Inclusive, being all in number One hundred and ten, .....and to make them like unto the Originalls which are to be given to him\*." This wholesale portraiture of kings, many of whom are mythical†, was to be done in two years at a cost of £120 per annum. Nor are the still remaining century of pictures very edifying. No. 161 of the catalogue is Robert I, the Bruce, and whatever the original given to de Witte may have been it certainly has not any relationship to Jamesone's Bruce. Some of de Witte's pictures seem to have been based on the work of Joannes Jonstonus: *Inscriptiones historicae Regum Scotorum* published in 1602 at Amsterdam, but this work does not contain a portrait of Robert Bruce, only an "inscription‡." The de Witte picture representing Bruce is a full length portrait ("in large Royall posture"—according to the contract!) with legs slightly apart in half armour and shirt of mail, the left arm carries a targe, and the right arm passing across the body holds in the hand a baton pointing downwards; a crimson cloak is draped from the right shoulder. On the head is a steel cap bordered by a coronet; a good deal of brown beard and hair more or less obscures the shape of head and jaws. The face is three-quarter looking to left. There is a background of trees and rocks. G. Cameron's engraving of Bruce circa 1820, see our Plate XVI (a), seems to have been based on this picture, or on the same prototype, if there was one, as de Witte's.

If we turn from the 17th century paintings to the 18th century engravings we have only two to be noted. The first was cut by L. P. Boitard who was probably a son of the better known father. The print represents the bust of a man of between 60 and 70 in profile, crowned, with sword in right hand, grey and bearded, with a high forehead. The only resemblance to the skull of Bruce is to be found in a somewhat lengthy nose. The whole is in the traditional "Frederick Barbarossa" style. As far as Bruce is concerned it might be thought wholly fictitious: see Plate IX. Beneath is a vignette of Bruce murdering Comyn. There is a copy in the Print Room of the British Museum, a proof before finishing. It is in the "Mary Queen of Scots Album" No. 229, p. 167. I am not aware that this engraving

\* *Official Guide to...Holyroodhouse...* By Sir Herbert Maxwell, 1923.

† King Fergus is supposed to have ruled *n.c.* 330.

‡ *Brassius Regni instaurator ac pene novus conditor in omni Fortuna invictus* (p. 52). Jonston starts pictorially with David Bruce, but I am not certain where he could find a prototype even for him!



was issued in any book, but I have succeeded in tracing its original. In John Leslie, Bishop of Ross's *De Origine, Moribus et rebus gestis Scotorum Libri Decem*, Romae, 1578 occurs a pedigree, on p. 240, of Scottish Kings. The "root" of this pedigree is a medallion of some 3" diameter containing a portrait of Robert Bruce. The bust has a crowned head, carries a sword in the right hand, there is a long beard which slopes inwards from the lower lip and excludes the possibility of an emphasised chin. The man is sixty if not sixty-five years of age. This is the source of Boitard's inspiration: see our Plate XV. We carry it back at once 200 years. That is to say, *possibly* within 18 years of the destruction of the Dunfermline monument, and nearly 60 years anterior to the Jamesone picture, but alas! it accords far less with the skull, and impresses one—like the de Witte picture—as a product of the non-historical imagination. It does not seem to me to have any link with the latter, however; indeed far removed as they are the de Witte is closer to the Jamesone. Whence Leslie obtained his Bruce it appears impossible to conjecture. At the same time some of his pedigree medallions have an element of real portraiture; thus on p. 462 there is a fairly reasonable medallion of Mary, Queen of Scots\* and Leslie had considerable historical and antiquarian tastes. If he had some traditional conception of Bruce to work on, it was not that of Jamesone or of the skull. The other cut of about the same year was engraved by E. Harding and published by E. Herbert†. Below are the words "From the original at Taymouth." It represents a bearded man half length and three-quarter face, in armour, holding a battle-axe in his left hand‡ and with a steel cap on his head: see our Plate X. This engraving appeared as we have seen in Pinkerton's *Scottish Gallery* of 1799, and was made a year or two earlier. There is a good copy in the Print Room, British Museum, "Royal Portraits, Kings of Scotland" 1868, 8—8—1977§. The Harding engraving suggests a more receding forehead than the Boitard, and it might have a low frontal index. The beards in both obscure any appreciation of the chin. The Boitard portrait seems so fanciful that I have not thought it worth while placing a tracing of the skull upon it. I have, however, done so with the Jamesone portrait after obtaining a photograph of the cast adjusted to about the same aspect: see Plates II and XI. I took lip-line to nasion to give a common base line of measurement. The result is not as bad as might have been expected. The breadth of face is defective, the right ear is much out of position, the forehead above the left eye is impossible, as also the left cheek-bone—the jowls of Bruce must have been very prominent—and the nasal septum is somewhat out of position. The jaws are not unfitting, and considering

\* The Mary medallion has a young James medallion attached to it, but Darnley is represented by a blank circle; whether this arose from Henry Stewart not being a *persona grata* to Leslie or because the latter had no portrait of him it is impossible now to decide.

† Some copies have E. Harding for E. Herbert, repeating Harding.

‡ This might possibly be interpreted as evidence that it had been copied *without reversing* from a picture or effigy in which the battle-axe would be in the natural hand. It would be interesting to know in which hand the Taymouth picture gave the axe.

§ A second, rather poorer copy, is in the "Mary Queen of Scots Album" on the same page as the Boitard.



how little attention, even in the present day, artists often give to the skull behind the features they portray, we might have had a worse result. Of course the suggestion of the picture is that the skull cap fits close to the steel cap. That it certainly does not, but there is not enough discordance for one to say straight off that the Jamesone portrait may not be based on a faint tradition of some sort.

It occurred to me that if such a tradition existed it might have arisen not necessarily from the monument, but from a coin of Bruce's. By the courtesy of the Keeper of the Coins and Medals at the British Museum I was able to obtain casts of three Bruce coins. They are shown enlarged on Plate VII. A lantern slide was then made of a coin; this was thrown on a sheet of paper and drawn. The drawing was then reduced so that the length of nasion to lip-line in the drawing accorded with that of the photograph of the right profile of the skull. The rough tracing of this placed on the drawing shows that the coin has a purely conventional figure, having no correspondence with Bruce's proportions: see Plate XII. All features are impossible. The forehead is infantile instead of receding, the mandible has no correspondence in the slope of its base, the mastoid is in front instead of behind the ear, and above instead of below it. If the tracing of the skull be tilted so as to bring the mandible into a more nearly horizontal position, the flesh over the nasion becomes absurdly thick. As for the eye it is remote from the orbit, but this is an artistic(?) convention even in the case of modern designers' profile portraits. On a penny postage stamp or a half-crown of his present Majesty the King the distance from nasion to outer border of orbit is about one-third of the distance from nasion to auricular passage, whereas in the profile of a skull it is nearer one-fifth: see our Plate XVI (b). In the Bruce coin it is more than two-thirds! The profile on the coin has not only no resemblance to Bruce, it is absurd as a human figure at all. The coins therefore, as indeed I was warned by the British Museum authorities, may be discarded for our present purpose.

Another source of possible information with regard to Brucian portraiture may be sought in the seals of King Robert. Pinkerton in his *Iconographica Scotica, or Portraits of Illustrious Persons of Scotland*, London, 1797, gives a seal of King Robert from a charter dated in the ninth year (1315) of his reign. The Bruce sits on a highly ornamental throne or settle, he is robed without armour; he holds a sceptre in the right, the orb with cross in the left hand. He is crowned, and has wavy hair without beard\*. The face is no portrait, and is largely the product of Pinkerton's imaginative engraver. Much better reproductions of the actual seals are provided by Walter de Gray Birch in his *History of Scottish Seals*, Stirling, 1905. The royal seals therein bear little resemblance to those of Pinkerton! Birch says that Bruce had two seals. The first seal is given in his Nos. 20 and 21, which are somewhat obscure. The obverse suggests a short stout man with a very big head, enthroned; the reverse a man in armour with sword and targe on horseback, the face entirely hidden in a cylindrical helmet. This also suggests a stout short man, as the Bruce, I hold, must have been: see our p. 6. The second seal is said to

\* There is no serial number to pages or plates in Pinkerton and so no exact reference can be given!



be of 1318. On the obverse (No. 22) the King is seated on a throne with serpent heads at the arms (like those on the seal of his son, David II), he is robed and crowned, with sceptre in right hand and the left raised to his breast. The head and chin are strong, but the real features are not ascertainable. In the reverse (No. 23) we have as in the first seal the king in armour on horseback with face hidden. Neither side of this second seal suggests the short stout man of the first seal. The curious reader who will examine these seals in Birch's work will soon satisfy himself that the seals contribute no more than the coins to the idea that a traditional portraiture might have been derived from them. It seemed idle to reproduce such seals here.

A last possibility occurred to me, a traditional portraiture might have been preserved in the Armorial. To test this it was needful to compare two good armorials together. Through the courtesy of Mr Gilbert Ogilvy I was able to have photographs taken of the Seton Armorial in his possession and Dr Dickson also permitted photographs of an Armorial (MSS. No. 31.4.2) in the National Library of Scotland (formerly the Advocates' Library) to be provided. In each case the Bruce was given twice, once with each wife. The fact that in the latter MS. James VI was represented as a child\* indicated the date at which the last entry had been made. A glance at our Plates XIII and XIV will at once convince the reader that there was no traditional Bruce common to the heraldic artists. The Bruce of the Seton Armorial is certainly a short man with an ample nose and a man of reasonable age, but he could have given no hint to Jamesone. The wild and bearded old man of the Advocates' Library Armorial might give a hint, a very slight one, to Ross's artist, but his threatening presentation of the sword was more likely to cause the obvious fear in the face of the "Duke of Hullesteris Dochter" than impress the English at Bannockburn. It is noteworthy that in this Armorial a thistle is placed in the hand of both wives of Bruce; according to Birch (i. p. 42) the first appearance of the thistle as a Scottish emblem occurs on the seal of Bruce. Are we to seek its origin in Galloway or Danby Dale?

Thus the Armorial like the other representations fail us. The above discussion will have sufficed to convince the reader that we have no valid portrait of Bruce, that our only accurate knowledge of the physiognomy of the man is to be gained from his skull. Even the aged dream dreams and I should like to see a national monument to Bruce at Westminster, an effigy based on the skull as only a great sculptor could conceive it. But it should be the gift of Englishmen only to the united nations. It was the Norman element in Bruce, quite as much as the Celtic, which carried him and Scotland to victory at Bannockburn. His blood, with Tudor blood and Stewart blood, still runs in our common royal line. The union of our nations needs no artificial cement, but it would be a graceful act for Englishmen to present Scotsmen with what at present they lack, a real characterisation—which I hold is still feasible—of one of their great heroes. If we can claim justly to share

\* Not in the least like James VI as a child in the portrait of him in the National Portrait Gallery, London. This is further evidence, if such were needful, that no attempt at portraiture was made by the armorial artists.

24 *The Skull of Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland, 1274-1329*

Washington with America, we have every right to share Bruce with the Scots. A great portrait of Bruce is still possible, and if fitly executed would go a long way to justify the value of craniological study for the portraiture of national worthies.

I have to thank numerous correspondents for aid in the details of this paper by replying to my many queries, and I must mention in particular, Mr James L. Caw, Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, and Mr J. Corsan Morton, the Keeper, Mr Francis Caird Inglis, Miss Rosaline Masson, of Edinburgh, and Dr J. F. Tocher, of Aberdeen.

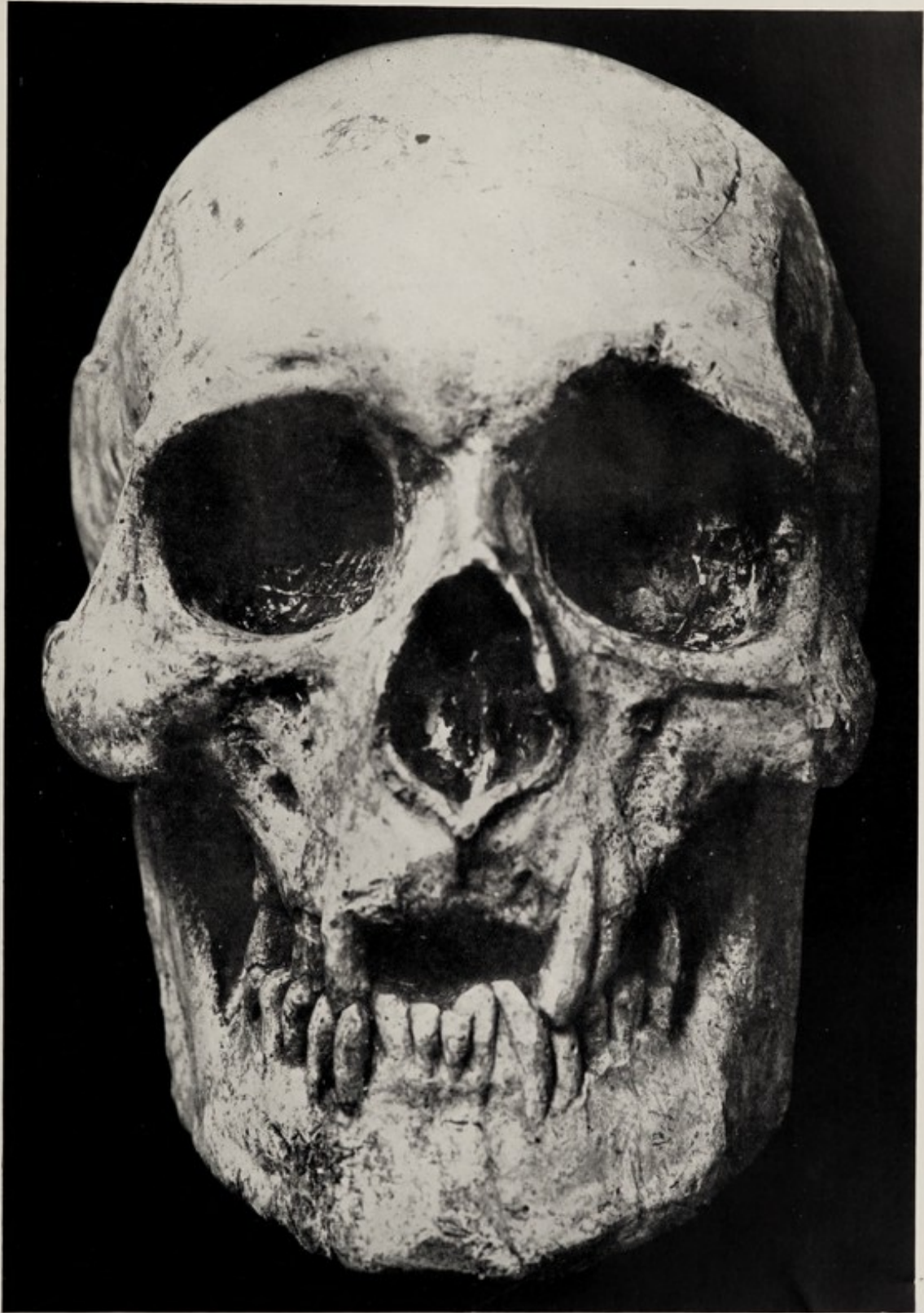
*Note to Froissart's Statement, p. 3.*

The passage in Froissart is clearly corrupt and the geography is impossible. In Buchon's edition (*Collection des Chroniques Nationales Françaises*, T. IX. p. 147, Paris, 1824) the passage runs:

Si se départirent le roi et les seigneurs de Haindebourg [Édimbourg] et chevauchèrent vers Donfremelin [Dunfermline], une ville assez bonne où il y a une belle et assez grosse Abbaye de noirs moines; et là sont ensevelis par usage les rois d'Ecosse. Le roi d'Angleterre se logea en l'abbaye, car ses gens prirent la ville, ni rien ne leur dura. A leur département elle fut toute arse, abbaye et ville, et puis cheminèrent outre vers Strumelin [Stirling] et passèrent au dessus de Strumelin la rivière de Tay qui cuert à Saint-Jeanston [Perth].

A somewhat clearer version is given by Denis Sauvage. The Breslau MS. reads Strumelin, or Stirling, instead of Donfremelin. The *Book of Pluscarden* (Ed. F. J. H. Skene, Edinburgh, 1880, p. 246) says Richard pillaged and burnt down many churches and monasteries and other sacred places such as Melrose, Dryburgh, Newbattle, also destroyed the whole town of Edinburgh, and the whole of Lothian, and pillaged and burnt the monastery of Holyrood. Fordun (*Scotichronicon* Libr. XIV. cap. 50) says that in 1385 Richard II burnt down with fiery flames God's temples and holy places, to wit the monasteries of Dryburgh, Melrose and Newbattle and the whole town of Edinburgh, with the Church of St Giles. Walter Bower, Fordun's continuator, notes that Richard would have burnt Holyrood Abbey, but for the intervention of his uncle the Duke of Lancaster. Guthrie and Tytler do not accept Froissart's statement that Richard crossed the Forth, and it seems improbable that the Scottish Chroniclers would have omitted Dunfermline Abbey from their list had it really been sacked.





The Skull of Robert Bruce. *Norma facialis* (about natural size).

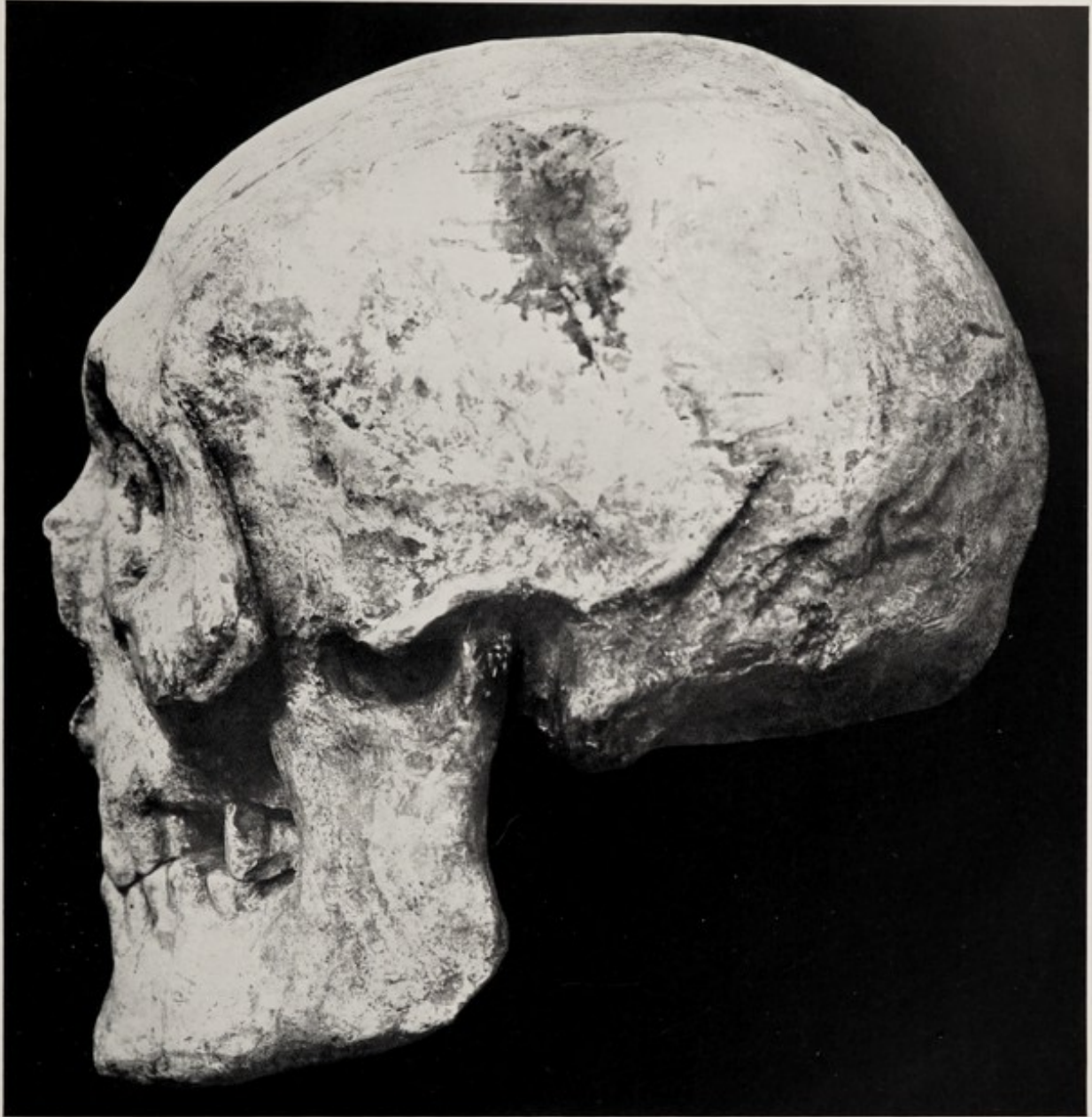




The Skull of Robert Bruce, three-quarter face. Cf. Plates X and XI (circa  $\frac{2}{3}$  linear).



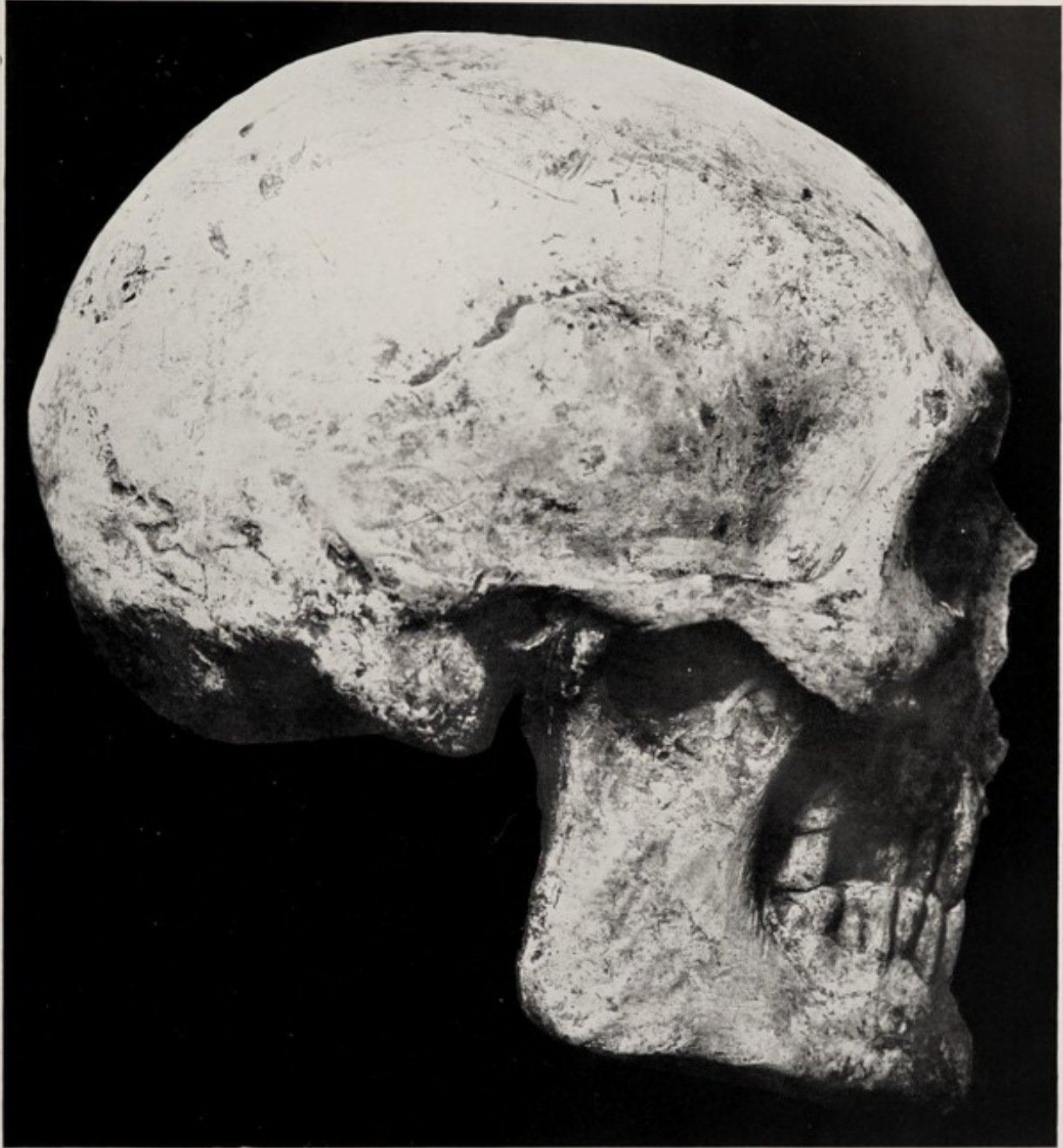




The Skull of Robert Bruce. *Norma lateralis* (Left Profile) (circa  $\frac{1}{3}$  linear).







The Skull of Robert Bruce. *Norma lateralis* (Right Profile) (circa  $\frac{1}{2}$  linear).







The Skull of Robert Bruce. *Norma occipitalis* (natural size).



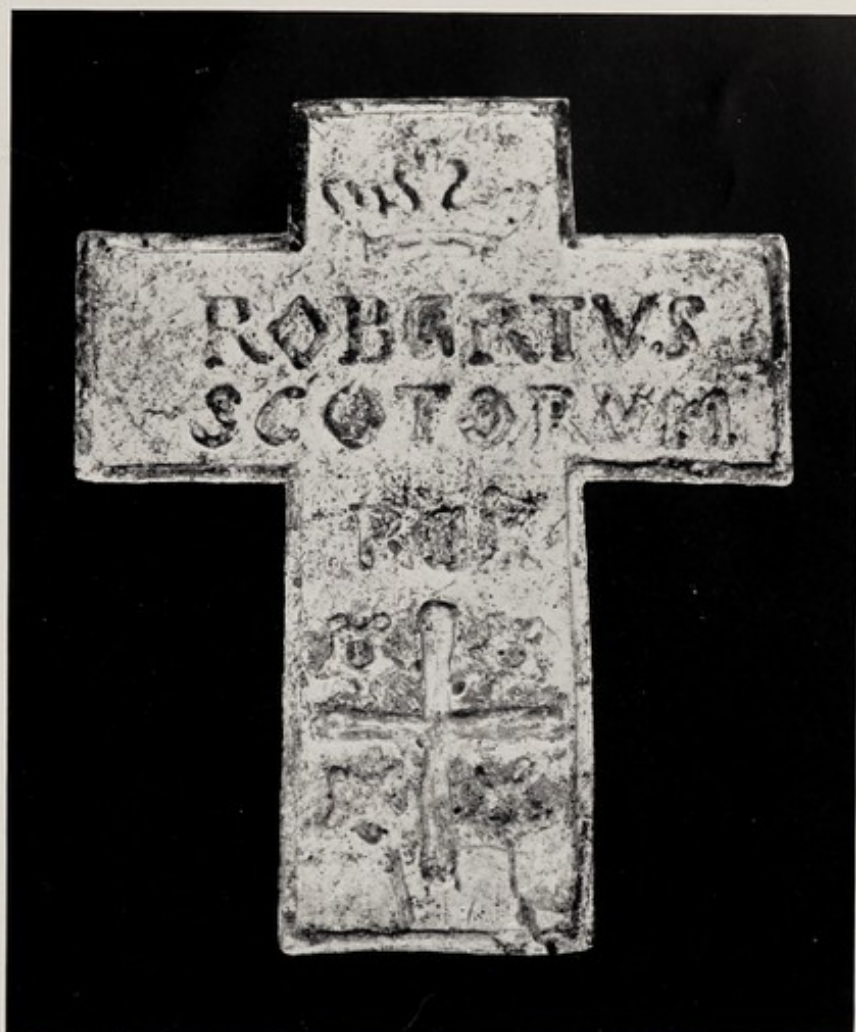




The Skull of Robert Bruce. *Norma verticalis* (natural size).







(a) "Faked" Coffin-plate of Robert Bruce now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.



(b) Photographs of Casts of Coins of Robert Bruce in the Department of Coins, British Museum (enlarged 2:1).





Plate VIII



Photographs of the carving of a Royal Personage, supposed to be from the Bruce Monument at Dunfermline.  
*Museum of Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.*







Engraving by L. P. Boitard, 1797; it follows the medallion in John Leslie's *De Origine...Scotorum*, 1578.





*From the Original at Taymouth*

Engraving after George Jamesone's picture formerly at Taymouth Castle,  
executed by E. Harding.





Plate XI



Three-quarter face outline of skull fitted to Harding's engraving of the Jamesone picture, indicating that the picture is not a true portrait, but might have some faint traditional basis.







Outline of skull profile adjusted to coin, indicating that the head on coin is not in any way a portrait.





Representations of Bruce in the Seton Armorial. By kind permission of Gilbert Ogilvy, Esq.







Representations of Bruce from an Armorial (MSS. No. 31. 4. 2) in the National Library, Edinburgh.  
By kind permission of the Chief Librarian, Dr Dickson.







Medallion of Robert Bruce placed by John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, at the top of his pedigree of the Stewart Kings in his well-known work: *De Origine, Moribus et rebus gestis Scotorum*, Romae, 1578. It is the original of Boitard's engraving some two centuries later (see our Plate IX), but whence Leslie drew his inspiration is unknown. The Bruce's massive chin and receding forehead are not in the least indicated.





*ROBERT BRUCE.*

(a) G. Cameron's Engraving from the de Witte picture of Bruce in Holyroodhouse.



(b) His Majesty the King in photographic and numismatic profile. To show how conventional is still the position of the orbit and auricular passage in modern coins.













