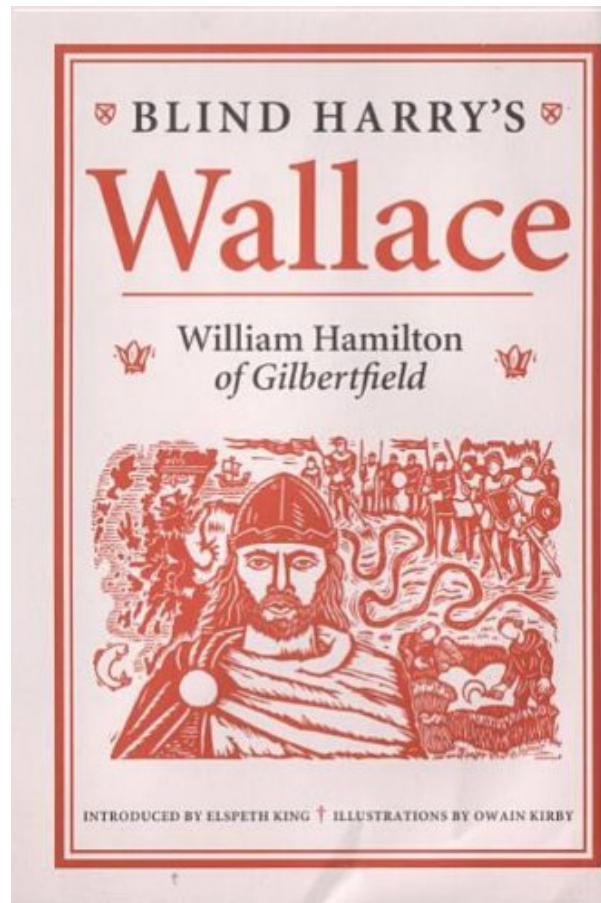
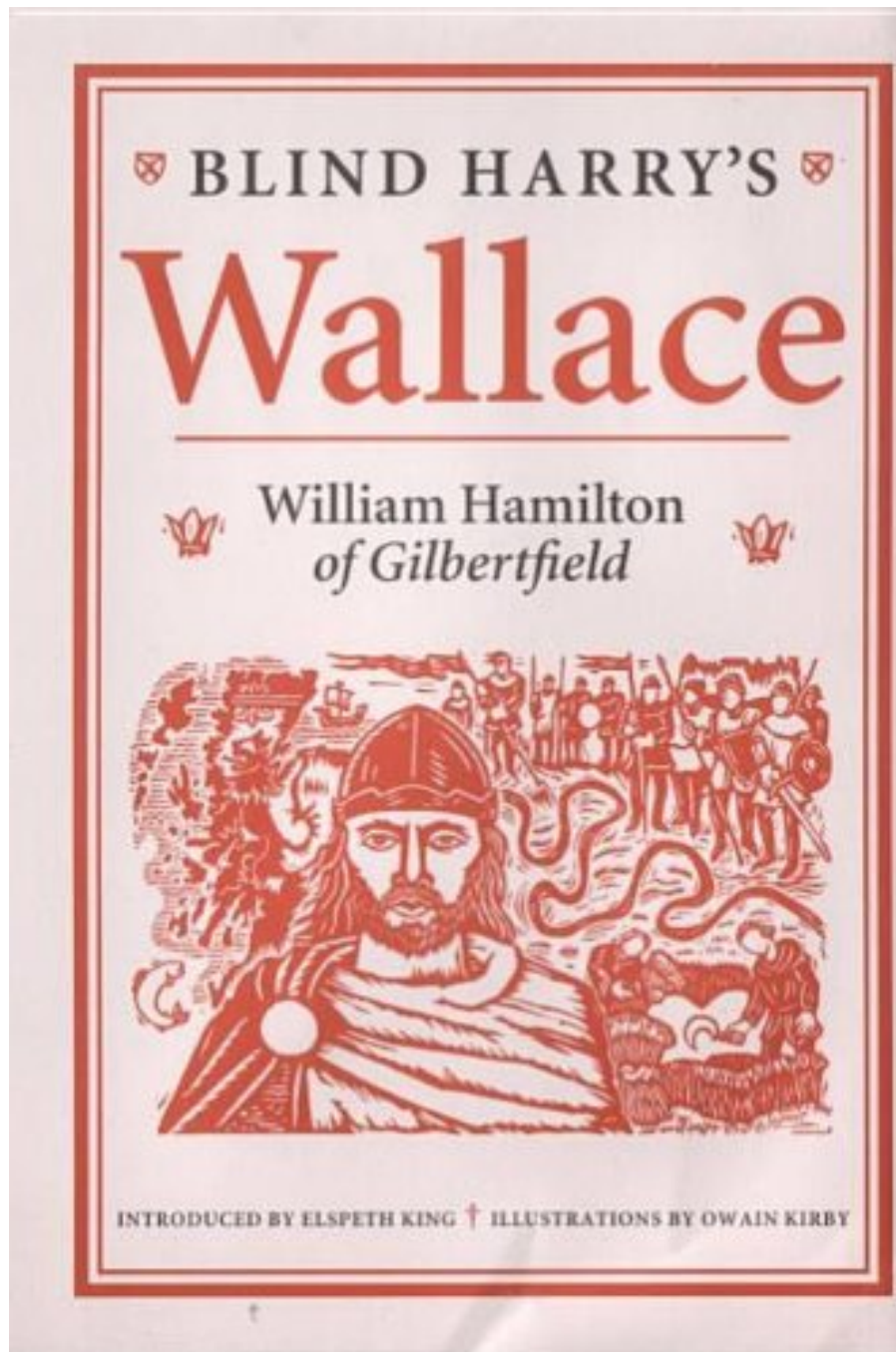


# BLIND HARRY'S WALLACE BY WILLIAM HAMILTON, ELSPETH KING



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## Review

Blind Harry's 'Wallace' is one of the most popular Scottish books of all time. -- Scottish Book Collector

## From the Publisher

Which book has been the greatest inspiration to Scots within and outwith Scotland over the last 500 years?

Why has one of the most influential books ever published in Scotland been out of print for almost 140 years, despite the fact that at least 47 editions are known to have been published?

Is the "lost manuscript" on which the book is said to have been based in existence?

How did American writer Randall Wallace come to base his script for Braveheart on this book?

Would a parliament in Scotland have won decisive support without the Braveheart factor?

Why has the poet and minstrel - whose work Burns deemed worthy of Homer - been ignored for so long?

Who was Blind Harry, and what is the significance of his work in modern Scotland today?

## About the Author

Blind Harry is thought to have lived from 1440 to 1493. Little is known about him. His one major achievement was to gather and record in writing stories about Wallace. He sang or recited these stories in verse form, and was well received at the Renaissance Court of James IV.

William Hamilton of Gilbertfield was a poet and soldier. All but forgotten now, it was he who brought Wallace back to the attention with his hugely popular 'translation' of Blind Harry's original poem.

Elspeth King is the Director of the Stirling Smith Art Gallery & Museum, which has a large collection of Wallace memorabilia and hosted the exhibition 'Scotland's Liberator- The Life and Legacy of William Wallace- throughout 1997 marking the 700 anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

Owain Kirby, a recent graduate of the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, is a freelance illustrator and artist who prefers to work in linocut, loves Scottish history and lives in Stirling.

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The epic verse of "Blind Harry" (or "Henry the Minstrel") is the main source on the life of Sir William Wallace. It was written around 1477 and based on the now lost Latin book of John Blair, commissioned by 'the fetching bishop' William Sinclair, Bishop of Dunkeld, to send to the Pope. Blind Harry gathered stories and traditions of Wallace from all over Scotland and sang or recited his verse. He was well received at the Renaissance court of King James IV. Blind Harry's "Acts and Deeds of the Illustre and Vallyeant Campioun Schir William Wallace" was one of the first Scottish books printed in Scotland. Hamilton's edition, "wherein the old obsolete words are rendered more intelligible", first published in 1722, had a great influence on Burns (whom it inspired to visit many of the sites mentioned and to write a number of poems including "Scots Wha Hae") and many others, including Wordsworth and Byron. Elspeth King, has long campaigned to bring Blind Harry's work back into print in an accessible form, and argues for its significance and relevance today.

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Most helpful customer reviews

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

A Good and Trusty Friend

By Ross Bills

Blind Harry wrote over a hundred years after Wallace was executed, but to this day his history is the most complete life of Wallace. Some dispute the extent of the recorded adventures and argue it is folk lore or fable, but fact is often stranger than fiction. I first encountered the 1800's reprint of the manuscript in the rare books section at Sydney University Library some twenty years ago, and having my own personal copy now is a rare treat indeed. Forget Braveheart. The movie could never encompass a fraction of Blind Harry's description of the deeds of Wallace. A word of caution to those who claim descent from Wallace. It is recorded that he died without issue. So I am of his family, but none are of his lineage.

Read it for the drama, and the poetry of the legend. Or read it out of respect for the world's first, and best, guerrilla fighter.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Great Wallace Information

By Lord Michael

I am glad I bought this book. I now know the finer details about Sir William Wallace and his life, the details that the movie BraveHeart would not have been able to include, unless it was made into a mini-series.

Lord Michael Hays

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

3 star

By Mr W.G. Duff

Use it for research I was not aware that it was written as poetry, which makes it harder to follow

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