



Hello, my name's Jill Calder, and I'm here today as part of the Big Book Weekend, to introduce you to my very first picture book that I did, called *Robert the Bruce, King of Scots*. And it was written by James Robertson, and published by Birlinn.

It's a fantastic story. It's a real story about real people: kings, and battles, and all sorts of jealousies, and loyalties divided, and everything like that, that took place over 700 years ago. Okay? So this is Robert the Bruce here, King of Scots.

I want to introduce you to the book and a little bit about Robert, and then we are going to do some drawing, because I'm an illustrator. I've got all my pens and everything here. We're going to draw a scene from the book, and then we're going to recreate our very own little picture book ourselves. So you don't need very many materials for that, just some paper, some pens, pencils or whatever, and a pair of scissors, but we'll get to that in a bit.

So here's the book. Okay. So. At the start of this story we meet very young Robert. Here's he's a teenager with his dad, and his grandfather as well. This is the story of a man who became a king. Robert Bruce, or Robert the First of Scotland as he would become was born in 1274. His birthplace is thought to have been Turnberry Castle in Ayrshire. His Norman ancestors, called De Bruce, came to England with William the Conqueror in 1066, and arrived in Scotland 60 years later. By the time of Robert's birth, the Bruces were one of the most powerful families in the whole land. But, when he was only 12 an event took place which left the throne of Scotland empty, and the country's future uncertain, and which would set the course for the rest of Robert Bruce's life.



Well my goodness me, the throne was empty, the king of Scotland at the time, he was riding his horse, he fell off his horse, down a cliff – dead! Kaput! And so this left a power vacuum. There was no one to lead the land. And the barons and the earls and the bishops couldn't decide who would be best to be the next king or queen of Scotland, and there were certainly plenty of claimants. But there was one man that I want to introduce you to who saw this as an opportunity. Oh my goodness me. Here we are. We meet this guy here. You wouldn't want to meet him on a dark night! This is Edward the First of England. King Edward the First, also known as Edward Longshank, because he was really tall, which was very unusual for that time in history.

Now, Edward decided that he wanted to take advantage of this, and become Scotland's overlord, and basically its ruler. And he marched up to the Scottish border and met with the barons and earls and bishops, etc., and basically told them that. Some of them agreed to this, and others, like Robert Bruce, were not happy at all about this, and felt that maybe they should be King of Scotland. So many years of turmoil ensued, with lots of battles and fighting and death, and oh my goodness me, it's such a dramatic story! But I am going to fast-forward a few years to our story. To the new century, the fourteenth century.

In 1306, Robert the Bruce was crowned King of Scots. Crowned himself King of Scots. And he was in the presence of three bishops, four earls, and many other supporters. And among them was the 90-year old Isabella, Countess of Buchan, whose husband's cousin Bruce had just murdered in order to become king. I told you it was a dramatic story...

Another of King Robert's firm supporters was a young knight aged no more than 20, called Sir James Douglas. His father had died a prisoner in the Tower of London, so,



y'know, he had enemies in England, too. The good Sir James, or "the Black Douglas" as he was known, soon became Bruce's most trusted comrade. And like the King himself, would prove himself a master of guerrilla warfare. So here's Isabella, and she has the Crown Jewels of Scotland in her hand, and there's Robert Bruce, waiting to be crowned King of Scots. And there is the good Sir James, or the Black Douglas, so it's quite a scene, a coronation scene. However... somebody wasn't happy.

King Edward the First of England was furious! He had been defied! He was the overlord of Scotland. So he, terrible retribution really. He gave orders for immediate retaliation against Robert Bruce. And on the 18th of June in 1306, an English force surprised Robert Bruce in a dawn attack seven miles west of Perth.

Bruce fled westward, and near Dalrigh suffered a second defeat at the hands of the MacDougalls, who were loyal to the English king. While Bruce and what was left of his force took to the mountains, his wife Elizabeth and daughter Marjory, and other women in the party, went north under the protection of brother Neil. But they, too, were apprehended, and delivered straight into the hands of King Edward the First. Oh my goodness, what is disaster!

Terrible retribution followed. Neil Bruce was executed in the most terrible manner. And the women in the party, including Elizabeth, Bruce's wife, his sister Mary, and the Countess of Buchan, Isabella, were placed in solitary confinement in specially constructed cages. And Marjory Bruce, his daughter, who was only 10, was caged for a shorter period in the Tower of London. And here we've got an illustration, and this is Marjory in her cage outside the Tower of London. And the crowd humiliating her and throwing dirty water and rotten vegetables at her. It was a terrible thing. But what about Robert Bruce...?



Well, this leads us to the scene that I want us to illustrate today, and make a little picture book from. And it's quite a famous story about Robert the Bruce that some of you might have heard of.

Robert Bruce was now a man on the run. There was a price on his head. He left the mainland and reputedly took refuge in the Hebrides islands off the west coast of Scotland. It was from this period that the legend of his encounter with a spider grew. Pondering his bleak situation Bruce is said to have watched a spider trying, and repeatedly failing, to spin its web. When at last it succeeded, the king was so impressed by its perseverance that he resolved to try, once again, to win freedom for Scotland – and Scotland for himself. And here we have this very famous scene. It's a very dark scene, and this is the one I want us to draw together. It's Bruce in his dank, dark sea cave, and there's a ferocious sea outside and lots of waves and crashing, and there's a storm brewing in the horizon. And there's this beautiful spider's web that's been spun right in the foreground of the picture. And Robert Bruce is mesmerised by it, and inspired by it.

So, I really want us to get the atmosphere of this cave, and recreate that ourselves. Maybe you've been in a cave. Doesn't need to be a sea cave. Just try and remember what that's like, what it felt like. And we can add in little things like shells and crabs, and all sorts of things. And Robert Bruce himself will be eating things like fish, raw fish, there's maybe some fish bones around, all sorts of stuff like that.

Okay, I'm going to keep this open because we'll have a look at it again, but grab some paper. I've just got some coloured paper here, and I've also got some A4 paper. You don't need very special materials for this. I'm going to take this paper



here, it's slightly peachy in colour, and I've got – what materials have I got? – I've got some felt-tip pens here, I've got some coloured pencils, I've got some crayons like this, they look a bit like big, chunky colour pencils, and I've got something called a paint stick as well, because that covers quite a large amount of area. You can use things like paints and inks as well, but you need to let the picture dry before we start folding and making our book, otherwise you'll ruin your picture.

Okay, so we're going to start off by drawing the sea cave. Okay? So I'm going to use some purple here, you can use any kind of dark colour you want to, maybe not black at this stage. We'll maybe add a bit of black later on, but we want to get those dark corners of the sea cave. So I've got some purple, and basically I'm just going to draw very quickly, and very roughly, round the edge of the cave. I'm quite a scribbly drawer, if you know what that means, and I like to fill in detail bit by bit as I go along. I get some of the foundations of the drawing in first. Before we start drawing Robert standing looking at the spider's web, okay? So we've got some purple in there. So that's it, you just see I've filled in the corners a little bit, very scribbly, the mouth of the cave there. I'm going to put some boulders in. Rocks are brilliant because they're any old shape. You can't draw a rock incorrectly, is my opinion. So we've got some rocks there, and I'm going to put some there, in the corner there. Boulders, rocks that have been thrown in there by stormy seas. We'll put that over there. Okay. We'll fill in the corners a little bit later on, so you can see I've done that very quickly. I've boulders in the corner. There we go, there.

And then what I want to do next, because remember there was sea in the background, there was great crashing waves on the horizon, I'm going to get a different coloured crayon, a kind of blue colour. If any of you have ever been to the west coast of Scotland, or maybe the west coast of Ireland, the sea is the most



amazing colour there, sort of turquoise. It looks Caribbean, but in fact it's absolutely Arctic to swim in! Very cold, but very beautiful.

I'm just going to draw a kind of rough line along in the background. When we look at our horizon, it's not often a completely straight line, it's quite a hazy line, like that. And that also gives the impression of waves in the distance as well. And you can maybe start to put some small waves in as well. I do like little dashes, little curly dashes, like that. And I'm going to keep adding to the sea as we go along, as we build our picture up. So you can see what I've done there. Like little waves and things, there it's just like really quick little dashes. You've just got to go for it with this picture.

And the other thing we could do, and I've not done it in the original illustration, is we could maybe draw an island or something. I'm going to get a colour pencil for a bit of detail, a nice green one. Put a little island in or something. There's lots of islands off the west coast of Scotland. I'm going to completely make one up. So there we go. It just gives us a bit of something to look at on the horizon, and a bit of focus, a bit of interest. And you can just have that island right on the horizon. I might use that colour to do some other quick waves as well. There we go. And so you see? We've got our island on the horizon, looking out from the sea cave.

Okay. Let's start to draw Robert. Now, I'm going to do a kind of base layer for Robert first of all. And rather strangely, I'm going to use a kind of pink colour, but you could use any colour you want, as long as it's slightly pale. You can use the side of a felt-tip pen as well for this. So remember, Robert is going to go here. Okay? And I'm going to just draw almost like a silhouette, an outline, of his head and shoulders, basically the upper kind of half of his body. And then what we'll do is we'll draw into that, we'll



put the detail into that. Okay? And again it's quite rough. It's just laying down a kind of background for Robert. Now in my illustration, remember, I'm just going to remind you of the illustration, you've got his arms crossed, which is quite tricky to draw, so you can put his arms any way you want to, anyway that you find easy. I've got him with his arms crossed, so I'm just going to try and recreate that. There we go. So Robert the Bruce is pink. Brilliant! Good colour. There we go. So you see it's just a kind of foundation layer, that's all. And then we maybe want to start building into it a little bit. I'm going to go back and use a kind of bluey colour. I'm just... because remember he's inside this cave, and it's very dank, and imagine it's dripping with old sea water, and maybe old bits of seaweed lying around, and he's in shadow. I'm just going to put a little bit of a layer of extra colour over him, and shadow underneath his arms. Very loose at this stage. There we go. So we see he's kind of building up a little bit. He's got his back to the light coming in the cave.

And then what I want to do is I've got a pen here. I'm going to use some black here, because I want to put some definition in. Now, I don't know about you, but I always start by drawing people's hair. It's a strange habit I've got, but I like to do the hair, then I can fill in the face. So I'm going to start with Robert's hair. Now, he's been there for weeks. He's not got a comb, he's not got a brush, he's, y'know, not had a shave or anything – he's living in a cave, for goodness sake! So, y'know, he's looking a bit messy. He's looking a bit like a wild man. So, again, very sort of quick kind of brush strokes. His hair's grown a lot and he's looking a bit messy. So you see how we're building up texture, we're building up detail as well. Right, so that's hair done. You can start to draw now his face. I'm going to draw his nose and his eyes. Now we're going to do something unusual with the eyes, because I don't want you to draw in his eyeballs yet, okay? Because we're going to do that after we've drawn the spider, because we want him to look exactly at the spider. Okay?



Right. Okay. So let me draw his nose, and just the outlines of his eyes, okay, so he's going to look slightly spooky. But trust me – it's worth waiting. Okay? And his mouth. And he's just mesmerised by this spider. And I'm going to give him a tiny little bit of beard as well, because he won't be shaving at all. So there we go, that's a bit of beard. Robert Bruce there. It's very odd not drawing the actual kind of irises of his eyes yet, but we will come to that. There we go. And you can start to draw in a little bit – do you see what I mean, he does look a bit like a zombie at the moment. But we'll get there, we'll get there.

We'll draw in some detail around his arms. There we go. And his tunic that he's wearing. It's maybe got some tears in it, things like that. Oh, gosh – it'd be miserable living in a cave. Right. And his cuffs. And he's got his hand here. The hands are always really difficult to draw, but I think if you try and draw them really quickly, generally, it works. It worked that time. That's his hand – he's holding on to his other arm, there. Okay. I'm just going to draw a little bit more of his tunic, down like that, and his other hand, coming up, holding on to his arm, like that.

Right, okay. So what I want to do now is we've kind of drawn bits of Robert. We're going to put a little bit more detail in him, but I want to work a bit more on the background and the cave now that we've got Robert in situ. And I was thinking that I'll get some green, I've got a green colour pencil, and a green paint stick here. We could draw some seaweed lying on the rocks, or maybe some green algae, that's just covering the walls of these damp sea caves. Maybe it's hanging down a little bit from the mouth of the cave. You can just imagine it all lying on the rocks. I do love seaweed, it's very pretty. It's quite nice to put little details like that in because it makes the sea cave more convincing. It makes the location more convincing. And



especially if you've been to a cave you can try and remember what it was like. And all the things that were there. Coming round right into that corner. Bit of that. You get wonderful shapes of seaweed that fall down. We're building up layers, texture. So there we go – we've got some coming down from the roof, and some seaweed on these boulders here.

I'm going to work into the sea a little bit more. Okay. So I'm just going to use the edge of my colour pencil, because it's much broader. And just bring in some really quick colour, work really, really quickly to build up this kind of new texture. And I'm going to go for a completely different colour now as well. I'm going to go for a sort of orangey colour, and put that on the surface of the seaweed as well, and maybe do some more waves. The real contrast makes it stand out. It's a kind of orangey coral colour. And that's going to lead me to the sky now as well. Imagine this stormy sky. I'm going to put some clouds in. Clouds are great because you can draw them any shape as well. They're a bit like rocks. There's no one, correct shape of cloud. And remember they'll be going behind Robert as well. There we go... some clouds in the sky. And I think I might bring my coloured felt-tip pens in here. We've got some clouds, like that, and I'll put some detail and this brings a different texture in. It's a kind of lilacky colour on top. There we go. In the sky. Maybe draw in a bit of definition on the island as well. So there's lots of looking at your illustration as you do it, and thinking "oh, I could add a little bit in there, add a bit in there...". Bit more on the sea cave as well, I think. Let's just give it a bit more to the right. There we go. A slightly different colour. Very scribbly. That rocky texture that you can recreate.

Right. There we go. And right at the beginning I think I mentioned drawing something like a crab or some shells. Now, I'm going to draw a little crab, right here, just sitting on the rocks. He's going to be looking at Robert as well. We're going to



introduce a crab to this legend of Robert the Bruce and a spider. Now remember a crab's eyes kind of stick up above their body. And he's got his little pincers out. He's going to be waving one at Robert: "Who are you? Get out of my sea cave! I was perfectly happy here before you moved in and spoilt all my splendid isolation." Put a bit of orange on the crab as well. I tell you who taught me how to draw a crab: it was Chris Haughton, when he came and did an event at Edinburgh Book Festival about his book *Don't Worry, Little Crab*. And he showed me how to draw a crab. So I've got a little crab there, waving away, waving his pincers.

Right. Okay. So, colour in the sky a little bit more. Maybe use some of that orange, or pinks for that dramatic sky that's going on. There we go. Right. These waves, wild waves and wild weather. Maybe some sea spray coming up. Crashing against the mouth of the sea cave, and there's sea water crashing around. Gosh – nothing is dry. There we go. Like that. Okay.

Right. I want to do a little bit more in this corner, here, because this is where the spider's web is going to be. And we need to have a nice dark background there. So our spider's web kind of stands out against it. That's really important that we do that. So I'm just going to put a little bit more darker texture in. I'm going to maybe get some grey as well. Which sounds a bit depressing, but you'll see how we use it. Just get this really dark corner of the cave so the web stands out. There we go. Right. Okay.

Can we put anything else on Robert? I think we can, actually. Let's give him a bit more definition, a bit more shadow. There we go. Now, we're doing this really quite quickly because of the time of the session, but you can spend as long on this illustration as you want at home, and really build up lots of detail as well. I take quite



a long time to do my illustrations. But there's something really exciting about working really quickly and really intuitively. Right, there we go. A bit of Robert there. And that sea in the background. Let's get a bit of that turquoise there. These are lovely brush pens. They're double-ended, so they've got this lovely kind of tip, like that, and then on the other end they've just got a kind of normal felt-tip pen, so you get lots of choice for the kind of way that you want to draw with it. Right.

Oh, and the other thing you can do as well – see, I get ideas as I go along – so there we go, you see we're starting to build it up a little bit there? You can put some birds in. And a really easy way to draw birds in the distance, is kind of do little flicks, little Vs. It's very effective. And it's just really their wings. And you can do little ones, and ones that are a bit nearer. And you just imagine this kind of flock of seagulls in the distance. And it really gives us a sense of perspective and scale, and the island in the distance, and the horizon, and the birds, and close up we've got Robert in his cave.

Right. Now. I'm just going to do a little bit more to the sky, because again I just want to have something for the web to go over, because we're going to be drawing the web in a kind of white, or pale colour of colour pencil, or you can use paint if you want to, or you can use a crayon – something that's going to stand out, basically, from the dark interior of the cave. There we go... something like that. There we go. Brilliant, if I do say so myself.

Right. Okay. So, there we've got our picture there. I'm going to start doing the web now. So I've got a white crayon here, or you can use a white colour pencil, whatever you want. I'm going to do it in this because it's a bit easier for everybody to see at home. And we're going to start in the corner, okay? So you've got to be bold. We're going to be drawing over Robert and our sea cave at the moment, so we just have to



go for it, okay? So, I'm going to draw the outline, though remember our web is almost held on by these wonderful strings of silk that the spider weaves. They're going to be attached there. Right over Robert. And that's great because you can see that over the dark purple and the dark green, and I'm just going to show you what I'm doing. You see how the effect of the web is coming together? And Robert is behind it? That's kind of why we need that darker background. There we go. And that's just a white crayon, or you could use white chalk or something like that, whatever you've got. There we go. It's quite a chunky web. Right. And then of course we have to draw our spider, and then we've got to remember to put Robert's eyes in, or otherwise he's going to look super-creepy!

Okay. So, I'm going to do the spider in, I know it's yellow in the book, so it really stands out from that dark purple and dark blue background, but we've got different colours in our illustration, so I'm actually going to use a felt-tip pen, and use a really deep blue colour for my spider. And the spider's going to look really big because it's in the foreground, okay? It's the nearest and closest to us. It's actually probably quite a small spider. I hope. I don't like big spiders.

Okay, so I'm going to put the spider roundabout... there. Okay? You might be a little bit different. And there's just the spider, lovely blue body. And remember a spider's got eight legs, okay? And it's going to be clinging on, spinning its web. There we go. I'm just going to use a white coloured pencil to show the string of its silk as it spins away. Right, so it looks quite big. There we go. Do you see it?

Now we can draw in Robert's eyes. Hooray! So he's going to be looking down at the spider in my picture, okay? So it's just getting the angles of the eyes right. And he's going to be smiling a little bit, because it's this moment of inspiration, when he



realises the spider just keeps trying, and that's what he should do as well. There we've got a human-looking Robert now. He's looking down at the spider. There we go.

Now, we could play for hours with this and keep adding to the drama of the background and the sea and everything, but what I really want to do now is I want to turn this image into a miniature picture book. Okay?

So, it's a little bit like I'm going to show you very briefly one that I made earlier. It's quite an usual book, it's not like a normal book, it opens up in different ways, but it's going to be a little book. And I'm going to show you how to do that now. I'm going to shove some of this out the way – I always have an untidy desk – typical illustrator! And all you really need at this point is being able to fold – you might need some help with that – and a pair of scissors. Okay?

Right, so, there's a few folds and one cut in this book. Really simple. So if you're happy with it take a picture of it, actually – that's a good idea – because we're going to be folding this and cutting it. We're going to fold it in half first of all. Now, be really careful with your folding, because the better you fold and you get the points of the paper to meet, and the lines and the edges of the paper to meet, the better your book will be, the better the structure of the book will be. So take your time with this one.

So we're going to do this kind of fold like that, in half, make sure it all meets. Right, that's looking good. And I always start my fold from the middle. I press down with my thumb, there, and I go up to the top and down to the bottom, and right over the edges to make sure it's folded all the way. Okay?



So we've got that. We've already got a book-type structure. Now what I want you to do is turn it over, so we've got the blank side facing up. And we're going to do a couple more folds. We're going to fold from one end to the crease, the fold we've just made. So line that up. Make sure the edges at the side are all lined up, and then again press in the middle and fold up, and down to the very edges. And if you want a really sharp crease, maybe you could use the end of the scissors, and just go over it really gently. And that gives your paper a really good crease, a really sharp crease.

Okay, so you see what we've done there? We're going to do exactly the same at the other side. So fold up to that middle crease. Okay? Make sure the edge meets, it's all lined up, there's nothing going over to one side or the other... there we go, got that done. Down in the middle, like that, up to the top, and down to the bottom, go over it with the handle of my scissors.

Okay. So what you should end up with, is this. If you look at it end-on, it's like a capital M. Or maybe some of you have got a W. But that's okay, it doesn't matter at this stage. So we've got like that, it's like a concertina. Now we're going to do our last fold. This is a big fold. Some of you with wee hands might need extra help with this from mum and dad, but we're going to fold, so we've got the image facing up the way, and we're going to do a fold like this – we're going to fold it length-ways. That's called a hot-dog fold. I'm going to show you why in a minute. So again, make sure everything is lined up. It's a little bit trickier this one, because you're folding across the folds and the creases that you've already made in the paper, but just take your time, make sure it's all lined up, double-check. You might need someone to hold down one end for you. Fold in the middle, or press down in the middle and fold up



and down right over the edges there. We want this to be a really good crease so we're going to go to that.

Okay. You see? I'm going to show you on the blank side because it's a little bit easier. We've got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight sections – eight pages – in our book. Okay?

Now we're going to do the cut. So be careful when you're handling scissors. It's easier, I think, to cut on the blank side, because you can see the crease that you've made, and that's the guideline that you're going to follow. And basically what we're going to do – I'm just going to check where Robert is – okay so Robert's there... I'm going to turn it over, and I'm going to cut from that end up to the third crease we've made. I've done a little drawing so you can see more clearly. So basically we cut from the bottom up one, two, to the third point, there. Okay? Now follow that crease line really carefully – I've got big scissors: it's a bit easier with bigger scissors – and just follow it. Right, here we go, following the line very carefully, steady hand, and don't overshoot. There we go – fantastic – we've made our cut!

The style of book that we're making is called a "trouser book" – and this is why... because we've made a pair of trousers...

Okay, so what we do now, is we simply put our book together like this. You take one end, the top trouser leg, and with the folds you've made you literally concertina it in together. And at the top of the trousers you fold them in like that, and then you fold the other leg of the trouser up. Okay?



So, ta-da! We've made a little book! And what's even better is that when you open it – there's still plenty of space inside for you to add more drawings, more writing, you can stick things into it, you can glue another little book on to it and make it extra-long... you can get really creative with these little books. But it kind of opens up like that and reveals little sections of the story as it opens up. The landscape as well – we see the edge of the page. So, it's a book that opens up anyway, and that's what's really exciting about it.

I hope you've enjoyed drawing with me today, and hearing more about Robert the Bruce. And I hope you've enjoyed making a little book.

Thanks very much for tuning in.