

Press Release to German media from *Save Gillies Hill*

Heidelberg Cement may recently won its takeover bid for Britain's Hanson Aggregates, but is now facing stiffer opposition in the U.K. – from a small Scottish village.

Cambusbarron, near the city of Stirling in central Scotland, is built on the northern slopes of the Gillies Hill, one of the icons of Scottish history. In the seminal battle that created an independent kingdom of Scotland in 1314, the Scots king, Robert the Bruce, stationed his camp-followers, or *sma folk* in the Scots language, on this wooded hill. On the decisive second day of fighting, on 24 June, these *gillies*, after whom the hill was later named, made a loud entry onto the battlefield – not with weapons, but banging together their pots, pans and cooking utensils. The sorely-pressed English, thinking it a fresh Scots army, fled, their leader, Edward 11, being pursued all the way to the border between the two countries.

Now, say angry villagers, the Hill is under serious threat after Hanson Aggregates announced in January plans to expand considerably the quarry they own on the southern side of the Hill.

A spokesperson said: “Not only is the Hill home to rare species such as red squirrels, peregrine falcons, green woodpeckers, ospreys, badgers, and not only is it a favourite place of many locals who walk, jog, cycle there, or simply enjoy the stunning views from its cliffs, but it is a place which, had *it* not existed in 1314, Scotland might not exist today. And now Hanson – or Heidelberg Cement, wants to blast it away.”

It may seem an unfair contest: Heidelberg is now the second-largest aggregates company in the world, but local people are waging a fierce campaign to preserve the Hill, and on 24 June, the 693rd anniversary of the battle, they will re-enact that famous intervention by the *gillies*, when large numbers will march across the Hill and down onto the Field of Bannockburn . A petition, signed by thousands of Scots, is being presented to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh the following week.

The campaign's spokesperson went on: “ Heidelberg's principal owner, Herr Adolph Merle, has a reputation as a cultured, sensitive art-lover: surely he will not sanction the destruction of such a beautiful and historic place?”

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