



Melrose Abbey is one of the most beautiful of all Scotland's abbeys. Its tranquil setting at the foot of the Eildon Hills gives little hint of the turbulent events which took place here.

# INVESTIGATING MELROSE ABBEY

Information for Teachers





### Timeline

**650** St Aidan founds Mailros monastery at Old Melrose

**839** Old Melrose destroyed by Kenneth MacAlpin

**1136** Cistercian monks from Rievaulx set up new monastery on site of modern Melrose

**1296** Edward I invades Scotland

**1322** Edward II's army sacks Melrose; Robert the Bruce helps monks rebuild abbey

**1331** Bruce's heart buried in abbey church

**1385** Richard II of England invades Scotland following attack; Melrose destroyed

**1389** Richard II assists financially with rebuilding

**1544** Melrose attacked by English as part of the 'Rough Wooing'

**1560** The Reformation

**1590** Last monk dies

**1610** Monks' choir converted for use as parish church

### Historical background

The story of Melrose abbey begins more than 1,300 years ago and about 4km to the east of its present setting. Around 650 AD monks from Lindisfarne established a monastery within a turn of the River Tweed, at a place known as Mailros. At that time this was part of the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria. The young St Cuthbert entered the monastery, becoming its prior before becoming prior of Lindisfarne in 664. Only traces of this original abbey remain; most of it was destroyed in 839 by Kenneth MacAlpin, King of the Scots.

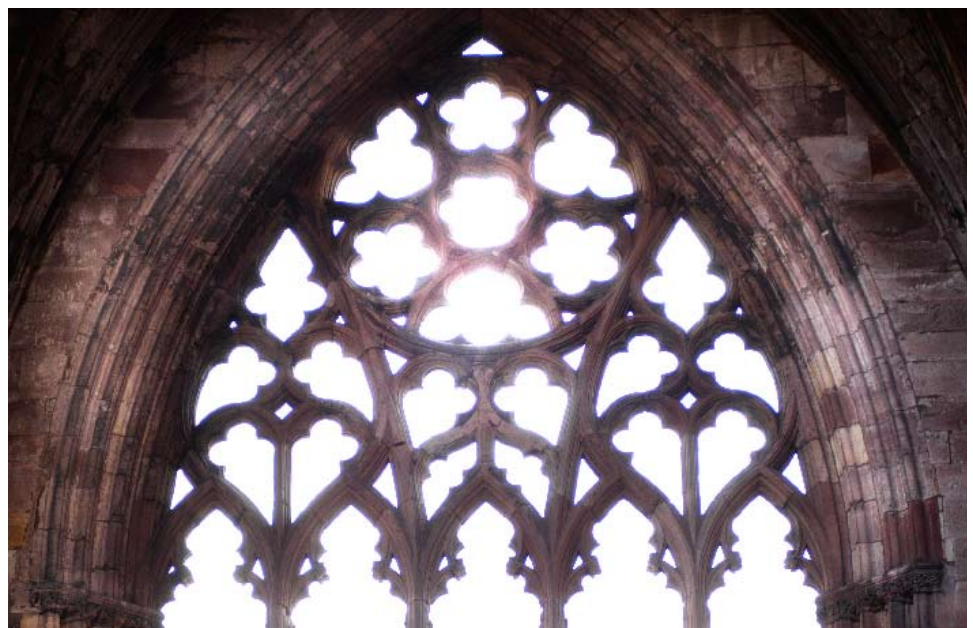
Around 1136 David I invited monks from the English abbey of Rievaulx to set up the first Cistercian abbey in Scotland. They selected a new site not far from Mailros which later became known as Melrose. Assisted by lay brothers with the manual work, the monks slowly established the abbey and their lives within its cloister.

Although the Cistercian order was characterised by austerity and poverty, Melrose quickly became one of the wealthiest institutions in Scotland. Part

of this wealth stemmed from donations from pious nobles, investing heavily in the afterlife, but much of it came from the wool trade. At its height in the 14th century, the monks of Melrose owned 15,000 sheep, one of the biggest flocks in Britain.

The peaceful round of prayer came to an abrupt end in 1296 when Scotland was invaded by Edward I. The abbey was sacked by Edward II in 1322, rebuilt with the assistance of Robert the Bruce and was again destroyed by Richard II in 1385. Rebuilding this time was supported in part by the same Richard II who had caused the destruction.

Rebuilding continued into the 16th century, though the status of the abbey was by this time in decline. After the abbey was damaged during the 'Rough Wooing' raids of the 1540's, there was little commitment to rebuild. By the time of the Reformation in 1560 only a handful of monks remained; the last monk, Dan Jo Watson, died in 1590. The abbey lands were gradually sold off and by 1810 not even the church was in use any more.





## Supporting learning and teaching

A visit to Melrose Abbey is particularly appropriate for teachers working on class study topics such as:

- The Middle Ages  
– Monastic Life
- The Reformation

There are also links to **Robert the Bruce** who's heart is buried in the abbey.

The **Curriculum for Excellence** aspires to motivate and challenge pupils through a wide range of varied learning experiences. Site visits have a particular role to play in joining up learning outcomes across the curriculum. A visit, and use of the supporting materials, will help to:

- **develop successful learners** by challenging pupils to consider how life has changed for people. It will help them to think critically about evidence and arrive at their own conclusions.
- **develop confident individuals.** Pupils will learn about aspects of their community's past, develop an understanding of social changes, establish some of their own values and communicate their views on different historical and social issues.
- **develop responsible citizens.** It will help to increase pupils' social and historical knowledge and understanding and encourage greater respect for their own historic and built environment.
- **develop effective contributors** by broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding through investigative, creative and critical thinking.

## Before the visit

- It would be helpful if pupils had an idea of some of the key terms relating to abbey buildings and life e.g. **monastery, monk, abbot, lay brothers, nave, tower, cloister, altar, chapter, chapel, Reformation, Mass, tomb.** These and other terms could be collated into a class dictionary.
- The abbey has changed dramatically over the years. Discuss with pupils how and why buildings change. Discuss how wind and weather can affect a building as well as the deliberate destruction following the Reformation.
- The role and extent of the power of the Church in medieval times is hard for today's children to grasp. Research into everyday life at this time will help show its influence – for example, the paying of **teinds** or tithes to the local church.
- Discuss and research what it would have been like to live in a monastery or convent. Investigate the everyday lives of monks and nuns. Further information can be found on the accompanying fact file. If possible, make contact with a contemporary monk or nun to discuss how they live today and what their motivation is.
- Help pupils gain a clearer grasp of the time scale by making a time line with them, counting back the centuries and then marking on key events. This could be added to after the visit.

## Working on site

Pupils should be encouraged to look for physical evidence. In addition to the points for discussion included in this pack, useful starting points are:

- What materials were used to construct the abbey? Where did they come from? Why have some survived and not others?
- How was the abbey protected against intruders?
- Can you see any ways in which the abbey has changed?
- What evidence is there for daily life?

Pupils can record evidence by taking notes, sketching, taking photographs, recording impressions into a tape recorder.

On the Historic Scotland website: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/education\\_unit](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/education_unit) teachers can find additional resources to help with work on site. These include compiling an *Evidence Record* and a *My Impressions Record*.

## Suggestions for follow-up work

Following the visit pupils can pool their findings in groups to create a fuller record of the abbey and the lives of the people who worked there. This could form the basis for a range of presentation activities, for example:

- A poster, leaflet or guide book for future visitors
- A slide show with commentary of their visit
- Imaginative writing based on the lives of the monks at the abbey.



### Daily Programme

0130	Prayers followed by sung service
	<b>Nocturns</b>
0330	<b>Matins</b> prayers. Back to bed.
0600	<b>Prime</b> prayers – first mass of the day Meeting in chapter house to read a chapter from St Benedict's Rule Book, to hear confession of sins; and to sort out work for the day. Spiritual work followed the meeting.
0800	<b>Terce</b> prayers and sung mass
0900	Reading
1130	<b>Sext</b> prayers
1200	Main meal of the day. Rest and private prayer.
1430	<b>None</b> prayers. Physical work
1730	Supper
1800	<b>Vespers</b>
1930	Light supper, followed by <b>Compline</b> service.
2015	Bed time

## Monk Fact File

### Who were the monks of Melrose Abbey?

The monastery at Melrose Abbey was a Cistercian monastery. This order of monk was founded at Citeaux in France in 1098. Cistercian monks lived very simply and humbly, often in remote places. Monks were usually adults who entered the order of their own free will and tended to come from better-off local families. The majority spent their entire lives within the abbey, devoting themselves to a formal round of worship and abbey works. To start a monastery there had to be thirteen monks, representing Christ and the twelve disciples, sent out from another abbey and accompanied by ten lay brothers. They lived communally, following strictly the rules set out by St Benedict in the 6th century. The monks dedicated their lives to **opus dei** – the work of god, a ceaseless round of prayer and, at least in the early days, of manual labour. They lived a life of poverty, chastity and strict obedience to the rules of the order. The abbey itself, however, became wealthy on the back of sheep farming and wool exports. The monks themselves wore rough, undyed white 'habits' and so were often known as the white monks.

### How was the monastery organised?

At the head of the monastery was the **Abbot**, responsible for the overall spiritual life of the monastery. However, he was often absent, meeting potential benefactors or involved in meetings with the Parliament

and the monarch. Below him were a number of other office bearers, known as the **obedientaries**. The Prior was responsible for the day to day organization and discipline of the monastery. Below him were other office bearers with other responsibilities as follows: **Sacristan** – church furnishings; **Precentor** – church services; **Cellarar** – food, drink and fuel; **Kitchener** – cooking; **Fraterer** – the running of the refectory, crockery, table linen; **Chamberlain** – housekeeping including care for clothes; **Almoner** – distribution of charity to the needy. Other jobs included responsibility for the sick, visitors, the church treasures and so on. Within the monastery there also lived between 20 and 40 **lay brethren**, who were the working members of the community and took on many of the roles of servants and workmen.

### What did the monks do all day?

A monk's life was dedicated to serving god and his day was structured around a programme of prayers and services. You can see their daily programme in the table on the left.

Second only in importance to prayer was the daily Chapter meeting. At this meeting, monks read a chapter from St Benedict's Rule, the 6th century guidebook for a monastic life. Any administrative issues were also discussed here and monks were able to confess and be disciplined accordingly.

Work ranged from gardening and farming to copying manuscripts. After the initial enthusiasm at the founding of the order, hard physical labour tended to be carried out by the lay brothers.





### What was it like to be a monk?

Monasteries were generally wealthy organizations, often receiving patronage and donations from the crown and noble families. This meant that the inmates of a monastery were free from the many usual insecurities of medieval life. Having said that, the life of the monks was founded on austerity and frugality, although certain abbots ended up living comfortable lives in houses separate from the abbey altogether.

Their lives were communal and controlled to an extent which is hard for us to imagine today. They slept in their habits in order to be ready for night services and even when sleeping followed the Rule about how their arms should be folded. Monks were required to keep total silence – apart from the sung prayers – between **Compline** and Prime. Outwith those hours there were occasions when quiet speech was permitted in certain areas of the Abbey.

Food was generally vegetarian and frugal, consisting mainly of bread, vegetables and eggs. Fish was served on a Friday and important visitors

would be offered meat on other days. After washing their hands outside the refectory, the monks would file through in silence; grace would be said, a gong would sound and then the meal could begin. Throughout the main meal a monk would read from a religious text. Meals were eaten in silence; however sign languages evolved to enable monks to request certain items.

Aside from seasonal variations and annual religious events, life was punctuated by certain domestic rituals or events. Every week the monks would wash each others' feet in a ritual known as the **maundy**. Every three weeks or so there would be communal head shaving to maintain the **tonsure**.

The number of monks at Melrose was small and members of the community would live together for a long time. The closeness of the community and the tranquility and serenity of the routine provided a secure environment in the service of god, which was certainly attractive to a select number.





Plan of Melrose Abbey

**On the trail of the monks of Melrose**

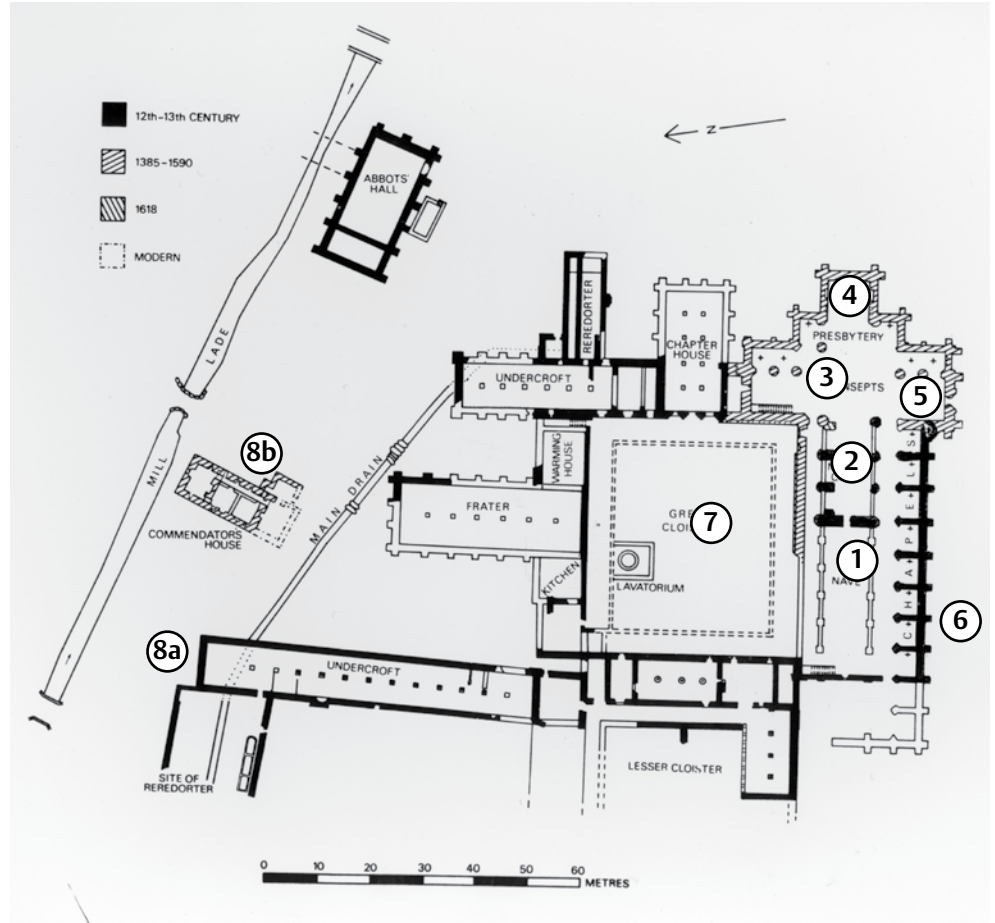
Our suggested tour route focuses on features which highlight aspects of the lives of the monks in the monastery. It takes in eight locations, marked on the plan to the right:

1. The Nave and Screen
2. The Choir
3. The Crossing and North Transept
4. The Presbytery
5. The Tower
6. The Outside of the Abbey Church
7. The Cloister
8. The Lay Brothers' Range and Commendator's House Museum

Background information is given in the pack for each location. It is written in simple language so that it can be read aloud to pupils if desired. Also included are suggested questions for discussion. The focus is on encouraging pupils to interpret the building and deduce what they can from clues they see around them.

Ideally divide your class into groups of about ten.

Allow about forty-five minutes for the suggested tour.





# Tour notes: On the trail of the monks of Melrose

## Outside Melrose Abbey

*Go through the shop and stand on the paving at the bottom of the steps.*

*Setting the scene. This can be read to pupils.*

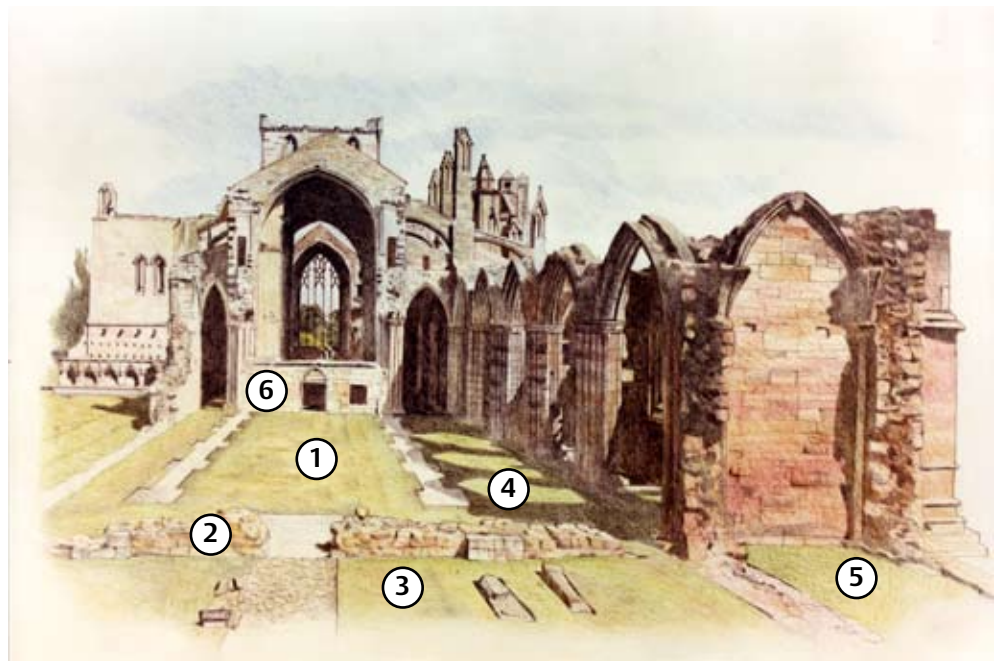
Almost 900 years ago, in 1136, 13 monks arrived here from Yorkshire. They had been invited by King David I to come and set up an abbey at Melrose. An abbey is where a group of monks live and work. They lived a very tough and strict life, praying, worshipping and carrying out good works.

Because the abbey was so close to the English border, it often got caught in the fighting between the Scottish and English rulers. It was attacked and burnt down twice, so what we can see now is a mixture of buildings from the 12th and 13th century and also from the 14th and 15th centuries.

The ruins that are left give us some clues about the lives of the monks who lived and worked here.

*Walk across the cobbles and stand at the site of the entrance to the abbey church.*

- 1 Nave
- 2 Original west wall (12th century)
- 3 Porch
- 4 South Aisle
- 5 Aisle chapels
- 6 Screen



*Melrose Abbey church looking along the nave from the west*



View down Nave



Piscina in south aisle



Pulpitum

## Location 1: The Nave and Screen

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- The most important part of the abbey was the church. It was built in the shape of a cross. Here you can walk down the long part of the cross. It is called the nave of the church. There used to be big pillars on either side, holding up the roof. **Can you see where they used to be?**
- This part of the church was for people called the lay brothers. They lived at the abbey too but they weren't proper monks. They attended services in the church and they did a lot of the hard work at the abbey, in the farms and as builders too.
- On the right you can see the remains of little chapels. As well as joining in the main church services, the monks spent a lot of time praying privately. These chapels were like 'mini-churches' for private prayer. Later on these were used by wealthy local families as special burying places.

### Teacher prompts

Look in one of the chapel areas. There used to be little altars here for the monks to pray at. Can you find where they would rinse out the silver plates and cups used on the altar?

Look for where the water drained away.

What do you think the windows used to be like?

### Desired pupil responses

Carved stone sinks known as a **piscina**.

Colourful stained glass.

- There is a stone wall at the end of the nave here. There used to be a carved wooden screen above it with a carving of Jesus on the cross. The lay brothers weren't allowed to go any further into the church. There used to be an altar here for them.

**Walk through the arch here into the roofed area of the church.**



### Did you know...

When a monk entered a monastery he was given special clothing to wear – a simple woollen robe called a habit. The monks here were Cistercian monks who always wore undyed woollen habits so they were sometimes called the white monks.

## Location 2: The Choir

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- From behind the stone wall and screen, the church was only for the monks. They spent a lot of time here – they had eight church services a day, starting in the middle of the night, at 1.30 am. All the services and prayers were sung, so this part of the church was known as the choir.
- The monks used to stand in wooden stalls. These were set against the stone wall. The choir stalls were made abroad, in a country we now call Belgium and were beautifully carved and decorated.
- The monks stopped using the abbey in about 1590. After that the abbey church was converted into an ordinary church for everyone to use. **Can you see where the new church was built inside the old church?**



Site of choir stalls



17th century church within old church

### Teacher prompts

Look to the right, high up. Can you find some of the stone decorations above where the choir stalls used to be?

Look for where the new parts of the new church were built inside the old one. What colour is the old stone?

What colour is the newer stone?

They also built a wooden gallery high up. The gallery has rotted away now, but look for the holes where the wooden beams used to slot in.

### Desired pupil responses

Carved leaf patterns.

Old stone – red sandstone.

New build – lighter.

Visible high up.

**Walk up the aisle until you are standing in the unroofed area known as the Crossing.**



### Did you know...

Sometimes the monks would fall asleep during the night time services. When this happened one of the officials would come and wave a lantern in the sleeping monk's face to try and wake him up!



Night Stair



Wash place at foot of night stair

### Location 3: The Crossing and North Transept

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- Stand in the middle of this area. This was called the crossing – **can you think why?** It was the part of the church where the 'arms' of the church crossed the nave.
- Look to the left (north). Look for a doorway, high up – it looks like a window now. On the other side of the wall used to be the monks' dormitory. At night they would come straight from the dormitory into church, to pray through the night.  
**Can you see the outline of the stone steps they used to process down?**

#### Teacher prompts

Find where the night stair used to be.  
How many steps can you count?  
Look for where the monks would wash their hands before coming into the church to pray. This was to make them feel pure.

What can you see high up on the wall above the steps?

They are statues of St Peter and St Paul. They each had a little chapel opposite.

#### Desired pupil responses

14.

In the wall at the bottom of the stairs.

2 statues

**Go and stand in the end of the church, the presbytery, below the remains of the big window in the east end.**



### Did you know...

Life was quite strict for the monks. If you did something wrong, you could be flogged in front of everyone. Other punishments included having to lie in the doorway to the church, so that everyone had to step over you.



*Piscinae in Presbytery*



*Vaulting in Presbytery*

## Location 4: The Presbytery

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- This part of the church is called the **presbytery**. It was probably the first part of the abbey to be built. It was where the high altar used to be and was where church services took place.
- You will have to use your imagination to see how beautiful this used to be. The floor was covered with colourful polished tiles, the windows had coloured stained glass, the roof would have been painted and all around silver cups and plates would have sparkled in the candlelight or the sunshine.
- Some important people were buried here. This is where the heart of Robert the Bruce was buried. The rest of him was buried in Dunfermline Cathedral.

### Teacher prompts

Look up. You can see that the roof here is decorated with carvings of God and Jesus surrounded by lots of saints.

Can you find the carving of God?

Can you find St Andrew with his cross?

There are lots of little cubby holes in this part of the church.

Two of them are cupboards, two of them are where tombs used to be and two of them are little sinks called piscinae, where they washed the silver plates used in services. Can you work out which is which?

Why do you think the monks went to so much effort to make the church look beautiful?

### Desired pupil responses

God is in the middle.

St Andrew is above God's head.

Cupboards are rectangular. Piscinae have drainage holes and are more decorative. Tomb alcoves are the biggest, with arched tops.

To show respect to God; to try and impress God so that they would go to Heaven after they died.

**Walk over to the doorway to the tower, in the South Transept.**



Statues from the Tower



17th century bell



Waterspout on roof



Pig with bagpipes

### Location 5: The Tower

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- Above the doorway leading up to the tower you can see a stone carved with writing. This was carved by the master stone-mason. He was called John Morow and came from Paris. Above the door you can see a shield with some of the mason's tools on it.
- The stone masons were very skilled and important. They knew all about buildings, a bit like architects today.

**It is well worth climbing to the top of the tower – if you have the energy! There is not space at the top for a whole class, so we suggest that pupils go up in groups of no more than ten and are closely supervised at all times.**

#### At the top of the tower

- When the abbey was first built, there wouldn't have been any of the buildings you can see around you now. The countryside would have looked much wilder. Can you see where the river Tweed is flowing?

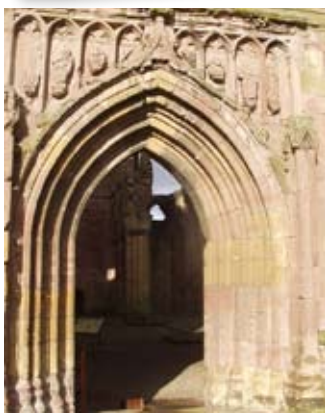
Teacher prompts	Desired pupil responses
Why do you think the river was important to the monks?	Water for drinking and washing. Could be used to transport heavy goods – useful when they were building the abbey. Fertile land around the river.
You can get a good view of lots of the lovely carvings on the abbey church from here. Look over the roof of the nave to find statues of:	Looking east over the nave. Statues are in niches. Pig is actually a water spout in the middle of the edge of the roof.
What else can you see?	
Find the bell of the church. This was added much later, when the monks had left Melrose. Why do you think the church had a bell?	Bell used to tell people when it was time to go to church.
From here you can see lots of different sets of staircases leading up and down. How many can you see?	At least three.
What do you think they were used for?	Probably used for cleaning windows and looking after the building.

**Head down the stairs and then turn right and go through a doorway leading outside the church.**



**Did you know...**

In 1326 Robert the Bruce gave the monks in the abbey a special present – money so that they could eat rice pudding every day! It was known as the King’s Dish in his honour.



South Transept Door



Shield with ‘mell’ and ‘rose’



Cook with ladle

**Location 6: The outside of the abbey church**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- The outside of the abbey church is covered with carvings. Some of them are of religious subjects but others show ordinary people, monsters, goblins, musicians.
- It’s quite unusual to find so much decoration on such an old church in Scotland. When the church was reorganised in 1560, and people changed from being Catholics to Protestants, a lot of statues and decorations were destroyed. Protestants thought that some people might start to worship the statues and decorations, rather than worshipping God.

<b>Teacher prompts</b>	<b>Desired pupil responses</b>
Above the south door you can see six statues missing something. What are they missing? What do you think happened?	They are all headless. Destroyed.
To the left of the door you can see some numbers carved into the wall. What do you think this is?	A sundial, used for telling the time.
Part of it is missing – what?	The pointer which casts the shadow to tell the time.
Can you find out when it was made?	1661 – after the monks had left the abbey.
Look down this side and this end of the church. Which is your favourite carving?	Ones to look out for could be: Cook with ladle, mason with mell – round corner to right of door out of south transept; very high up. Shield with mell and rose – towards east end of nave. Royal shield commemorating visit of James V.

- The masons used a tool called a **mell**. It was a kind of hammer with a great big round wooden head and a short handle. There are several carvings of a mell, together with a flower, maybe a rose....can you think why? (pun on the name Mel-rose).
- All around the abbey there used to be a huge wall. This was to show where everyday life and abbey life stopped and started. There used to be a gatehouse where the gatekeeper made sure that the monks weren’t disturbed inside the abbey.

**Walk round the east end of the church, right round until you find yourself on a square of smooth green grass, the former cloister.**



**Did you know...**

The monks spent a lot of time in silence. At meal times they were not allowed to talk at all. Some monks developed a kind of sign language so that they could communicate during meals. To ask for bread you had to draw a circle in the air with the thumbs and first two fingers of both hands.



*Benches in cloister*



*Monks' wash place*

**Location 7: The Cloister**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- There used to be lots of other buildings round about the abbey church. The monks lived here, so they had their dormitory, their dining room, their wash rooms and so on. There's very little left of these buildings though; when the abbey stopped being used, the stone was taken away to be used in other buildings.
- Most of the monks' buildings were around this square, which is called a **cloister**. It looks very different now. There used to be a garden in the middle, with herbs and flowers growing.
- All around the outside of the garden was a covered walkway. The monks would study here. It also sheltered the monks as they passed from one building to another.

<b>Teacher prompts</b>	<b>Desired pupil responses</b>
The monks would sit in a special place here to study and sometimes to wash each other's feet. Can you find where they would sit?	Stone benches round edge of cloister.
Above the benches you can see holes over in the wall. What do you think these were?	Show the position of the roof the walkway.
Why do you think they grew flowers and herbs?	Flowers for altar, herbs for medicine and flavouring food.
On the grass you can see a round shape marked out in stone. This was where the monks used to wash their hands before going into the dining room. Can you find where the water would drain away to?	Into huge stone drainage channel.

- Underneath the dormitory was the chapter house where the monks had daily meetings, and not far from this was the toilet block – handy for the dormitories!
- Look out for the marker showing where a casket was found which might have contained the heart of Robert the Bruce.

**Go through the gate, across the road and into the other half of the abbey grounds.**



### Did you know...

When a monk died, for thirty days afterwards a cross was laid on the table where he used to eat. Full meals were also served at his plate which were then collected and given to the poor.



Drain



Commendator's House



Mill stream



Tanning pits

## Location 8a & 8b: the Lay Brothers' Accommodation and Commendator's House Museum

**Note: please warn your pupils to take care– there are many deep ditches in this area.**

**Background information for teachers. This can be read to pupils.**

- The lay brothers were a special kind of monk. They did a lot of the hard work of the abbey. They worked on the farms, grew food for everyone to eat and carried out any building work. They went to some of the church services but not all of them, and did not have to do any studying as they could not read.
- You can see the remains of where they used to live, eat and sleep down the side of the cloister and down this part of the grounds.
- Melrose abbey became very rich because of sheep farming. The monks owned one of the biggest flocks of sheep in Britain –more than 15,000 sheep! They sold the wool all over Europe. The lay brothers were the ones who looked after the sheep on the hills – ordinary monks weren't generally allowed to go outside the abbey.
- The Commendator's House is where the person in charge of the abbey lived, after all the monks had left.
- Look out for the huge drain channel. The monks built this drain to channel water from far away. It was used to wash away rubbish.

### Teacher prompts

The other side of the Commendator's house is the mill stream. This was a channel of water which came from the River Tweed. What do you think they used the mill for?

### Desired pupil responses

Grinding flour to make bread.

Near the wall to the left you can see three pits. These were used for tanning – for turning animal skins into leather.

Where did the animal skins come from?

Skins came from the sheep and cattle.

What do you think the monks did with the leather?

Leather used for making things – shoes, belts, bags, parchment for important documents etc. Possibly also sold.

The Commendator's house is now a museum. There are some items of interest to pupils but you do have to track them down!

Of particular interest might be:

- The **pee pots** – chamber pots made of clay
- Three legged metal cooking pots
- **Posset** pot – used for monks' bedtime drink
- Masons' tools
- A large picture of a Cistercian monk
- Floor tiles

**Our suggested tour is now finished.**



## FAQ

**Q** What is the minimum number of adults required for supervision?

**A** 1 adult to 10 pupils.

**Q** Is there disabled access?

**A** Wheelchair users can gain access over ramps to the ground level areas of the abbey complex.

**Q** Are there lunch facilities?

**A** In good weather pupils can picnic on the site

**Q** Where are the toilets?

**A** There are toilets on site. Toilets with disabled access can be found less than 5 minutes away – ask the steward for directions.

**Q** Do you carry out risk assessments on behalf of schools?

**A** Risk assessment of the site is the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the group. Hazard information sheets available on the Historic Scotland website provide information that can help teachers prepare their risk assessments.

**Q** Is there a shop?

**A** There is a small shop that sells postcards, guidebooks and souvenirs.

## Visiting Melrose Abbey

**Pre visits:** We strongly recommend that teachers should make a free visit to the abbey to familiarise themselves with the site and to make a risk assessment before bringing school parties.

**Booking a visit:** Phone **01896 822562** to book a visit, discuss your needs and confirm opening times with the Steward. If staff are available, it may be possible to arrange a guided tour.

**Cost:** Admission is **free** to a range of educational groups including school parties. More information about who qualifies for free visits can be found on the Historic Scotland Education Unit website (see below).

**Location:** In Melrose off the A7 or A86.

**Parking:** Coaches can park close to the abbey in the abbey car park.

**Health and safety:** Please note the following:

- Pupils should be supervised at all times and should not climb on the walls.
- Pupils should take care crossing the road which bisects the abbey site (access to road is through a gate).
- As part of our commitment to Green Tourism, we ask that all litter be disposed of back at school.

**Historic Scotland Education Unit:** For further information about school visits, events and resources for teachers linked to **Melrose Abbey** visit: [www.historic-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk)

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**Text:** Elspeth Mackay

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## Additional resources

### For teachers:

Chris Tabraham *Melrose Abbey* Historic Scotland 2005. The official guidebook to the site which includes detailed information, maps and lots of photographs.

S Hebron *Life in a Monastery* Pitkin 1998. Though slanted towards English sites, a useful guide to life in monasteries with plenty of photographs.

Richard Fawcett *Scottish Abbeys and Priors* Batsford/Historic Scotland 1994. More detailed and specialist architectural information.

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/scottishhistory/index.shtml) A clear overview of the periods with helpful essays on the medieval church and Reformation.

[www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk) Images of objects associated with the medieval church.

[www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/melrose/melroseabbey/index.html](http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/melrose/melroseabbey/index.html) A good historical overview of the site with clear photographs.

### For pupils:

Terry Deary *Horrible Histories: Bloody Scotland* Scholastic 1998.

Elizabeth Newbery *Lookout! Mostly Monks* Pitkin 1999 A lively pocket sized booklet (with stickers); useful pictures and information.

[www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/sym/scots/index\\_choice.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/sym/scots/index_choice.shtml) This website looks at the life of monks in pre-Reformation Scotland.

[www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/as/burghlife/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/education/as/burghlife/) This website explores Burgh life in 1566.

[www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishhistory](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/scottishhistory) An excellent library of resources with some good pages on the Reformation.