

*DUNFERMLINE*

*ABBAY*

A

BRIEF

GUIDE



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**DUNFERMLINE ABBEY**

**A Brief Guide**

Revised in 1963

MACPHERSON'S BOOKSHOP

DUNFERMLINE



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# DUNFERMLINE

## ABBEY

### A Brief Guide

Revised in 1963

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#### *To Visitors*

The Abbey is open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Sundays 2-6 p.m.) in the Summer and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Sundays 2-4 p.m.) in the Winter  
The hours of service on Sundays are 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

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(Note: - These times are now out of date.)  
[www.dunfermlineabbey.co.uk](http://www.dunfermlineabbey.co.uk)

MACPHERSON'S BOOKSHOP

DUNFERMLINE

## *Acknowledgments*

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This Guide is based on the Guide written by the late Norman M. Johnston. The text has been read by the Revd. Robert Dollar, B.D. and the late Revd. Dr. Webster but any faults remaining are the responsibility of the printers.

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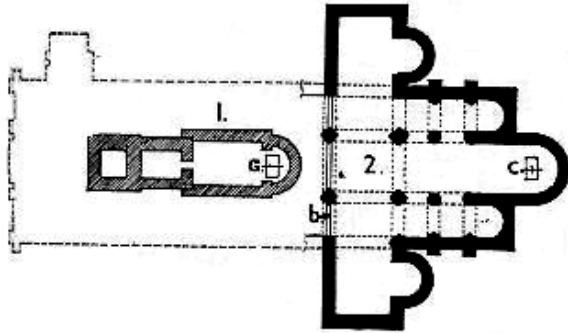
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# DUNFERMLINE ABBEY

## PLANS SHOWING STAGES IN DEVELOPMENT.



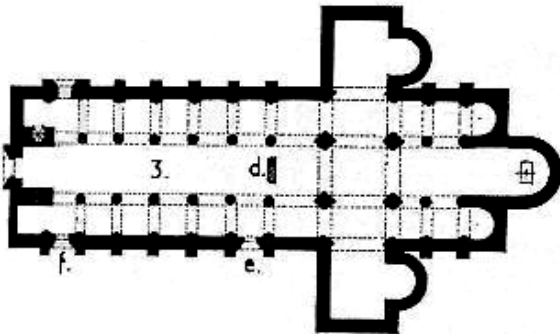
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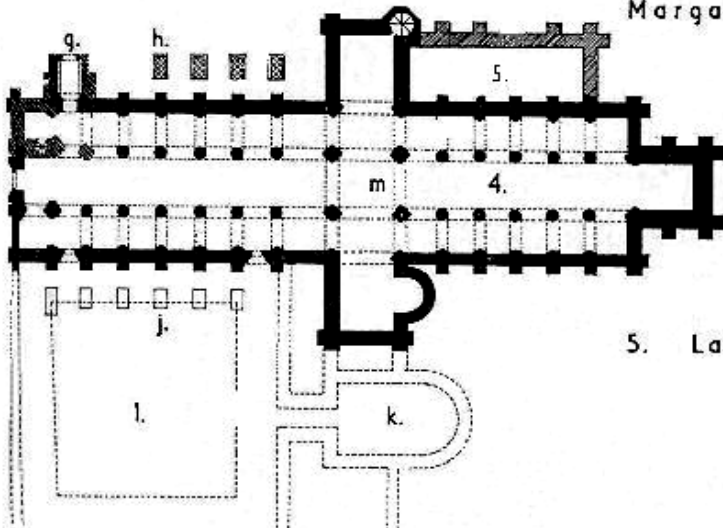
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# GUIDE TO DUNFERMLINE ABBEY

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## INTRODUCTON.

Three Churches have stood on the site covered by the present Nave. The first of these, the original Celtic church in which Malcolm King of Scots married, about A.D. 1068 as his second wife, Margaret the fugitive Saxon princess.

The second was the one Malcolm built for Margaret and was begun in 1072 and probably completed in 1075. The outlines of these two churches are clearly shown on the floor of the Norman Nave of the Abbey. There may be traced the lines of the Belfry and the little Culdee church itself. Adjoining this are the outlines of the second church with the semi-circular apse.

## THE CHURCH OF MALCOLM AND MARGARET.

Queen Margaret, we know, appealed to Lanfranc (Archbishop of Canterbury) for one or two “religious” to be sent to her to support her in her controversies with the clergy of the Celtic Church – and he sent her three men under the leadership of Goldwinus. Their “stay,” clearly was not continuous – Scotland reverting after the death of Malcolm and Margaret to Celtic rule - but some were still there when David I came to the throne.

The Nave may have been begun by David I in 1124; it was not dedicated till 1150.

Geoffrey of Canterbury was chosen Abbot in 1124, but was not actually consecrated until 1129. The last Abbot was George Durie, referred to later, who fled to France in 1560 during the troublous times of the Reformation. Between 1124 and 1560 Dunfermline Abbey had 37 abbots.

Malcolm and his eldest son Edward were slain at the siege of Alnwick Castle in Northumberland, and at the same time Margaret was lying ill in Edinburgh. It is said that she died shortly after the news was conveyed to her by Ethelrede, a younger son. Her body was carried to Dunfermline and she was buried “opposite the altar and the venerable image of the Holy Rood which she had erected.” The Holy Rood referred to here was set above the High Altar.

Wynton (“Orygnale Cronikil of Scot.’), writing in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century, says:

“And wyth that body that past syne  
But ony lat till Dunfermelyne.  
Befor the Ryde Awtare with honoure  
Scho wes layd in Haly Sepulture.  
Thare hyre Lord wes layd alsua  
And wyth thame heyre sownnys twa,”

Malcolm’s body was buried at Tynemouth in 1093, removed to Dunfermline by Alexander I in 1115, and re-interred in the Abbey. Owing to her great benefactions to the church, Margaret was canonized in 1249, and it is of interest to note that as early as 1200 there is a reference to her original tomb as being a shrine.

#### DAVID’S NAVE – EXTERIOR.

The old Abbey, as we know it, is the Nave of the large church begun by David I, the “sair sanct,” in 1128 and consecrated in 1150. The following extract (with modifications) is taken from Henderson’s “Annals of Dunfermline.”



Dunfermline Abbey – c.1650.

“The church, which in its length lies east and west, in about 112 feet long and 65 feet broad, outside measures. In the north front are two Norman and three Early English windows with three peaked windows above, and two Norman triforium windows with six flat buttresses between them rising from the ground to the first floor. The top of the wall is ornamented with a common Norman design. To the right is seen the north porch built by Abbot de Bothwell in the 15th century. He was responsible for the building of the two bays at the north west end. The junction of Abbot de Bothwell’s scheme with the original Norman work is plainly seen. The arch of the entrance consists of a series of Norman orders, above which are small pilasters and ornamented semi-circular arches, capped with a splay roof of stone, similar to that above the west entrance. The under north wall is 36 feet in height and 3 ½ feet thick; above this wall is the first roof, which rises to another wall, supported by the great massive pillars inside the church. This top part is the clerestory (54 feet from the floor) and has six small semi-circular windows. Above the upper wall rose the high roof, much higher than the present one reaching from the east to the west gable between the towers.

“The south wall of the church has six Norman windows with six windows above (similar to the two Norman windows on the north wall) rebuilt in 1810. The south wall of the church was similar in all its details to the north wall now described. The south tower was struck by lightning and fell in 1807, and was replaced in 1810. The north tower was in a bad state of repair after the reformation (1560), and when re-built by William Schaw, master mason to James VI a spire was added. The great western entrance projects a few feet out from the west gable within which rise ten tall, slender, stone pillars, five on each side of the entrance. The pillars in each row are in close proximity to each other, and recede at a sharp angle into the recess on which they stand. Each of these pillars rests on a double base, and is surmounted with an ornamental capital from which spring five semi-circular arches of different heights. The large stones of the several arches are exposed to view, showing their beautiful designs, some being a continuation of zig-zags, others floriated and otherwise ornamented. The first or outer arch stones are twenty-six in number, on eleven of which are carved heads. The first arch is 20 feet in height and 16 in breadth.”

The late Norman, or East Processional doorway at the east end of the Nave, on the south side, is beautifully preserved, as it was covered for centuries by the vault gifted by Anne of Denmark to the Wardlaws and only uncovered in 1905.

The south and north flying buttresses, the north baptismal porch, and the steeple were no part of the original fabric. The Porch was added in 1450, the South Buttress in 1620, the North in 1675, and the Steeple in 1590.

The view from the Bartizan walk encircling the steeple is intensive and embraces portions of 10 counties. This walk is about 100 feet above the ground and 400 feet above sea level.

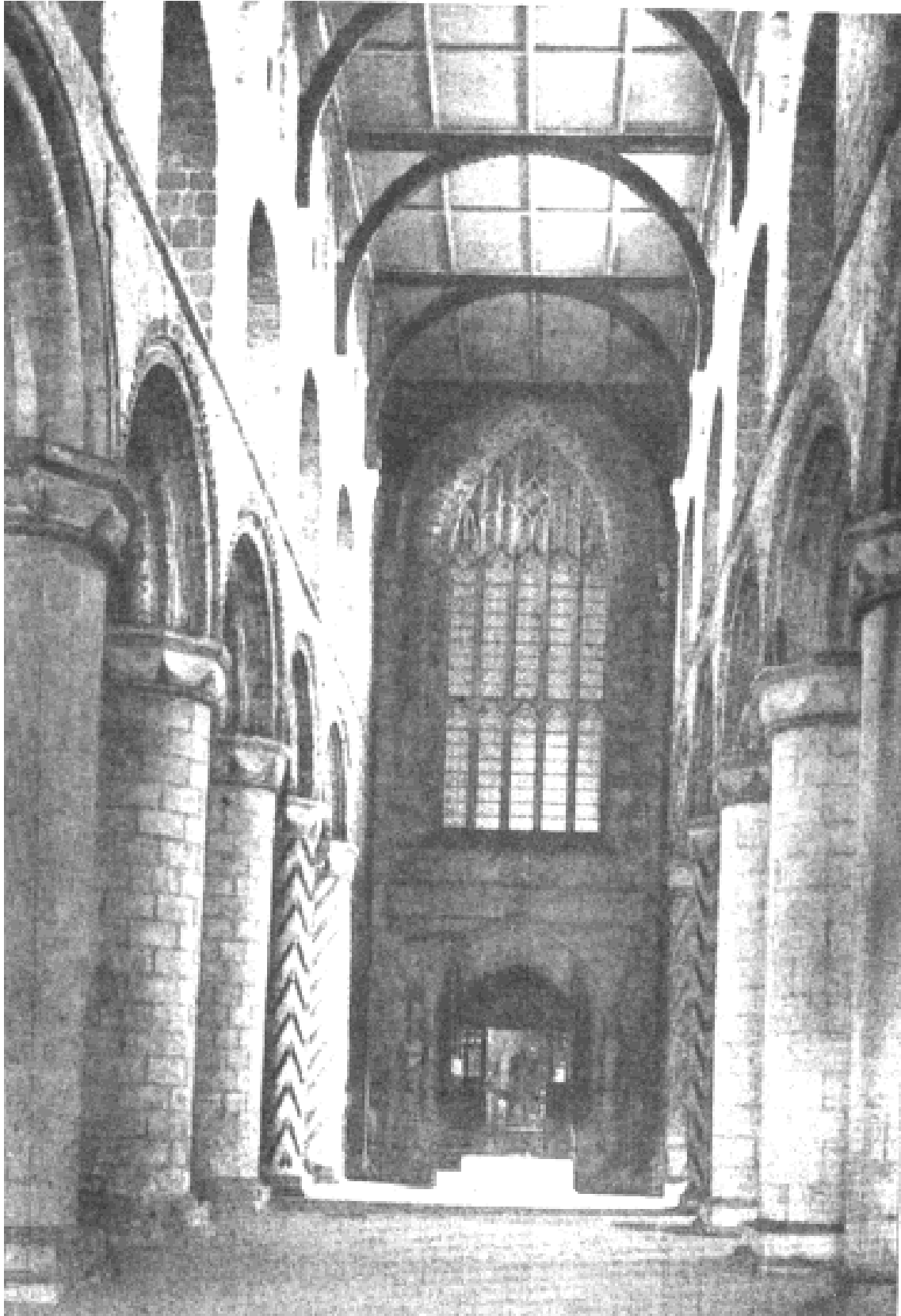
The north porch has a stellar vaulted ceiling with sculptured keystones containing two deface shields supported by angels with extended wings. In each wall there is a cavity which held alms boxes.

#### DAVID'S NAVE – INTERIOR.

Entering the Nave and looking to the east, there are five Norman pillars on the left side and six on the right with semi-circular pier arches supporting the inner wall. The pillars are 20 feet in height, 13½feet in circumference and have cushion tops. Two of the pillars are incised with a chevron design, the result of which is no produce an optical illusion, and the pillars appear to be of unequal diameter from top to bottom. The side aisles are 17½ feet wide, 29 feet high and 92 feet long. The length of the Nave from the western door to the entrance to the new church is 106 feet, and the breadth 55 feet.

On looking upwards one can see the beautiful Norman triforium and clerestory with their walls and nook shafts.

The rood altar was placed above the line of the high altar of St Margaret's Church, and facing west, would no doubt be visible from every part of the building. Its base was only detected in 1916.



The Old Nave

Robert Pitcairn. Commendator of Dunfermline, Papal Legate, and Secretary to James VI was interred in the north aisle in 1584. He it was who had the following words carved on the building in the Maygate known as the "Abbot's House":-

"SEN VORD IS THRALL AND THOCHT IS FRE  
KEIP VEILL THY TONGE I COINSELL THE."

In the same aisle is the monument to George Durie, the last Abbot of Dunfermline. He held office from 1539 to 1560. The name George Durie is placed at the top of the memorial, and at the bottom are the Durie coat of arms and the letters H.D. and M.M. The initials refer to Henry, the son of George Durie, and of Margaret Macbeth, his wife. In the family records it is stated that this Margaret Macbeth cured Charles I of an illness in the Palace of Dunfermline in 1603.

The beautiful Durie Window, by Elizabeth Goudie of Edinburgh, in blue and yellow stained glass, incorporating small portions of pre-Reformation Glass with the motto "Confido," was erected in 1933, as also was a bronze plate at the base of the memorial giving details of members of the Durie family.

The remains of the Rev. Thomas Gillespie, the founder of the Relief Church of Scotland, are laid a little to the westward of Durie's monument.

Under the North Tower is the monument erected to the memory of William Schaw. On the top is a monogram, and below an inscription in Latin. The monument was erected by Queen Anne, Consort of James VI.

Two stone coffins, lying near the west door, were discovered in the centre of the Nave in 1849. The larger one contained a leather shroud which had been wrapped round the body and stitched with a thong from neck to heel and along the soles of the feet. Within were found fragments of bone and a little dark-coloured air. The remains are said to be those of Prince Edward, the son of Malcolm and Margaret, who, originally, was interred near his mother. The shroud is preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities, Queen Street, Edinburgh, and there is a photograph of it at the entrance to the Abbey Church.

In 1923, when workmen were cleaning the ceiling of the north (or St Mary's) aisle, they uncovered some of the original red and blue colourings, the design incorporating chevrons and fleur-de-lis. Four of the six vaultings in the aisle are the original twelfth century ones.



Picture by S. Pitcairn

At this point, almost vertically above the monument erected in memory of Robert Pitcairn, a most interesting discovery was made in 1938, when sixteen century paintings were brought to light. The paintings, of which there are four, the work of Andrew Foreman in 1530, represent four of the Apostles. Peter and Paul are named, St Andrew is recognized by the cross, but the fourth, so far, has not been identified.

A single consecration cross, the actual cross of 1150, is on the pilaster which supports the vaulting opposite the fifth pillar counting from the west end. It is a Greek cross with enlarged ends, And measures 7½ inches by 8 inches and was inlaid with gold and studded with jewels, and was despoiled at the Reformation.



Picture by S. Pitcairn

The south (or Rood) aisle is a marvel of twelfth century work. On the floor will be seen a circular stone covering an old well. Opposite the well is an aumbry. The majority of the arcadings in the aisle have been repaired, the exceptions being the first three next to the (original) East Processional Door. The doorway was only discovered in 1905 when the memorial to the South African campaign was being erected.

The other door in the aisle was the gift of Alexander Seton, Earl of Dunfermline, in 1607. Note on the walls fish-scale as well as typical cube-top capitals. The vaulting was repaired in 1620-21, keeping the original twelfth century groins, but the transverse arch is Gothic.

## THE WINDOWS.

That over the west door, now known as the Carnegie window, depicting Wallace, Margaret, Malcolm and Brue, designed by Sir Noel Paton, and the cost was borne by Andrew Carnegie.

In the north (or St Mary's) aisle the first window (by Meures of Munich) is a memorial to the Reid family.

The second is a Kempe.

The third is the Durie window, already described; the fourth, the Halkett of Pitfirrane window; and finally another Meures of Munich.

The windows in the south, or Rood, aisle are fine stained glass. The first, next to the east processional doorway, was a gift by Andrew Carnegie in memory to his mother and father (1882). The second one is the oldest in the Church (1860) in memory of Queen Annabella, Consort to Robert III and mother of James I of Scotland. The third in memory of Peter Chalmers, minister of the Abbey for 52 years. The next two are the Douglas windows, by Ballantine and Gardiner, and the last, under the south tower, a beautiful stained glass window by Burne-Jones.

As was usual with Benedictine Abbey churches, the parishioners worshipped in the part of the building called the "Parochial," but the clergy used the enclosed conventual choir which from the thirteenth century stood on the site now occupied by the new church.

Duncan II, Queen Margaret, Malcolm Canmore, Edgar I Alexander I and Queen Izabella were all interred in the original church of Malcolm and Margaret, but David I Malcolm IV Robert the Bruce, Alexander III, Queen Annabella and Queen Elizabeth were buried near the High Altar of the Eastern Church.

Altogether, within the precincts of the Abbey, there were buried 8 Kings, 4 Queens, 5 Princes, and 2 Princesses.

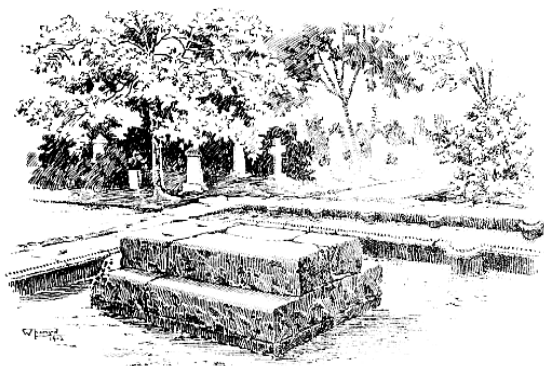
When the Nave was in use as a Presbyterian place of worship from 1563 to 1821, the pulpit stood at the central pillar in the north row. It was made of oak and beautifully carved, and on it were the words "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Sir Walter Scott, while visiting Dunfermline in 1822, was so taken with the pulpit that he applied to the Heritors for it. His request was granted and the pulpit was removed to Abbotsford, where it adorns the entrance hall.

On 19th September 1938, a most interesting ceremony took place in the Nave, when the chime of bells, gifted by the citizens of Dunfermline as a centenary tribute to Mr Andrew Carnegie, was dedicated and inaugurated. The ten bells, made by Messrs. Gillett & Johnston of Croydon, are electrically operated, and in addition to chiming the quarters on eight bells and striking the hours on the bass bell, tunes on airs may be played by means of an automatic player. Tunes within the range of bells may also be played by the use of a hand-operated ivory keyboard. The Bass Bell, 15 cwts. in weight, bears a somewhat similar inscription to that on the bronze tablet. Placed at the entrance to the Tower to commemorate the centenary, and on each of the remaining bells is the monogram A.C. Two bells, gifted also by the citizens, were added to the Carillon in October 1947 in memory of Mrs Carnegie.

#### THE NEW ABBEY CHURCH – EXTERIOR

The foundation stone of the new church was laid by Thomas, 7th Earl of Elgin, on the 10th of March 1818. In September 1821 the building was finished and opened for public worship. It is of Gothic architecture, with tall handsome windows and a square tower near the east end. On the summit of the tower, instead of the usual balustrade, are four words KING ROBERT THE BRUCE on the four sides in capitol letters of open hewn work, four feet in height.



Saint Margaret's Tomb, outside, Dunfermline Abbey Church. By W. Thomson 1902

The shrine of St Margaret, now outside the new church, was originally inside that part of the Eastern Church added to the twelfth century structure about the middle of the thirteenth century.

Mr F. C. Eeles, in "Burgh Records of Dunfermline," edited by the late Erskine Beveridge, LL.D., says "The base of St Margaret's shrine, made of blue and white marble still exists, almost in situ, in the extreme eastern part of the church, portions of the east and south walls of which remain to the height of some three feet above the ground of the courtyard outside the east end of the modern church. These walls are the remains of the small aisleless chapel which formed the extreme east end of the thirteenth century church."

Prior to the Reformation the shrine was one of the places to which pilgrimage was regularly made. There are still to be seen in the parish of Dalmeny, about a mile from south Queensferry, on the Edinburgh road, the remains of a pilgrim's cross. It is on the south side of the road at a point where the first view of Dunfermline would be had by pilgrims from the south.



Base of the remains of the Cross at Dalmeny.

“The Tomb of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, re-discovered by good fortune among the ruins in 1818 has been marked anew by this brass 560 years after his death.”



King Robert the Bruce died at Cardross, near Dumbarton, in 1329, and was buried in Dunfermline. Wyntoun, alluding to this says: -

*“In the Kyrke of Dunfermelyne  
Hys bodie was interryed syne”*

The funeral was attended by “the grate, the good, and the brave of the daie, and the weeping of the multitudes inside and outside the Kyrke, adid solemnitie to the rite.”

In February 1818, when the ground was being cleared preparatory to the building of the new church, workmen came across a vault which contained the remains of King Robert the Bruce. When laid open the vault as found to be built of polished masonry. Within this vault was found an oak coffin covered with two sheets of lead. Inside the coffin lay a skeleton wrapped in a cloth-of-gold shroud. After a superficial examination the tomb was closed again until November 1819, when a second, and this

time, an official inspection was made. It was found that the breastbone of the body had been sawn asunder in order that the heart might be removed in compliance with the Bruce's dying wish.

The remains were re-interred between the transepts, and ultimately covered by a large rectangular memorial "brass" embedded in a slab of porphyry. The inscription on the brass may be translated thus: "The tomb of Robert the Bruce, King of Scots, fortunately discovered among the ruins in 1818, has been anew marked by this brass in the 560th year after his death."

Standing above the brass is the beautifully carved pulpit, carved by William Paterson, Edinburgh, 1890.

In 1858 there was erected in the north transept of the church the front of the ancient Royal Gallery which formerly was in the Nave, nearly opposite the pulpit. The defaced royal arms of Scotland and Denmark were renewed with the letters J. R. and A. R. (Jacobus Rex; Anna Regina), and the date 1610.

As the paneling was not long enough to extend the whole breadth of the transept, two side pieces were added in which were inserted inscriptions to commemorate ten of the royal and two of the other distinguished persons who were interred within the walls of both churches.

Running round the interior of the church is a frieze upon which at intervals are placed the coats of arms of the Kings and Queens of Scotland buried within the Abbey walls, as well as those of Charles I, who was baptized in the Abbey, and of certain Abbots, Noblemen, and Heritors.

Note should also be taken of the eastern or McLaren Window, gifted in 1904, which is another Ballantine and Gardiner.

The magnificent window in the south transept, designed by Douglas Strachan, was dedicated in 1932 in remembrance of John Fisher of Newlands, and Isabella Lawrie Bruce, his wife.

The subject of the window is "Queen Margaret of Scotland." The subject of the five lancet lights in the lower tier is the Marriage of Malcolm Canmore and Margaret, attended by their Ladies and Knights. The dove introduced into these Lights is

emblematic – and emblem frequently associated with Queen Margaret to denote her character – i.e., “Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”

The subject of the five lancet lights in the upper tier above the transom bar, represents Queen Margaret in the act of instructing her children to give alms to the poor and needy – seen on the extreme right. Malcolm, who has just entered with one of his sons, sits down to watch. On the extreme left is a bishop, bringing a master mason (who has a plan of a church on his drawing board) to Queen Margaret to submit his plan for her approval. On the upper portions of the extreme left and right lights are two angels to represent music.

Queen Margaret, we are told, was very fond of beautiful raiment, and encouraged her ladies to make and wear more becoming garments. She also instructed them to make beautiful embroideries for church purposes, and, in the background of the upper lancet lights, are ladies embroidering an altar cloth, and on the left one is seen weaving at a loom.

In the tracery lights are the heraldic shields of Queen Margaret and the lion rampant of Scotland for Malcolm. In the centre tracery panel is the ship with a dove under it. The ship represents the Church and the symbolism is “The Church resting upon the Holy Spirit.”

There are six emblems of the Virtues in the upper tracery lights – reading from left to right they are: -

“Prudence” - A Serpent on a Cleft Stick.

“Perseverance” - A Crown.

“Faith” - A Chalice.

“Hope” - An Anchor.

“Justice” - A Balance.

“Gentleness” - A Lamb.

The beautifully carved Lectern, the work of Thomas Good of Edinburgh, was gifted by the late John Fisher of Newlands.

The Stevenson Memorial, in bronze, designed by G. H. Paulin, was erected on the wall of the North Transept in 1933. It and three ornamental communion chairs, which may be seen in front of the

pulpit, are in memory of the late Rev. Robert Stevenson, M.A., who was minister of the Abbey Church for 51 years, from 1880 to 1931.

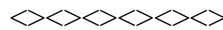
In the Choir there is a large display cabinet, presented by the late Mr Charles E. Livingstone in 1934, for housing the following ecclesiastical relics: - Four silver communion cups, two bearing the date 1628 and two dated 1629; two pewter communion flagons engraved "Dunfermline Kirk" and dated 1792; two silver communion flagons, each inscribed "The Abbey Church Dunfermline, 20th September 1821; the Rev. Allan McLean and the Rev. Peter Chalmers, ministers," The remaining relics are a piece of the cloth of gold which enclosed the remains of King Robert the Bruce; a replica of the Abbey seal; a collection of old communion tokens; and an Abbey seal; and an Abbey pulpit Bible (1722) used in the beginning of the eighteenth century; also a New Testament, unrevised edition, 1754. (Display now changed)

Mr Livingstone also gifted the stained-glass window placed in the new memorial chapel. The subject matter of the window is Love, exemplified by the six Acts of Mercy enumerated in St Mathew's Gospel, chapter 25, verses 35 and 36. The artist was Alexander Strachan.

In the south transept are several monuments to the Bruce family, whose burial vault is underneath. The most striking is that erected by the widow of General Bruce to the memory of her husband. He was for some years tutor to King Edward VII when Prince of Wales. The monument is from the chisel of Foley, and is expressive of the grief of the bereaved widow. The three panels beneath the main figure tell the story of the expedition to the Holy Land where the General caught the fever which proved fatal. The first panel shows the travelers setting out, the Queen watching them go. The second shows the party overlooking Jerusalem, while the third shows the Prince ministering to the sick tutor. In connection with this monument it is said that when the late Queen Victoria viewed it previous to its erection here, she drew attention the fact that there was nothing to show the General's connection with the Prince of Wales, and that, in consequence, the sculptor added the Prince's feathers. These may be seen on the pillow on which the General's head is resting. The inscription on the adjoining tablet to the memory of Charles, 5th Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, was composed by the well-known eighteenth century

divine, Dr. Blair, of Edinburgh. The monument to the Hon. Dashwood Preston Bruce, which has been much admired, is by Noble, while that to the memory of Lady Augusta Bruce, his wife of Dean Stanley, is by a lady sculptor, Miss Grant. Lady Augusta Stanley was the daughter of Thomas, Earl of Elgin, whose name is associated with the famous "Elgin Marbles." Behind is a stained glass window to the memory of James, eighth Earl of Elgin, who died in India when Governor-General there.

One cannot leave this part of the Abbey without admiring the beautiful Memorial Chapel in the south Chancel. This Chapel was a fine thought of the Rev. Robert Dollar, B.D., present minister of the Abbey. It was designed by the late James Shearer, O.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., R.S.A., and was dedicated in 1952.



## THE MONASTERY



The monastery buildings lay immediately south of the Abbey, and consisted of Chapter House, dormitories, the Frater or Refectory and the Infirmary.

Between the Frater and the Nave was an enclosed cloister court or Garth.

By the middle of the thirteenth century the establishment was one of the most extensive and wealthy in the whole of Scotland. Matthew Paris (Matthew of Westminster), one of the chroniclers of the period says that “the limits were so great as to contain so any princely edifices that two distinguished sovereigns with their retinues might be accommodated with lodgings at the same time without inconvenience to one another.”

Of these splendid buildings only parts of the Frater, a tower connecting the Monastery with the Royal Palace, remain. Near the east end of the Frater wall there is a small room, the scriptorium, 12 feet by 5 feet wide, with rib-vaulting. From this portions of the Scriptures were read aloud during meals by one of the novices.

In the west gable there is a large Gothic window of Kentish architecture with six mullions and a great deal of tracery above, and it dates from the fifteenth century.

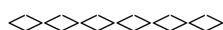
Between 1920 - 24 the Ministry of Works excavated the Frater bringing to view the two lower levels of the building.

The connecting tower is arched, and forms a gateway between St Catherine’s Wynd and Monastery Street, locally known as “The Pends.” Through the tower there is a passage between the Frater Hall and the King’s Kitchen of the Guest House, a convenience which the monks would appreciate as they were entitled to certain supplies from the Royal Kitchen.

Edward I and his army paid a hostile visit to Dunfermline in November 1303, and remained during the winter. When they left in spring they set fire both to Monastery and Palace. The Monastery as afterwards partially repaired with grants made by Bruce but it never attained its former splendour. Froissart states that the buildings were once more destroyed by Richard II in 1385.

The grounds of the Abbey and Monastery, extending to 28 acres, were surrounded by a high wall, a fact which determined the direction of certain streets. Thus the Maygate, Abbot Street and Canmore Street were ultimately laid out to the north of the wall, and Priory Lane to the south. Gardens to the west of houses in the

New Row ran, generally speaking, to the section of the wall which lay north and south. A well-preserved portion of the wall may still be seen in Canmore Street, near the foot of the Free School Close. It is of interest to note that in the Burgh Records of 1525 there is a reference to the Monastery plumber.



## THE ROYAL PALACE.

The south-west wall of the Palace is all that now remains of a most extensive structure. It is 205 feet long and 60 feet in height, and is supported by eight buttresses. Near the south-eastern end of the wall is an oriel window, in the ceiling of which is a piece of sculpture visible from below. The sculpture is a sculpture is a graphic illustration of Luke. ch. I., verses 28-38, and is known as the "Annunciation Stone." It represents the angel Gabriel with outspread wings, and the Virgin Mary in an attitude of devotion. In his right hand the angel holds a sceptre, and in his left hand is a Scroll, inscribed as follows:

AVE : GRATIA : PLENA : DNS : TECV.

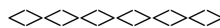
At the top is a human head and face with a crown of glory, the emblem of God the Father, and to the left, a dove. There is also shown a two-handed pot containing a lily, the emblem of purity. In the lower part of the stone is a shield bearing the arms of George Durie. The arms consist of a shield with a chevron between three crescents.

The original building, a Guest House converted into a Palace, may have been built in the thirteenth century and is said to have been re-built in 1315 following the destruction carried out by the orders of Edward I.

In the Guest House were born in 1323 David II, in 1394 James I, and in 1596 the Princess Elizabeth of Bohemia, and the ill-fated Charles I. Tradition still points out the window and fireplace of the room near the west end in which he was born in 1600. The last king to occupy the palace was Charles II, who in response to the demands of the Covenanters, subscribed to the Solemn League and Covenant in August 1650. The document is known as “The Dunfermline Declaration.”

A reference to the expected visit of the King is found in the Kirk Session Records (23rd July) as follows:-

“This day the Session being publiclie desyrit to convey after the blessing, no meeting was, Everie one being so taken up with the present troubles of war and putting out of soldiers to our Armie against Cromwell, and preparing the King’s coming to the Town.”



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