

## History Subject Knowledge Bank Year 1: Selby Abbey Fire 1906

<u>Vocabulary</u>	<u>Definition</u>
<b>Evidence</b>	Information about the past
<b>Source</b>	Where information from the past comes from
<b>Timeline</b>	Putting events in order depending on when they happened.
<b>Past</b>	Has happened
<b>Compare</b>	What is the same and what is different
<b>Week/years ago</b>	A period of time in the past
<b>Old/older/oldest</b>	Belonging to the past
<b>Here/now/then</b>	Words about the past
<b>Artefacts</b>	An object from the past

### **All about Selby Abbey**

- Selby Abbey was founded in 1069 by Benedict of Auxerre, a French monk.
- He arrived at Selby where three swans are said to have landed near the River Ouse as he approached.
- Benedict took this as a sign that this was the place for his Abbey.
- Many English Kings visited Selby.
- In the 1500s the Abbey started to decline and most of it was destroyed.
- In 1618 it became the parish church of Selby.
- During the 1700s the church continued to be used though it was decaying.
- In 1969 Queen Elizabeth II visited Selby Abbey.

### **What happened in 1906?**

- Shortly before midnight on October 19th 1906, flames were seen pouring out of an Abbey window.
- Soon the old timbers of the roof were burning as flames and smoke filled the sky.
- The central tower looked like a huge chimney as smoke poured out.
- Bells came crashing down.
- The next morning, the charred beams were all that was left of the roof of the nave. The Choir screen lay in ashes.
- Within a year, the nave had been re-built and within three years it was restored.

### **What damage did the fire cause?**

- Thousands of people from all parts of Yorkshire visited Selby on Saturday and Sunday to gaze at the scene.
- Though the flames had been almost extinguished before daylight, the building was still filled with burning debris and dense clouds of smoke and steam rose.
- Masses of chairs, pews and charred beams were piled up in smouldering heaps and under the central tower lay a number of the fallen church bells.
- Overhead, the Abbey stood open to the sky, only a few charred beams were left.

### **What happened next?**

- It was thought the fire was caused by a candle left burning by a workman.
- £39,000 was raised and within a month there was enough money to begin work.
- The nave was restored in 1907, the choir in 1909 but the restoration was not completed until 1935.

