

History Subject Knowledge Bank Year 3: History of Selby Abbey

<u>Vocabulary</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Rebellion	An act of armed resistance
Dissolution	The breaking up of something
Enquiry	Asking for information.
Period	Intervals in history
Pilgrimage of Grace	An uprising against the dissolution of monasteries.

What was the dissolution of monasteries?

- In the reign of Henry VIII, the Pope refused to grant Henry a divorce from Catherine of Aragon so he set up the Church of England.
- The Reformation is the process by which the English Church is split off from the Roman Church. Rather than the Pope, the king would be the head of the English Church.
- 1534 Act of Supremacy- this confirmed the break from Rome, declaring Henry to be the Supreme Head of the Church of England.
- Over 800 monasteries were dissolved.
- After his divorce in 1533, Henry needed to limit the power of the church and find money to fund his expensive wars against France and Scotland.
- In 1536 Henry ordered the closing down of Abbeys, monasteries and convents in England, Wales and Ireland. This act became known as the **Dissolution of the Monasteries**. It lasted for 4 years The last monastery to be dissolved was in March 1540.



How did Selby Abbey become so important?

- Selby Abbey- founded in 1069 by Benedict of Auxerre, a French monk
- The monastery became very famous and it was one of the wealthiest in Yorkshire. Many of the English Kings made visits to Selby.
- After 1256 Selby was a "Mitred Abbey". This honour made the Abbey a much-envied prospect in England.
- In 1340 the new Choir was erected but shortly after its completion the Abbey caught on fire. The Chapter House, Dormitory, Treasury and other buildings suffered greatly and the church became in part "ruinous."

How did the dissolution of monasteries affect Selby Abbey?

- In the 1500s the Abbey started to decline and during the Dissolution of the Monasteries most of the Selby monastery was destroyed.
- It was officially closed on the 8th of December 1539
- When the Pilgrimage of Grace arose to oppose the Dissolution of the Religious Houses, the Abbot of Selby does not appear to have joined the rebellion and the Abbey was surrendered on December 6th 1539.
- At that time there were 23 monks who were involved with Selby Abbey.



What happened next?

- In 1618 it became the parish church of Selby.
- During the 18th century the church continued to be used though it was rapidly decaying.
- 1906 saw the second fire of Selby Abbey. At the cost of over £40,000 the church was completely restored and reopened in 1909.
- In 1969 Queen Elizabeth II visited Selby Abbey.

Timeline of the dissolution of monasteries

- 1509** - Henry VIII becomes king.
- 1527** - Henry asks the Pope if he can divorce Catherine of Aragon. The Pope refuses.
- January 1533** - Henry married Anne Boleyn while he is still married to Catherine.
- July 1533** - Pope says Henry can no longer be a Catholic and excommunicates him.
- 1534** - Act of Supremacy- Henry Puts himself in charge of the church in England.
- 1536** - Thomas Cromwell starts the Dissolution of the small monasteries in England.
- 1536** - The Pilgrimage of Grace (a rebellion against the dissolution led by Robert Aske).
- 1536** - Cromwell starts the Dissolution of all the monasteries left in England.
- 1540** - The end of Dissolution. All monasteries in England are now closed.