8

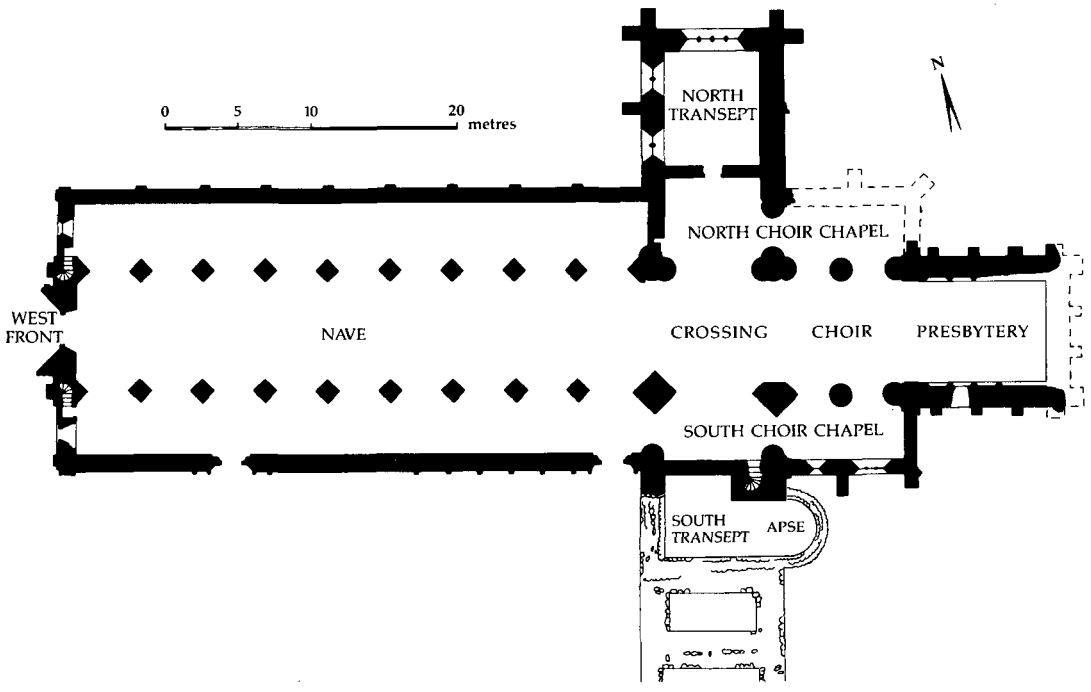
THE ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABBEY CHURCH

Richard Fawcett

The abbey church (illus 110) was the principal focus of the community of Augustinian Canons at Jedburgh between 1138 and 1560, and it is also the most complete structure to survive on the site. This chapter provides an outline account of its architectural development as an aid to fuller appreciation of the context against which the excavations took place.

8.1 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE EASTERN LIMB AND TRANSEPTS

There seems to be no good architectural reason to doubt that construction of the eastern parts of the church of Jedburgh was begun soon after the abbey's foundation by David I and Bishop John of Glasgow in about 1138 (Cowan & Easson 1976, 92; Ross & Lorimer 1925; RCAHMS 1956, 194), and that masons trained in the Anglo-Norman tradition were brought up from England to carry out the work. It was the eastern parts which housed the most urgently needed areas of the presbytery for the high altar, at the far East end, and the choir, where the canons sang their daily round of services, a little further west. They were set out to an echelon plan, with semi-circular apsidal chapels to the transepts, as the outer element on each side of the formation, and with straight ends to the two-bay choir aisles next in the sequence.



Illus 110
Plan of the abbey church.

The original form of the axial termination of the echelon, the presbytery's East end, however, is not known with certainty. The alternation between round and straight ends in the transept chapels and choir aisles might suggest that the presbytery would probably have had an apse as the culmination of the sequence. Certainly apses were the most common form of East end in major churches of the Anglo-Norman tradition by the first half of the 12th century, where there was no ambulatory or chapel beyond. On face value it might seem that a plan like that of Cerisy-la-Foret in Normandy, of a date around 1080 (Musset 1975, 156), is the most likely for Jedburgh. In apparent support of this, the architect Peter Macgregor Chalmers, claimed to have found 'somewhat limited' but 'sufficient' evidence for an apse in the course of inadequately recorded excavations in 1898 (Chalmers 1905, 185) although his coyness in giving details in itself leaves his findings open to doubt.

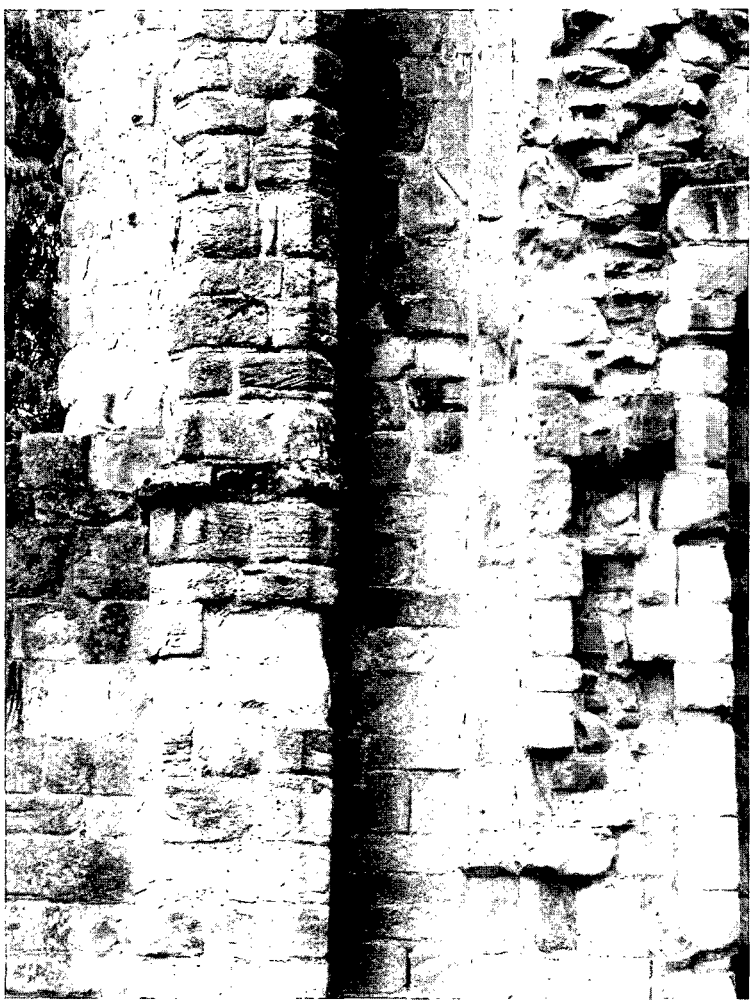
Against Chalmers' claims, excavations by the Office of Works in the 1930s located the foundations of a straight cross wall about 2m inside the later E gable, and this has been re-examined in the most recent campaign of excavations. On balance, although a case might be made that this straight line could have been some form of sleeper wall associated with the mouth of an apse, no evidence was found to support this view, and a rectangular E wall must thus be regarded as more likely. Straight East ends were certainly not unknown at this period. The presbytery of Archbishop Thomas of York's choir at Southwell in Nottinghamshire of between 1108 and 1114, for example, had a rectangular termination (Clapham 1934, 44, fig 13). It must be said, however, that since Bishop John spent much of his episcopal career fending off the predatory interests of the Archbishops of York in the Scottish church, it is perhaps unlikely that it was one of their churches which was the specific inspiration for Jedburgh.

Assuming that the presbytery was of rectangular plan, on the basis of these indications, we must next consider the evidence for its original internal elevations. This evidence is sparse, but is consistent with there having been two levels, corresponding with the arcade and gallery stages of the adjoining choir; both of these levels seem to have been at least partly pierced by windows. There are also clear indications of a mural passage at the upper level, and possibly also of a decorative wall arcade at the lower level. The evidence for the latter is a base beneath later masonry on both sides of the choir (illus 111), a short distance to the E of the E choir arcade responds which, from its scale and position, seems most likely to have belonged to the start of a decorative engaged arcade. At a higher level are two truncated sections of string course. One, above the choir arcade arch springing level, may have delineated the top of the wall arcading, while the other, at the base of gallery level, probably marked the sill level of the mural passage. Also at gallery level, on both sides of the presbytery, is a major respond shaft, which must have belonged to the start of the inner arcade of the mural passage, and provision for access to this passage may be seen at the E end of the choir galleries. Supplementing this evidence externally, on the N side there are traces of window jambs at both levels, immediately beyond the E wall of the aisle (illus 112). One of these would be within the wall passage at gallery level, while the other would be within the upper part of the wall arcade. On both sides there is additionally some evidence for the curved line of the lower window's arch springing.

After the highly tentative evidence for the presbytery, it is a relief to turn to the greater certainties of the two-bay aisled choir section of the E limb, which represents the most complete surviving part of the first campaign (illus 113). There are also substantial remains of the original transepts, which show that the design of the E limb was continued into the inner parts of the cross arms at the junctions with the choir and nave aisles. As supplementary evidence for the extent of work carried out in the first campaign, the form of the responds and two E arcade bases of the nave suggests that those bays had to be built – or rebuilt – later than the rest of that limb when the existing nave was built towards the end of the century. This could indicate that at least two bays of the nave had been built in the first operation and were only removed when the rest of the later nave was well advanced. These two bays would presumably have been required both to accommodate adequately the canons' choir and to abut the crossing area. On the N side, the stub of the first aisle wall may also still be observed, incorporated within the later stub.

The earliest surviving parts of the church are of particular interest because of the way in which they illustrate something of the range of architectural inspiration which was being sought by patrons at what must have been one of the most exciting and outward-looking periods in the history of the Scottish church (illus 114). At Jedburgh, as at others of the foundations in which David I played a part, there are good reasons for suspecting that it was the king himself, with his wide knowledge of the English church and its new buildings, who suggested the model on which the building was to be based.

Illus 111
A base of the wall arcading of the early 12th-century presbytery is on the right of this illustration. Above it is the wall arcading of the presbytery as rebuilt in the later 12th century.

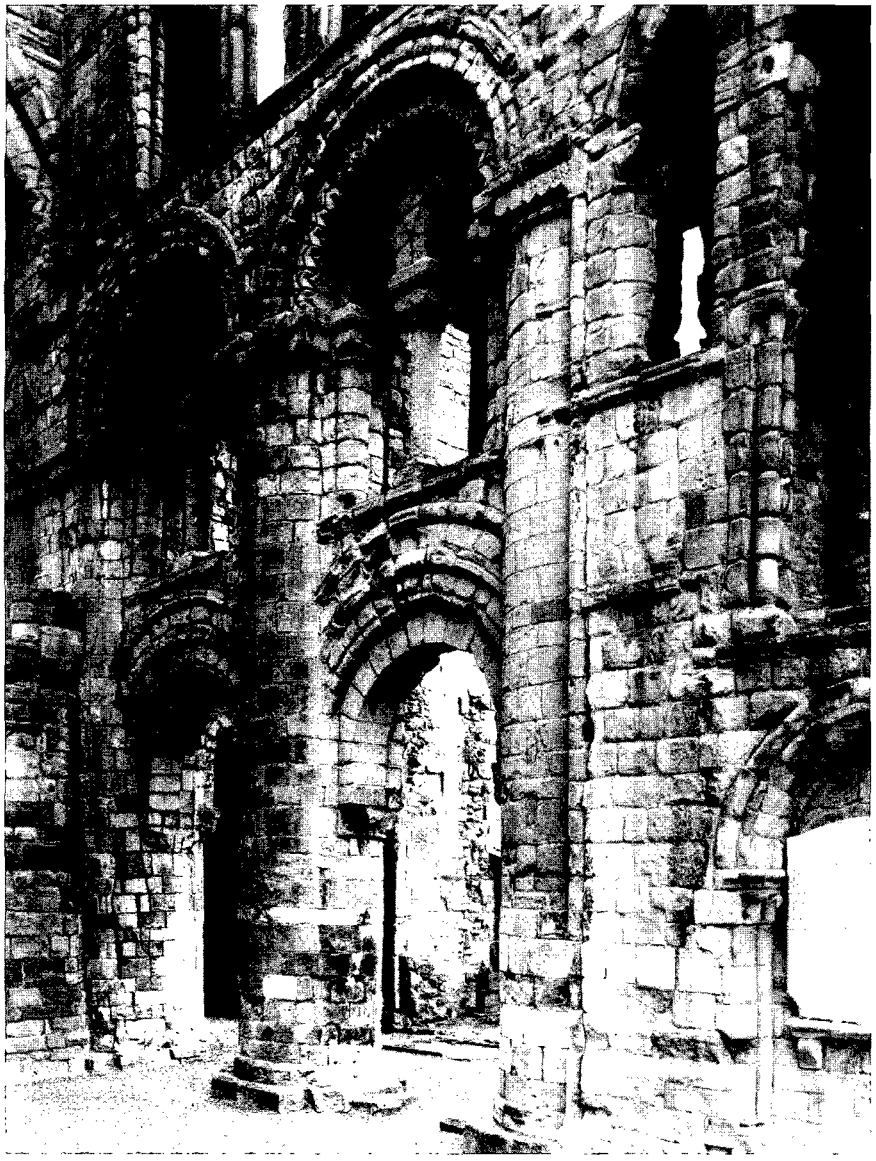


Illus 112
The external junction of choir and presbytery on the N side at the upper level. Between the broken E wall of the choir chapel and the first presbytery buttress can be seen the vertical line of a window jamb resting on a string course.

Illus 113
The external junction of choir and presbytery on the N side at the lower level. Immediately to the left of the broken E wall of the choir chapel is the capital of a window arch.

The most striking feature of Jedburgh's first design is the way in which giant column-like piers with scalloped caps rise through both arcade and gallery stages. It may be mentioned, incidentally, that it seems to have cost the designing mason a considerable effort to contrive this arrangement satisfactorily, and resort had to be taken to a wide variety of forms of stilting to ensure that all of the orders of the arcade arches sprang from the required levels. The immediate inspiration for this design is now generally accepted as having been the E nave bays of the Benedictine nunnery church at Romsey in Hampshire. David's aunt, Christina, a sister of St Margaret, was a nun there, and his own sister, Matilda, had been placed in her care at Romsey before her marriage to Henry I in 1100 (Boase 1943, 152). There are thus good grounds for assuming that David would have had sufficient of a continuing acquaintanceship with the foundation to be able to point to it as a possible source of ideas. The date of Romsey's reconstruction is not known with certainty, although, following re-evaluation of the dating of architectural sculpture at Canterbury of a type that is related to examples at Romsey, it may now be thought unlikely to have been started much later than about 1100 (Zarnecki 1978, 39).

However, Jedburgh was clearly not designed simply as a derivative copy of Romsey, but must rather be seen as an integral part of the development of a strand of architectural thought of which Romsey was a part. So far as can now be judged, the earliest building to have had an elevation of this type was the choir of the Benedictine abbey church of Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire, an area where there was a particular interest in the use of arcade piers of giant proportions. Unfortunately, following the 14th-century remodelling of Tewkesbury it is now only the remains of cloured-off arches on the side of the truncated piers towards the aisles which give the clue to the original arrangement (Clapham 1952, 10). Nevertheless, having been started in about 1087, there are no known variants on the type which could be earlier, and the case for the primacy of Tewkesbury in this group appears to be supported by the rather uncertain way in which aspects of the



Illus 114
The original bays of the choir.

design were executed. As a consequence of its later remodelling both the precise details of, and the sources for, the design of Tewkesbury are the subject of a debate which has been summarised by Fernie (1985, 1). But in spite of this it seems possible that in some respects Jedburgh had more in common with Tewkesbury than with Romsey. Both Tewkesbury and Jedburgh have a rather tentative quality in the working out of the relationship between piers and arches, by comparison with which Romsey appears more assured.

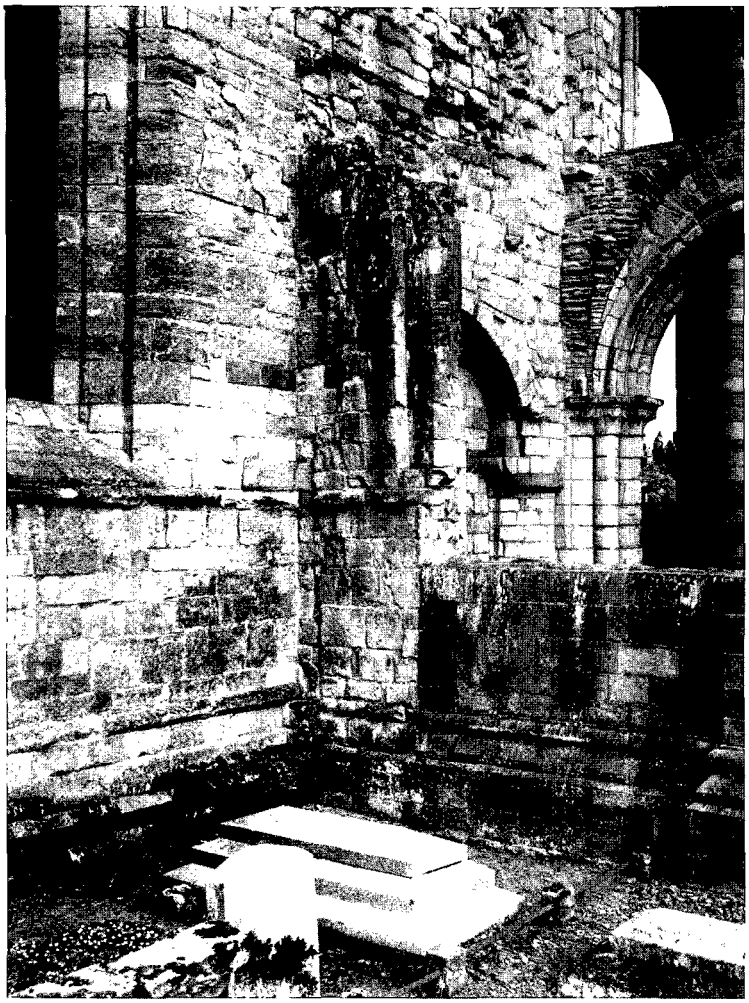
Among the many questions posed by the first work at Jedburgh in its present state is what, if anything, was originally intended for the clerestorey? Romsey was certainly provided with a full clerestorey, even if it was only eventually built over those nave bays which are of this type of design after a considerable delay. But at Tewkesbury many scholars now believe that there was no clerestorey in the late 11th-century E limb although it does appear likely that there was a triforium passage immediately below either a stone vault or timber ceiling of semi-circular section (Thurlby 1985, 9). At Jedburgh the evidence is rather confusing. There is certainly clear evidence on the N side of the choir, at the junction with the transept (illus 115), of a phase of clerestorey construction pre-dating that which was eventually built, and on face value this might be taken to indicate the intention to have a clerestorey from the start. The evidence consists of an area of earlier masonry incorporating two stretches of chamfered string course and a fragment of corbel table. These string courses must be the relics of the mouldings at sill and arch springing level of a range of windows which would have been of considerably smaller size than those which were later built, while the corbel table belongs to a wall

Illus 115
The N side of the choir at gallery and clerestorey levels. The evidence for the early clerestorey, visible at the junction with the transept, consists of two string courses and a section of corbel table.

head rather lower than the one we now see. It is perhaps natural to assume that the clerestorey represented by this evidence must be contemporary with the choir, and that the original choir was thus of three storeys.

However, the string courses are of a different – and probably later – type than those used elsewhere in the choir, having no quirk (V-shaped indent) between the vertical and chamfered faces. Beyond this, comparison with related details in other parts of the church may also support the idea of a significantly later date for this clerestorey fragment. The first points of comparison are related stubs of clerestorey in the cross arms, particularly on the E side of the South transept. These have similar string courses at the same height as those of the choir clerestorey fragment, with which they must certainly be contemporary. But part of a window reveal and of a wall passage arcade respond also survive in the South transept clerestorey, and the details of those would appear to show that the clerestorey represented by these fragments is later than the first choir campaign. The window reveal has a narrow chamfered margin around the opening, with a rebate for a detached nook shaft, while internally the corresponding fragment of the wall passage arcade has a chalice cap. None of this is of a character likely to be before the later decades of the 12th century.

In support of a secondary dating for the transept clerestorey, a comparison for its chalice cap may be made with those used in conjunction with secondary pointed arches which were inserted into the rear plane of the gallery openings on the N side of the choir (illus 116). These added arches appear to belong to an attempt to



Illus 116
The N aisle wall of the nave where it joins the North transept. The jagged line in the broken stump of wall indicates the junction of the earlier and later 12th-century work.

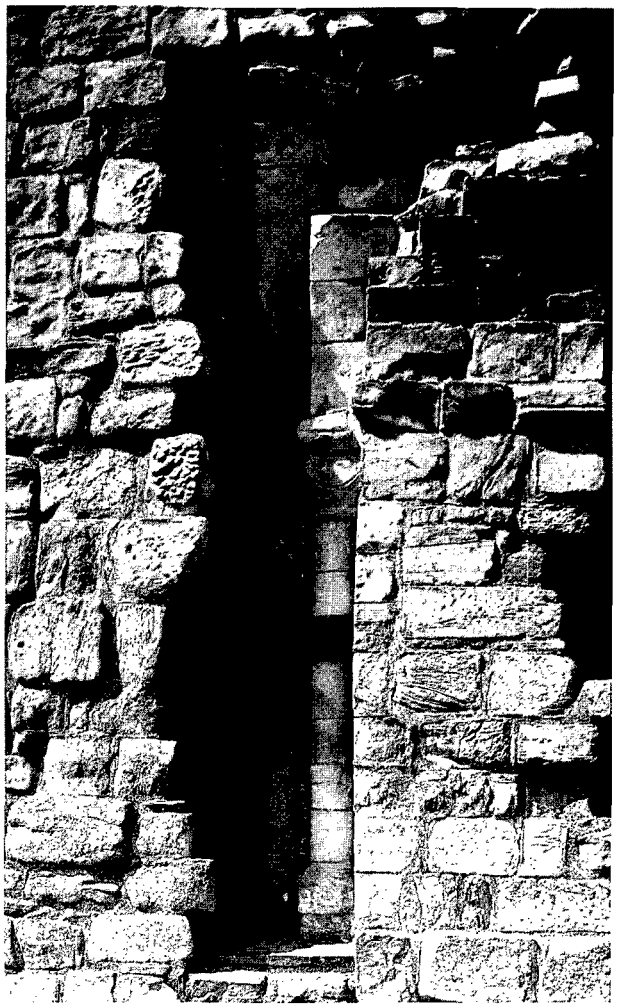
stabilise the structure, or even perhaps to strengthen it in order to receive a clerestorey which had not originally been intended. It may also be mentioned that the imposts and abaci of these inserted arches are like the strings of the choir clerestorey fragment in having no quirk between the vertical and chamfered faces. A further, but perhaps rather less significant, comparison may be made with the surviving portion of a window at the E end of the N nave aisle, which to some extent reflects the detail of the transept clerestorey in its rear arch cap and external reveal, and which is certainly part of the first phase of the late 12th-century nave campaign.

While all of this evidence cannot be regarded as entirely conclusive, there certainly appears to be at least a strong possibility that the earliest surviving evidence for a clerestorey over the E arm thus post-dates the first building campaign by some decades. If this was the case it would seem that Jedburgh, as first designed, was rather closer to Tewkesbury than to Romsey in having been planned for a two-storeyed elevation. In this respect it may be worth remarking that at Romsey the three-storeyed elevation had been established in the choir, where the design was not of the Tewkesbury-Jedburgh giant order type; the use of a clerestorey over the giant order bays in the nave there was thus conditioned by other factors.

Another respect in which Jedburgh may have been closer to Tewkesbury was the internal covering of the choir. Nothing has survived of the original ceiling through the two clerestorey building operations, but a pointer to what may be seen as one of the continuing aesthetic themes of the church may be seen in the transepts. In both of the cross arms, as will be discussed below, a barrel vault was either projected or built at a later stage of the abbey's history, and it may be not entirely unwarranted to speculate that such covering to these lateral spaces could have been prompted by what already existed in the E arm. It must be said that the structure of the choir suggests that it is unlikely that it ever had a stone vault. Nevertheless, taking account of

the fact that such a covering was eventually introduced or projected for the two transepts, and allowing for the possible initial influence of Tewkesbury, is it possible that Jedburgh's choir was originally finished at successive stages of its history in some related manner, perhaps in the form of a semi-circular timber wagon ceiling? Any such ceiling would continue the arc of the E crossing arch, the chevron-decorated springing of which still survives on the N side of the choir, rising from the string above the gallery. There can, however, be no possibility of certainty on this score. At this point reference must be made to an enigmatic, diagonally-set, corbel-like projection immediately adjacent to this springing. In its present worn condition no function can now be assigned to it with confidence, unless it was intended to carry an additional order of the tower arch.

Before leaving the first building campaign, brief mention must also be made of the internal disposition of the transepts. As has been said, at the aisle ends of choir and nave the transept elevations were essentially similar to those of the choir. Beyond this point, however, rebuilding has destroyed much of the evidence for the elevations. Nevertheless, on the S side we still have one respond of the arch which opened into the apsidal chapel there (illus 117), which has two orders of nook shafts carrying cushion caps towards the main body of the transept. In addition, in both transepts there is still evidence of two tiers of narrow windows with finely detailed rear-arches set between the arches into the choir aisle and gallery on one side, and the arch of the transept chapel on the other. At the upper level the provision of access around the transepts by mural corridors is indicated by narrow passages leading off the galleries above the choir aisles. On the S side, above the fragment of the transept chapel respond, is a portion of the inner wall of the mural passage, incorporating part of the respond of the mural passage opening at this point.

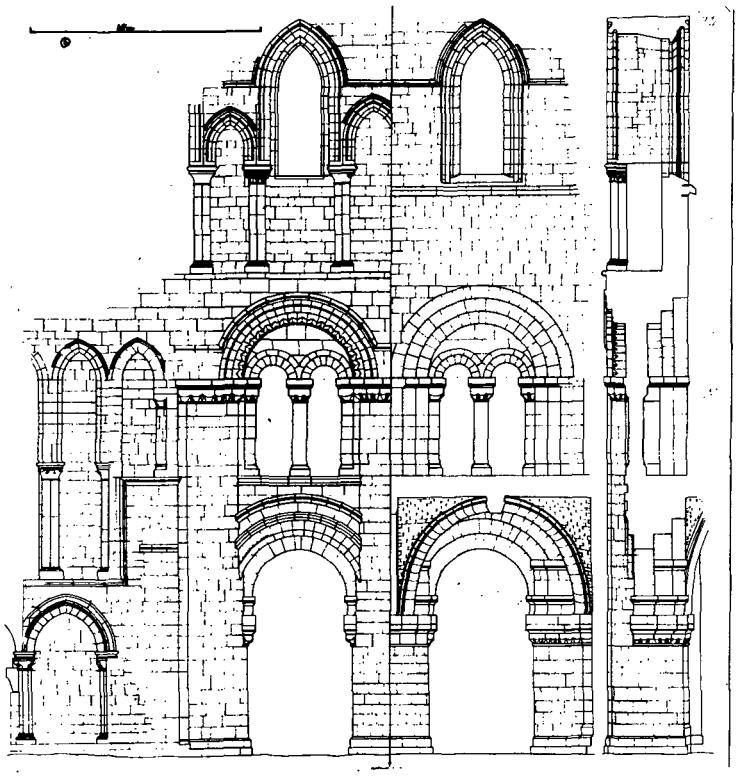


Illus 117
The surviving jamb and arch springing of the arch into the apsidal chapel of the South transept.

8.2 THE REMODELLING OF THE PRESBYTERY

Once the E parts of the church were completed, there is no evidence of further significant operations for some decades. Somewhat perversely, when work did start again, it seems to have been the E limb which received the first attention, in the form of a reconstruction of the presbytery to a slightly lengthened, plan (illus 118). Very little has survived from this operation, although inspection of the remaining evidence, together with the clues provided by earlier views (Watson 1894, f p 93), suggests that it was of a design related to the choir of the Benedictine priory church of Coldingham in Berwickshire. Like Coldingham, Jedburgh had decorative arcading to the lower walls, and upper walls with an alternating rhythm of low and tall arches. This upper arcade ran in front of a wall passage, with windows on the outer face corresponding to the taller arches. Although a *terminus post quem* for Coldingham is usually taken to be an attack by King John of England in 1215/16 (MacGibbon & Ross 1896, I, 443), there seems to be little reason on stylistic grounds to doubt that in fact it dates from the later decades of the 12th century. The waterleaf and crocket capitals of the Jedburgh presbytery also point to a similar date. A small group of churches of similar design in northern England, such as Nun Monkton in Yorkshire and St Bees in Cumberland provide further support for a date around the 1180s (Pevsner 1959, 383; Pevsner 1967, 183).

Looking at this group of churches with elevations related to that of the rebuilt Jedburgh presbytery, the question again arises as to whether a clerestorey was intended for its E limb. Certainly no clerestorey above the main rank of windows was intended for Coldingham, St Bees or Nun Monkton, the relevant parts of which were not flanked by the aisles which might have made an upper tier of windows seem essential. Similarly, the presbytery of Jedburgh was aisle-less, and therefore arguably without need of a rank of windows above those corresponding to the choir galleries. Indeed, the choice of such a design for the presbytery, with what appears to have been the natural wall-head level rising to the same height as the top of the choir gallery, might be thought to strengthen the case which has already been made for the choir not originally having had a clerestorey. Nevertheless, it has to be said that the grandest of all variants on this design type, the nave of the collegiate church of Ripon in Yorkshire, did have an upper rank of windows. However, Ripon, which was



Illus 118
Measured elevations of the choir and presbytery.

started by Archbishop Roger of York shortly before his death in 1181, was altogether more ambitious than the other members of the group, and should not be regarded as offering the closest parallels for the Jedburgh presbytery. A proposed reconstruction of the original nave at Ripon is illustrated in Hearn (1972, 39).

However, if a clerestorey had not yet been planned for the E limb at the time the presbytery was rebuilt, it must have been very soon after it was completed that one was started. The stub of an earlier clerestorey on the N side of the choir, the evidence for which has already been discussed, seems likely to have been started in the last decades of the 12th century.

8.3 THE ADDITION OF THE NAVE

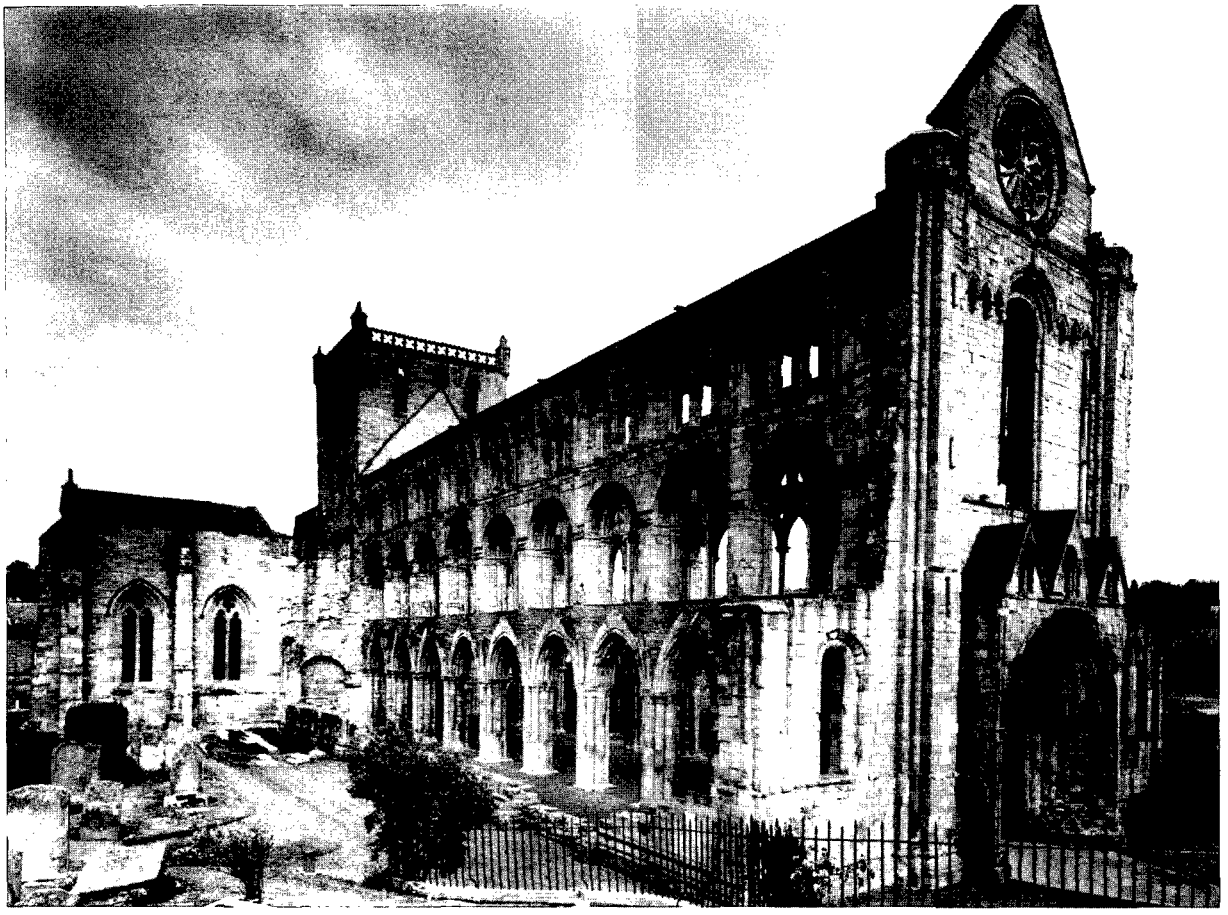
In fact the last decades of the 12th century saw simultaneously renewed activity at Jedburgh on a heroic scale, although the most important aspect of this activity was not in the E limb but in the nave. By comparison with the E limb, the nave is strikingly complete (illus 119), resulting from the use of the lower storeys of its western parts as a parish church between 1668 and 1875. It also appears markedly homogeneous. Nevertheless, examination of the details of the work indicates that it was probably completed in a number of closely consecutive phases. It has already been suggested above that the E bays of the nave may initially have been built as a continuation of the operations in the E limb in the early 12th-century campaign and only replaced after the rest of the nave had been started. At a higher level a change in the design of the gallery stage may be noted: whereas the four E bays have basically quatrefoil piers with additional smaller shafts on the N–S axis (except for the second bay on the N, which was not sub-divided), the five W bays have only pairs of major shafts separated by smaller shafts.

However, as a dreadful warning against over-neat conclusions based on such evidence, it should be noted that changes in the *tas-de-charge* of the aisle vaults complicate the picture. Those above the piers of the two E bays of the S aisle vaults incorporate heavier and thus seemingly earlier transverse ribs than those of the other bays, although the corresponding *tas-de-charge* in the outer aisle wall are of essentially the same type as in the other bays. Clearly, in a part of the building in which the constituent phases were separated by no great gap of time, it would be dangerous to place too great a burden of proof on excessively slight changes of detail.

The lower storey of the West front was probably among the earliest parts of the new nave to be started. The chief focus of this front is the cavernous processional entrance, surmounted by a triplet of gables above a horizontal string. Although it is not coursed in with the flanking masonry, it seems unlikely to represent a later addition. It has five principal orders, once carried on disengaged shafts and with caps of mainly Corinthianesque forms; these shafts alternate with continuous mouldings. The engaged inner order has classically-inspired foliage to the arch, and in the jambs there is similar foliage alternating with heads in quatrefoils; at impost level this order has pairs of delightful wyvern-like creatures. The proliferation of various types of chevron decoration to both arch and jambs introduces a note of late Romanesque elaboration which is remarkably absent from the rest of the nave, other than in the two processional doorways from the cloister into the S aisle, one of which is a complete restoration. Garton (1987, 69) suggests that the W doorway is secondary to the West front; however, although the idea is an attractive one, the present author feels that this is not supported by the structural evidence.

Internally the masonry of the lower part of the West front (colour illus VIII) is differentiated from that of the upper parts by the alarming downward slope towards the S of its bedding. This had to be corrected above the string course which runs at the level of the gallery sill. Further evidence for a break in the West front building operation is observable inside the two stair turrets which rise at the ends of the arcade walls. Above a level corresponding with the arch springing of the galleries, there is a change from steps of composite construction, formed on the extrados of a helical barrel vault, to steps of monolithic key-hole shape incorporating an integral newel.

Nevertheless, despite these changes, the basic design of the front is likely to have been determined at the start of the work, and the immediate inspiration for the upper part, rising through both gallery and clerestorey



Illus 119
The abbey church from the NW.

levels, may have been the nearby Tironensian abbey of Kelso, where the West front appears likely to have been started a few years before that of Jedburgh. At both, the main feature of the upper part of the design is a single lofty window, flanked by decorative arcading – a pair of intersecting arches at Kelso (RCAHMS 1956, 240) and a triplet of simple arches at Jedburgh. The links with Kelso are supported by similarities in the moulded detail, which may even suggest that some of the Jedburgh nave masons had come from there.

Some precedents for such a facade design may be found in the areas of France within which many of the ideas which eventually took root in Scotland first originated. Among examples which show something of a related approach to design is the Burgundian Cistercian church of Pontigny, of about 1155 (Dimier 1982, pl 111) although it is very likely that there were northern English intermediaries which provided the immediate stimulus for the choice of such a design. The influence of ideas which had originated in Burgundy and reached Scotland through northern England, where the activities of the Cistercian order provided fertile ground for the reception of ideas from eastern and northern France, is also apparent in a number of other aspects of the nave design (colour illus IX).

The piers themselves are of the clustered shaft type which, after a brief vogue in France in the 11th century, had been taken up by the Cistercians in their earliest surviving house at Fontenay in Burgundy – the area in which the order was born. The small-scale examples in the Chapter house there date to about 1155. Such piers were then quickly copied on a larger scale in northern England, reached Scotland soon after 1160 at St Andrews Cathedral, and had a considerable vogue on both sides of the Border in the later decades of the 12th century. (For a discussion on clustered shaft piers see Bilson (1909, 185), Ferguson (1975, 155) and Wilson (1986, 86)).

Other details of the Jedburgh arcade also show close links with both the north of England and St Andrews.

These include the earlier of the two nave arcade base types, in which the lower roll ends in a vertical face. By comparison, the bases at the E end of the nave are of the later type which has a full lower roll below a water-holding hollow with a filleted rim. Further links with both England and St Andrews are to be seen in the arcade arches, in which the angles of each order are relieved by a form of roll, while the soffits show variants on a triplet of rolls. Beyond this, telling comparisons may be made between at least one of the elaborated waterleaf caps at Jedburgh and examples at the Cistercian abbey of Byland, the luxuriantly fleshy carving of which shows a very similar approach.

In the general design of its internal elevation (illus 120), Jedburgh belongs within an Anglo-Scottish group, of which the Tironensian abbey of Arbroath in Angus and the Augustinian priory of Hexham in Northumberland (Hodges 1888) are the best surviving examples. All have arcades carried on keeled octofoil clustered shaft piers, and all have a relatively tall gallery stage, with two pointed arches contained by a semi-circular arch in each bay. Although there are differences at clerestorey level, all have a continuous open arcade in each bay, in front of the mural passage at that level. A number of the sculptural and architectural details of Arbroath and Hexham suggest they could be marginally later than Jedburgh. Among these pointers may be included the general use of waterleaf and crocket foliage at Jedburgh as opposed to the use of stiff leaf in comparable situations at the others, and the use of earlier base types in the main body of the Jedburgh arcade. In addition, the relatively larger size of the gallery stage at Jedburgh appears typologically earlier than those of Arbroath and Hexham.

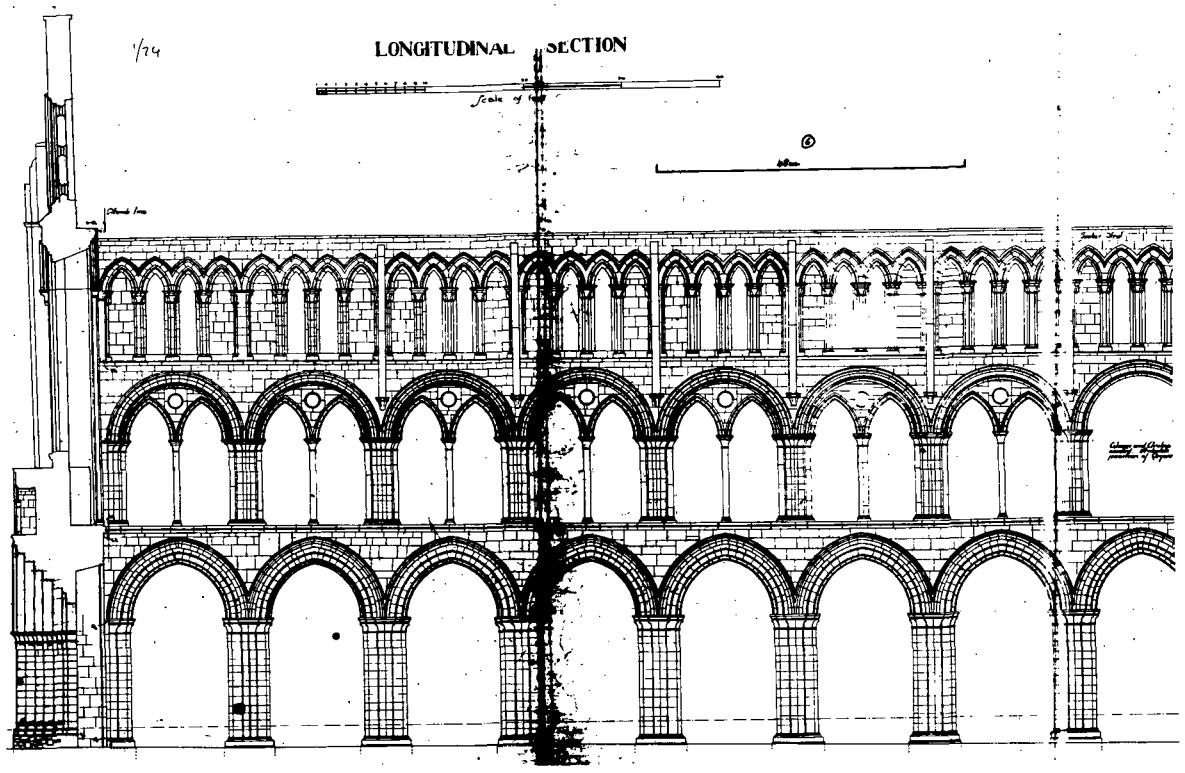
While the difference in date between Jedburgh on the one hand and Arbroath and Hexham on the other is likely to have been slight, it does seem there may be a case for arguing that it was Jedburgh which set the pattern for the others; but, if so, what was the immediate inspiration for Jedburgh itself? Since so many buildings have been lost there can be no certain answer, but one very likely source of ideas is the choir of Scotland's most important cathedral, at St Andrews, to which reference has already been made on a number of counts. St Andrews was, like Jedburgh, the home of a community of Augustinian canons, and had been started in or soon after 1160, but it is important to remember that work there was still in progress throughout the whole time that Jedburgh's nave was being built (Cant 1976, 11; Cambridge 1977, 277). Beyond this, despite St Andrews' much greater size, assuming that the relative proportions of the three stages of the elevation there were the same in the choir as in the aisle-less presbytery, they must have been very similar to those of Jedburgh. St Andrews therefore seems to offer a convincing prototype for Jedburgh's nave in a number of respects.

8.4 THE CLERESTOREYS OF THE NAVE AND CHOIR

That there was a pause before the construction of the nave clerestorey is suggested by the change in the stair turret construction already mentioned; but the use of waterleaf or chalice capitals throughout this level probably suggests that the pause was not a long one. Nevertheless, the design of the clerestorey as built does seem to embody changes from the original design. Externally a large respond and arch springing at the W end on both sides, along with the large pilasters which define the bays at the jamb level of the arches, may suggest that originally the upper part of the clerestorey was to have been thicker; although the motive behind this may have been no more than the provision of an adequate wall walk to either side of the main roof.

It was presumably the resumption of work on the nave clerestorey which led to the decision to rebuild the choir clerestorey – but not that of the South transept – to a greater height, so that its wall head would be on a level with that of the nave. Whatever the external benefits of this heightening in the overall balance of the building, internally the consequent disproportionate relationship with the arcade and gallery below is one of the less pleasing features of the E limb. The new choir clerestorey may well have been started before the squatter one which was apparently started only a few years earlier had been taken very far. Indeed it may even have been started before the nave clerestorey itself was complete if the use of square abaci in the choir as opposed to polygonal abaci in the nave may be taken as as significant.

Here again, however, as with the vault ribs of the nave aisles, it may be that too much should not be



Illus 120
Measured elevation of the nave.

concluded from such slight changes. In fact the architectural evidence suggests that construction was underway in all parts of the abbey church throughout the decades at the turn of the 12th and 13th centuries, and that different teams of masons with varying architectural vocabularies were at work. The net result for the canons must have been that they were hard pressed to recite their offices anywhere within the church in anything approaching peace.

The form of the stiff leaf foliage to be found associated with some of the finishing touches of the both the nave and of the choir clerestorey indicates that the operation may not have been finally wound down until several years of the 13th century had passed. The parts which have this type of foliage include the S clerestorey of the choir and, somewhat unexpectedly, the fourth bay from the E of the N nave gallery. This latter also has the later form of rounded abacus and therefore seems only to have been completed at a very late stage of the operations; possibly this bay was possibly left open to allow access for materials.

It is perhaps not surprising that, once the building was complete, the canons appear to have chosen to leave the structure well alone until Border warfare, and maybe also some degree of structural instability, forced them to take action in the 15th and 16th centuries. One slight change to the choir clerestorey which may be noted here is the lowering of the sills of its N windows at some stage although it is not known quite when this was done.

8.5 THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE NORTH TRANSEPT

Despite accounts of attacks in the course of the wars of independence, including references to the removal of lead roofing in about 1305 (Bain 1888, no 1727), there is little evidence of repairs to the church around that

time. The first major operation to have left its mark on the fabric after the completion of the church in the early 13th century is the reconstruction of the North transept. This took place in the central decades of the 15th century. It is known that the abbey suffered attacks in 1410 and 1416, and it may have been those which were the cause of rebuilding although the more extended plan given to the transept suggests that the need for additional altar space was also a factor. An additional motive for rebuilding may be indicated by the tomb recess under the N window, suggesting that at least one altar in the transept was destined to serve a chantry foundation.

The new transept (illus 110) was laid out to a rectangular plan, re-using much of the 12th-century masonry in the reconstructed walls, with a blank E wall to accommodate the retables of the altars placed against it. The stubs of the demolished apse appear to have been adapted for use as buttresses. Direct light for the altars came from a pair of two-light windows in the W wall, and there was a magnificent four-light window with curvilinear tracery in the N wall. Above this window is a shield with arms which are now badly worn, but which have been identified with Bishop William Turnbull of Glasgow (1447–54). Although doubt has been cast upon this identification, the near identicality of the window with one at Melrose would seem to support such a date, since at Melrose the comparable window is associated with the arms of Andrew Hunter, who was abbot between 1444 and 1471 (Fawcett 1984, 176). Additionally, Turnbull's concern for Jedburgh is indicated by the presence of his arms on the S choir chapel although any work he did there was soon to be subsumed within more extensive operations. It may be noted here that one of his successors in the see of Glasgow also seems to have had an interest in the transept, since the arms of Archbishop Robert Blackadder (1483–1508) are placed on the rebuilt tomb chest within the recess below the N window.

On the evidence of the roof creases, and of returned mouldings from the flanking choir, it appears that the reconstruction of the transept involved the destruction of an existing clerestorey, and that the transept as rebuilt was thus lower than its predecessor. However, there is some reason for thinking that this represented a change of plan, and that the re-furbished transept was originally intended to rise to a similar overall height as its predecessor. On the E side of the transept, immediately adjacent to the tower, is what seems to be the springing of a barrel vault, while within the transept are the the vertical joints of what appear to have been the rear-arches of a row of windows below the springing of such a vault. In addition, towards the N end of the E wall there are the lower external reveals of one such window. If this vault had ever been completed, it would have given the transept a characteristically Scottish Late Gothic appearance, in marked contrast with the rest of the building. But, on balance, it appears unlikely that it was ever carried higher than we now see.

8.6 OPERATIONS IN THE AREA OF THE CROSSING AND SOUTH TRANSEPT

The next operations on the abbey church are liberally indicated as their own contribution by Abbots John Hall and Thomas Cranston who successively held office between 1478 and 1488. The immediate cause of the work was probably an English attack of 1464 although this may have exacerbated long-standing structural weaknesses which have left much evidence in this area, particularly in the N crossing piers. Hall's work included the reconstruction of the pier at the SE corner of the crossing. An arch springing near the level of the choir gallery floor (illus 121) shows that he also intended either to brace the S crossing arch by a transverse strainer arch at that level, or perhaps even to extend the gallery across the transept. However, by the time that Cranston rebuilt the SW pier, together with three of the high crossing arches, this idea had been abandoned. Hall also remodelled the S choir chapel to which Bishop Turnbull had earlier made some now unidentifiable contribution, and in the process he reconstructed the vault, re-using some of the earlier ribs.

As part of the same strengthening operations, several of the openings into the aisles and galleries of choir and transepts were either remodelled or simply blocked, and there was extensive reconstruction of the Romanesque work at the SW corner of the choir. It was probably also as an element of this campaign that a stone barrel vault was constructed over the South transept, following the arc of the crossing arch. In building

Illus 121
The rebuilt SE crossing pier, showing the cap and springing of the arch intended to cross the transept at gallery level.

this vault there seem to have been doubts about the capacity of the transept walls to support it, since it was constructed above gallery rather than clerestorey level, and as a consequence the clerestorey over this part of the building was blocked internally. The culmination of this phase of the work was the extensive reconstruction of the central tower, the stone vault at the top of which – like that in the South transept – suggests a real concern for fire-proof construction. This work was perhaps left incomplete on the death of Cranston, since the arms of Archbishop Blackadder (1483–1508) on the parapet indicate that it was under his patronage that it was finished.

One other 15th-century alteration which may be mentioned at this point is the reconstruction of the W gable in the nave, although there is no way of knowing its precise place in the sequence of operations. As the main focus of the new work a handsome twelve-light rose window was installed, which is very similar to one which was inserted in the W gable of the refectory at Dryburgh Abbey, and which may well have been the work of the same mason (Fawcett 1984, 179).

8.7 THE FINAL MEDIEVAL BUILDING OPERATIONS

The results of the contribution of Abbots Hall and Cranston, whilst not sitting entirely sympathetically with the earlier work, do at least point to the continuing aspirations of a community which was still concerned to provide a worthy and even beautiful setting for its worship. By contrast, the final works for which the fabric offers evidence are indicative of no more than damage control operations by a community which was both spiritually and financially exhausted, and which was not to have the opportunity to recover as a corporate institution.

The need for the work was almost certainly created by devastating English attacks in 1523, 1544 and 1545. There is no way of being sure of the precise sequence of the various reconstruction works undertaken, but it seems most likely to have been after the burning of the abbey in 1523 by the Earl of Surrey that the roofs were replaced at a lower pitch. The evidence for this is to be seen in the creases against the tower and the W walls of the transepts, and in the chases cut into the back walls of the galleries above arch springing height. This must have represented a massive effort for the impoverished abbey although the aesthetic consequences can hardly have been entirely happy. The partial or total blocking of the gallery openings which must have been involved in the lowering of the aisle roofs would have been particularly unfortunate.

Work on all of this can have been only newly completed when the attacks of 1544 and 1545 were delivered. There is even less certainty of what works followed these, but it is inherently likely that the truncation of the South transept on the line of the flanking aisle walls and with a stair at the E end of the cross wall, was a part of the operation. The wall below the E crossing arch may also be of this period. If these were indeed the efforts of damage control which followed the English attacks it is likely that they were instigated as a stop-gap exercise pending the collection of funds to undertake a more thorough-going reconstruction. However, the Reformation intervened to prevent further repairs by the Augustinian canons, and it was this small area within the truncated transept and crossing which was first taken over as their parish church by the local population.