

= Education in Medieval Scotland =

Education in Medieval Scotland includes all forms of education within the modern borders of Scotland , between the departure of the Romans from Britain in the fifth century , until the establishment of the Renaissance late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century . Few sources on Scottish education survived the Medieval era . In the early Middle Ages , Scotland was an oral society , with verbal rather than literary education . Though there are indications of a Gaelic education system similar to that of Ireland , few details are known . The establishment of Christianity from the sixth century brought Latin to Scotland as a scholarly and written language . Monasteries served as major repositories of knowledge and education , often running schools .

In the High Middle Ages , new sources of education arose , such as song and grammar schools designed to train priests with emphases on music and Latin grammar , respectively . The number and size of these schools expanded rapidly after the 1380s . By the end of the Middle Ages , all the main burghs and some small towns had grammar schools . Educational provision was probably much weaker in rural areas , but there were petty or reading schools in rural areas , providing an elementary education . There was also the development of private tuition in the families of lords and wealthy burghers that sometimes developed into " household schools " . Girls of noble families were taught in nunneries and by the end of the fifteenth century Edinburgh also had schools for girls . There is documentary evidence for about 100 schools of these different kinds before the Reformation . The Education Act 1496 decreed that all sons of barons and freeholders of substance should attend grammar schools to learn " perfyct Latyne " . All this resulted in an increase in literacy , with perhaps 60 per cent of the nobility being literate by the end of the period .

Those who wished to attend university had to travel to England or the continent , and just over 1 @, @ 000 students have been identified as doing so between the twelfth century and 1410 . Major intellectual figures produced by Scotland with this system included John Duns Scotus , Walter Wardlaw , William de Tredbrum , Laurence de Lindores and John Mair . This situation was transformed by the founding of St John 's College , St Andrews (1418) . St Salvator 's College was added to St. Andrews in 1450 , followed by foundations at Glasgow in 1451 and King 's College , Aberdeen in 1495 . Initially , these institutions were designed for the training of clerics , but they would increasingly be used by laymen who began to challenge the clerical monopoly of administrative posts in government and law . They provided only basic degrees and those wanting to study for the more advanced degrees , which were common amongst European scholars , needed to go to universities in other countries . In this period , Scottish universities largely had a Latin curriculum , designed for the clergy and civil and canon lawyers . Towards the end of the fifteenth century , a humanist influence and the teaching of Greek was becoming more evident .

= = Gaelic education and monasteries = =

In the early Middle Ages , Scotland was overwhelmingly an oral society and education was verbal rather than literary . Fuller sources for Ireland of the same period suggest that there were filidh , who acted as poets , musicians and historians , often attached to the court of a lord or king , and who passed on their knowledge in Gaelic to the next generation . After the " de @-@ gallicisation " of the Scottish court from the twelfth century , a less highly regarded order of bards took over these functions and they would continue to act in a similar role in the Highlands and Islands into the eighteenth century . They often trained in bardic schools , of which a few , such as the one run by the MacMhuirich dynasty , who were bards to the Lord of the Isles , existed in Scotland and a larger number in Ireland , until they were suppressed from the seventeenth century . Much of their work was never written down and what survives was only recorded from the sixteenth century . Evidence of formal schooling is largely only preserved in place names .

The establishment of Christianity from the sixth century brought Latin to Scotland as a scholarly and written language . Monasteries served as major repositories of knowledge and education , often running schools and providing a small , educated and overwhelmingly male , elite , who were essential to create and read documents in a largely illiterate society . Literary life revolved around

the contemplation of texts and the copying of manuscripts . Libraries were of great importance to monastic communities . The one at Iona may have been exceptional , but it demonstrates that the monks were part of the mainstream of European Christian culture .

= = Schools = =

In the High Middle Ages , new sources of education arose . Choir and grammar schools were designed to train priests , with an emphasis respectively on music and Latin grammar . The reorganisation of the church that began in the reign of David I (1124 ? 53) gave the church a clearer diocesan and parochial structure , meaning that the seats of sherifffdoms , such as Perth , received schools that were usually under monastic patrons . Early examples of grammar schools include the High School of Glasgow in 1124 and the High School of Dundee in 1239 . These were usually attached to cathedrals or a collegiate church . The newly created diocesan chancellors may have had authority over cathedral schools and schoolmasters within their diocese .

The new religious orders that became a major feature of Scottish monastic life in this period also brought new educational possibilities and the need to train larger numbers of monks . Benedictine and Augustinian foundations probably had almonry schools , charity schools using funds from the almoner to provide a type of bursary to educate young boys , who might enter the priesthood . At the Cluniac Paisley Abbey , secular chaplains were employed as schoolmasters . Some monasteries , including the Cistercian abbey at Kinloss , Sweetheart Abbey and Beaulieu , opened their doors to a wider range of students to teach the sons of gentlemen . St Andrews , which was both the seat of a bishop and the site of a major Augustinian foundation , had both a grammar school , under the archdeacon , and a song school , under the priory . The foundation of over 100 collegiate churches of secular priests between 1450 and the Reformation would have necessitated the training of large numbers of choristers . Sometimes , as at Lochwinnoch , they were taught both music and grammar . Dominican friars were noted for their educational achievements and were usually located in urban centres , probably teaching grammar , as at Glasgow and Ayr . The number and size of these schools seems to have expanded rapidly from the 1380s . By the end of the Middle Ages , grammar schools could be found in all the main burghs and some small towns .

Educational provision was probably much weaker in rural areas , but there were petty or reading schools that provided an elementary education . There was also the development of private tuition in the families of lords and wealthy burghers . Sometimes these developed into " household schools " , that may also have catered to neighbours and kin , as well as the sons of the laird 's household , which is known to have happened at Huntly . All these schools were almost exclusively aimed at boys . Girls of noble families were taught in nunneries such as Elcho , Aberdour and Haddington . By the end of the fifteenth century Edinburgh also had schools for girls , sometimes described as " sewing schools " , whose name probably indicates one of their major functions . Although reading may also have been taught in these schools , the students were probably taught by lay women or nuns .

There is documentary evidence for about 100 schools of these different kinds before the Reformation . Most of the schoolmasters of these schools were clergy , and also acted as chaplains of religious foundations , hospitals or private chaplains of noblemen to supplement their meagre incomes . To some extent , all education was controlled by different branches of the church , but towards the end of the period there was an increasing lay interest . This sometimes resulted in conflict , as between the burgh of Aberdeen and the cathedral chancellor , when the former appointed a lay graduate as schoolmaster in 1538 , and when a married man was appointed to the similar post in Perth . Education began to widen beyond the training of the clergy , particularly as lay lawyers began to emerge as a profession , with a humanist emphasis on educating the future ruling class for their duties . The growing humanist emphasis on education cumulated with the passing of the Education Act 1496 , thought to have been steered through parliament by the Keeper of the Privy Seal William Elphinstone , Bishop of Aberdeen , which decreed that all sons of barons and freeholders of substance should attend grammar schools to learn " perfyct Latyne " . All this resulted in an increase in literacy , which was largely concentrated among a male and wealthy

elite , with perhaps 60 per cent of the nobility being literate by the end of the period .

= = Universities = =

From the end of the eleventh century , universities had been founded across Europe , developing as semi @-@ autonomous centres of learning , often teaching theology , mathematics , law and medicine . Until the fifteenth century , those Scots who wished to attend university had to travel to England , to Oxford or Cambridge , or to the Continent . Just over 1 @, @ 000 students have been identified as doing so between the twelfth century and 1410 . Among the destinations Paris was the most important , but also Cologne , Orléans , Wittenberg , Louvain and Vienna .

Among these travelling scholars , the most important intellectual figure was John Duns Scotus (c . 1266 ? 1308) , who studied at Oxford , Cambridge and Paris . He probably died at Cologne in 1308 , after becoming a major influence on late medieval religious thought . After the outbreak of the Wars of Independence (1296 ? 1357) , with occasional exceptions under safe conduct , English universities were closed to Scots and continental universities became more significant . Some Scottish scholars became teachers in continental universities . At Paris , this included John de Rait (died c . 1355) and Walter Wardlaw (died c . 1387) in the 1340s and 1350s , William de Tredbrum in the 1380s and Laurence de Lindores (1372 ? 1437) in the early 1500s . The continued movement to other universities produced a school of Scottish nominalists at Paris in the early sixteenth century , of which John Mair (1467 ? 1550) was a member . He had probably studied at a Scottish grammar school and then Cambridge , before moving to Paris where he matriculated in 1493 .

This situation was transformed by the founding of St John 's College , St Andrews in 1418 . Henry Wardlaw , bishop of St. Andrews , petitioned the anti @-@ Pope Benedict XIII during the later stages of the Great Western Schism , when Scotland was one of his few remaining supporters . Wardlaw argued that Scottish scholars in other universities were being persecuted for their loyalty to the anti @-@ Pope . St Salvator 's College was added to St. Andrews in 1450 . The other great bishoprics followed , with the University of Glasgow being founded in 1451 and the King 's College , Aberdeen in 1495 . Both were also papal foundations , by Nicholas V and Alexander VI respectively . St Leonard 's College was added at St. Andrews in 1511 . St. Andrews was deliberately modelled on Paris , and although Glasgow adopted the statues of the University of Bologna , there , like Aberdeen , there was an increasing Parisian influence , partly because all its early regents had been educated in Paris . Initially , these institutions were designed for the training of clerics , but they would increasingly be used by laymen who began to challenge the clerical monopoly of administrative posts in government and law . They provided only basic degrees . Those wanting to study for the more advanced degrees that were common amongst European scholars still needed to go to universities in other countries . As a result , Scottish scholars continued to visit the Continent and returned to English universities after they reopened to Scots in the late fifteenth century .

By the fifteenth century , beginning in northern Italy , universities had become strongly influenced by humanist thinking . This put an emphasis on classical authors , questioning some of the accepted certainties of established thinking and manifesting itself in the teaching of new subjects , particularly through the medium of the Greek language . However , in this period , Scottish universities largely had a Latin curriculum , designed for the clergy , civil and common lawyers . They did not teach the Greek that was fundamental to the new humanist scholarship , focusing on metaphysics and putting a largely unquestioning faith in the works of Aristotle , whose authority would be challenged in the Renaissance . Towards the end of the fifteenth century , a humanist influence was becoming more evident . A major figure was Archibald Whitelaw , a teacher at St. Andrews and Cologne who later became a tutor to the young James III and served as royal secretary from 1462 to 1493 . By 1497 , the humanist and historian Hector Boece , born in Dundee and who had studied at Paris , returned to become the first principal at the new university of Aberdeen . In 1518 Mair returned to Scotland to become Principal of the University of Glasgow . He transferred to St. Andrews in 1523 and in 1533 he was made Provost of St Salvator 's College . While in Scotland his students included John Knox and George Buchanan . These international contacts helped integrate Scotland into a wider

European scholarly world and would be one of the most important ways in which the new ideas of Humanism were brought into Scottish intellectual life in the sixteenth century .