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allegiance to England, to one of the most famous of all old English customs.

CRYPT UNOPENED FOR 400 YEARS

MAD PRIOR WHO SAVED BINHAM

AN UNQUARRIED RUIN

The announcement that the Office of Works is taking over the guardianship of Binham Priory at Michaelmas and that the work of repair and excavation will begin in the next financial year, draws attention to the possibility of some highly interesting discoveries (writes a correspondent).

The crypt at Binham appears to be very large. Its existence was not suspected till recently, when an examination of the levels showed that the floor of the conventual church is much higher than that of the nave; and as the roof line was apparently even there must have been some reason for raising the floor, and for telescoping the triforium in the monks' church into a stunted arcade. The reason was clear when among the piles of rubbish a buried staircase was found at the corner of the north transept.

Henry VIII. at the time of the Dissolution was after the obvious valuables of the place, the plate, the bells, and the lead on the roof. These were seized in haste and the tower was brought down in heaps after the bells were removed and the lead stripped. This blocked the entrance to the crypt, which has remained unopened and unnoticed since 1541.

May be the crypt was never despoiled. There is just the chance that the altar may still be there as it was in the days of John Albon, the last prior, who was evicted after holding charge for 32 years. Probably it contains the tombs of the priors, and perhaps it was in this crypt that the unhappy maniac, Alexander de Langley, was walled up in his fetters after the Abbot of St. Albans had failed to exorcise the devil that possessed this whilom prior of Wymondham.

He was sent in chains to Binham with instructions that "flogging unto the copious effusion of blood" might prove more efficacious; but in vain, for the monks in despair thought it better to put an end to his ravings by walling him up in his chains.

Here, too, might well be found the graves of the great De Parco, who built the west front; and of the rebellious William Dixwell, four times appointed prior and thrice expelled, who collected the monks in the crypt and in this retreat defied the Bishop of Norwich when he arrived on a visitation.

It is to the mad de Langley that we owe all that remains of Binham, for when Thomas Paston, to whom the Priory was granted at the Dissolution, started to convert it into a dwelling-house for himself, the first workman that touched the monastery was killed by a mass of falling masonry. This was clearly the work of the mad prior, and no one thereafter dared to touch the place.

Thus it is that we have an unquarried ruin, the like of which is nowhere to be found. More than 20 feet of debris covers the monastic buildings, and in the chancel itself the ruins are piled two fathoms high. Excavation may prove a veritable treasure hunt.

Something less than £30 is still required to complete the purchase of the property by the Norfolk Archaeological Trust. Donations should be sent to the hon. treasurer of the Binham Priory Fund, Mr. H. R. Nevill, Tasburgh Hall, Norwich.

considerable discussion among our leading archaeologists. In another field at Arminghall there is a solitary circle with a long straight line leading to it, undoubtedly of the Bronze Age.

MARKSHALL

At Mr. Skinner's farm at Markshall, on both sides of the road leading from the Ipswich road to Caistor, the Aero Club has secured some decidedly interesting photographs. Very clearly are indicated a number of circles, large and small, in some cases, circles within circles, whilst intermingled with these circles are a number of squares. A competent archaeologist to whom this photograph has been shown inclines to the belief that these are camp sites of the Bronze Age. A curious feature is that the circles in the root field show up more clearly than those in the adjoining barley field, which suggests that air photographs may be taken, under certain conditions, at almost any time of the year.

KENNINGHAM, MULBARTON

On a grass field within the bounds of Kenningham Hall Farm is a very interesting formation which may be anything from an ancient field system to the remains of an ancient building. This shows up clearly covering an area of about an acre, and it is interesting to note that the owner, I believe, was not aware of its existence. A solitary field circle also appears in this parish.

ARMINGHALL "WOOD HENGE"

The existence of an ancient sepulchral meeting place in the form of two large concentric trench circles, the larger being about 250 feet in diameter, was discovered by the R.A.F. in 1929, but their photograph does not reveal a number of smaller circles in close proximity, which stand out with reasonable clearness on the Aero Club's photograph. Norwich citizens have always been aware of the existence of Stone Henge, but it is

ST. BENET'S ABBEY

The Benedictine Abbey of St. Benet-at-Holme in its long history has probably never before been photographed from the air. To understand the very excellent photograph which Mr. Low has secured one has to appreciate that the site of St. Benet's Abbey has had an extremely varied history. In the eighth century the site was occupied by a recluse named Suneman with a number of religious hermits. The Danes, however, knocked the place down and killed its inmates. After that King Canute founded a fortified monastery for the Benedictines, and this in turn was attacked and taken by the Conqueror. With such a history the site seems well worthy of the attention of the excavators. The air photograph taken reveals earthworks over a very wide area. No doubt these earthworks comprise foundations, dykes and remains of buildings constructed by its various occupiers. Only the work of the excavator can sort them out. The photograph, however, is a very revealing one, and is now being studied by experts

THUNDER LANE, THORPE

An interesting circle was discovered by Mr. Collier during an instructional flight within half a mile of the aerodrome just off Thunder Lane. Regarded at first as of little importance a keen student, on examining the photograph, states that he believes this to indicate the possible site of a group of tumuli which were indicated on an old 14th century map and have long since disappeared. Far from being relatively unimportant, it would appear that this casual discovery may be the means of locating an important ancient site.

TASBURGH

As an instance of the reversal of archaeological opinion, thanks to the aid of aerial photography, the Tasburgh site may be mentioned. This has always been referred to as a Roman camp, and, with a view to verifying certain sites, a local archaeologist flew over the place at the club's invitation. Having flown over and taken a photograph, he writes the following somewhat striking opinion:—"This site has always been referred to as a Roman camp. It is certainly not Roman at all. It is probably a fortified hill village of the Iron age."

The above scant description of some of the photographs taken by the club will give an indication of the scope for air photography in this all-absorbing science. The club hopes in time to be able to raise a fund whereby the whole of the county can be systematically surveyed from the air and the history of the work of the various races who have from ancient times erected their buildings, temples, and fortifications upon its surface may be correctly recorded. It is hoped during the coming winter to have slides of the various photographs and to secure the services of a competent authority to reveal the many secrets which are perhaps not obvious to the untrained eye.



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