

# Summaries

## The archaeology of the medieval Danish monasteries

*By Olaf Olsen*

C. 100 monastic institutions were founded in Denmark during the Middle Ages. 86 of these were still in use in the early 16th century, but they were all dissolved during the Lutheran reformation. Most of them were pulled down or transformed to other use shortly afterward. To-day, only two monastic sites still contain all their medieval buildings: The Black Friars in Ribe, and the Carmelite monastery in Elsinore. However, 36 monastic churches have survived, most of them serving as Lutheran parish churches mainly in towns, and in c. 30 places there are still monastic buildings preserved.

This leaves a considerable part of the monastic heritage in Denmark to the spade of the archaeologists, and since the end of the 19th century many monasteries have been localised and investigated through excavation. Two abbeys, a Cistercian at Øm in Jutland and Augustine at Æbelholt in North Zealand, have been subjected to large scale excavation.

The foundation of Danish monasteries were concentrated in three periods: 1130-80 was the time of the great old orders (Benedictines, Cistercians, Augustines etc.) in the rural communities, 1225-70 saw most of the Mendicants in the towns, while 1410-1500 mainly gave place to a smaller number of houses of Carmelites, Brigidines and the Order of the Holy Spirit.

However, excavations have revealed the surprising fact that the 15th century was the true peak of monastic achievement in Denmark. Evidently, most of the elder monasteries first obtained their monastic square and cloisters in this period, though obviously planned centuries earlier. In the same time, many monasteries expanded with a number of supplementary buildings, perhaps main-

ly for elder people who sought the care from a monastic institution without joining the order.

Therefore, the concern of monastic archaeology in Denmark today is concentrated upon three major questions: The age of the buildings in the complex, the outer fringes of the monastic settlements and the use of each of the buildings.

»better than before«

## The medieval Benedictine Convent of Ring

*By Jens Ingvordsen*

The Benedictine Convent of Ring near Skanderborg in Eastern Jutland was founded in the second half of the 12th century. On the basis of a study of excavations carried out between 1933 and 1985 the 4 major phases of medieval activity are discussed.

A written source from 1430 mentions a fire at some time between 1424 and 1430, traces of which were found in several areas. 3 major phases of activity have been ascribed to a period preceeding the fire. In these phases the convent consisted of a church made of ashlar and 2 brick-built houses, while the western, northern and eastern wing were wooden or half-timbered buildings.

The conflagration destroyed the wooden buildings and caused severe damage to the brick-built houses and the convent church. In phase IV, c. 1424/30-1650, the brick-built houses in the north-eastern corner of the compound were repaired and incorporated in the new 4-winged convent built entirely of brick.

Topography dictated the location of the convent buildings in phase IV, so oblique angles dominate the layout of buildings at the expense of a rectangular ground plan.

## The Benedictine Nunnery of Vor Frue in Randers

*By Hans Mikkelsen*

The Benedictine nunnery of Vor Frue in Randers is first mentioned in a written source from the second third of the 12th century, and in 1451 Vor Frue Kloster was officially transferred to the Brigittine nunnery at Mariager.

The 'Kulturhistorisk Museum', Randers excavated parts of Vor Frue Kloster in 1988 and 1989. They excavated exciting and comprehensive finds, and a rare opportunity occurred to see something of the daily work and lives of the nuns.

The northern wing of the cloister was built in brick and the walls stood on an ashlar pedestal. Several minor buildings with stone footings were found around the wings of the nunnery and these, together with all the other structures are placed in 7 phases of activity found through out the excavation. 78 of the c. 160 coins were found in different strata, and thus form a basis for the dating of these phases.

The foundations of the north wing was laid down in phase 1 and the wing was apparently completed in phase 2. In phase 3 in Building 1, remains of castings in bronze and lead were found, while Building 2 was fitted out as the kitchen of the nunnery. Building 1 was divided into smaller rooms in phase 4, and two buildings, 8 and 9, were built west of the north wing. Sections of the western wall of Building 1 were rebuilt in phase 5, and a new door was put in. The two buildings of phase 4 were removed and the area was used instead as the refuse dump for the nunnery. In the area west of the north wing a 2-m. wide stone paved track was constructed in phase 6, leading from the door in the north wing to a furnace, built of brick, stone and re-used ashlar. A substantial layer of charcoal and burnt clay was recorded in phase 7. The clay layer was the last layer in the north wing so what happened to the building after this is uncertain.

In the rooms of the nunnery and in the refuse dump were found many artifacts. Until the artifacts are studied it is hard to tell who lived in the rooms and exactly what the rooms were used for.

## The Augustan Priory of Tvilum

*By Hans Krongaard Kristensen*

The Priory of Tvilum was erected in the 1240s. The church of which the eastern two thirds belongs to the 13th century – has more in common with the churches of the mendicant orders than with the contemporary landowning monasteries.

Excavations of the churchyard (primarily 1990-93) have shown that three wings together with the church forms a fairly big cloister garth to the south.

The brickbuilt monastery belongs to the late Middle Ages and is built at the site of an earlier monastery made up of a complex of small, perhaps half-timbered houses. Probably the 13th century monastery was placed to the north of the church.

## Dueholm. A house of the Order of St. John on the island of Mors

*By Per Bugge Vegger*

Recent excavations at Dueholm, founded 1370, have shown, that Dueholm was built according to a plan one can find in the monastery of St. John in Odense and perhaps in the monastery of Antvorskov.

A plan where the monks lived in houses built west of the church. A solution one can also find in Bubikon-Schweizerland and Mailberg-Austria.

## The Archaeological Sight of the Franciscan Friary of Randers

*By Inger Marie Hyldgård*

The Franciscan friary in Randers, founded in 1236, formed a four-winged complex erected of red brick. The church constituted the northern wing with a tower to the north of the nave. The complex was erected next to the medieval rampart at the town's eastern gate. Traces of settlement and cultural layers, older than the friary,

have been found beneath the church, the churchyard, the cloister, and just south of the western wing. In the church floors were found at different levels. Under the choir a lower storey connecting with the eastern wing was discovered. This storey dates from the 15th century, when the church was rebuilt and the choir raised. The eastern wing was also rebuilt in the 15th century after the church was rebuilt. The western wing was probably built in the 13th century. The cloister and the south wing was added in the first half of the 14th century. After the Reformation the friary was closed and in the 15th century was rebuilt by Christian III as the castle Dronningborg.

## Franciscan Friary in Ribe

*By Jakob Kieffer-Olsen*

In a major excavation in 1993 a third of the franciscan church and a small part of the east wing was examined. The written sources and two smaller archaeological investigations suggest a large friary with buildings around two cloister garths. The grey friars arrived in Ribe in 1232 and established the first franciscan friary in medieval Denmark. The church was consecrated in 1280.

The excavated church was built during two periods, but it is impossible to tell how many years passed between these periods. Looking around at franciscan (and dominican) friaries in Denmark and neighbouring countries, it must be suggested, that on arrival in a new town, the friars either used an existing church or built a new one within the first ten years, and that they often enlarged the first one or built a second church in the later part of the 13. century.

In Ribe the franciscan churchyard was situated east of the friary during the Reformation. A medieval public road was excavated north of the church and further north a part of a cemetery, which could be dated to the period 1250-1400, was excavated. The nearest ecclesiastical building, the parish church of Sct. Clemens, known from 1145 to 1536, was situated 40 meters further north. The churchyard of the franciscan friary is unlikely to have been moved, the churchyard of Sct. Clemens is unlikely to have been that big during this period and the existense of a completely unknown church is unlikely. At the moment the excavated cemetery is believed to have belonged to the order of Sct. Clemens.

## The Franciscan and Dominican Friaries in Næstved

*By Palle Birk Hansen*

Medieval Næstved gave room to no less than 4 monasteries and friaries: oldest is the benedictinian Næstved St. Peters Monastery, founded in 1135. During the 13th century two friaries were established, first the franciscan friary in 1240, then the dominican friary probably in 1266. Last came a dominican nunnery on the small island of Gavnø just outside the city, founded 1403. This article deals with the two friaries inside the medieval town. Visible remains of both friaries have disappeared, however, remains are to be found underneath pavements and lawns.

The franciscan friary, erected shortly after 1240 and plundered by the citizens of Næstved in 1531, was situated where the Axeltorv marketplace now is. In order to allow the construction of a subterranean car park in 1957 the church and the adjoining parts of the living quarters were excavated. Other parts of the friary have been found at other times. Prior to the friary there was an early medieval habitation on the site. Estates were bought in order to give room to the new friary. The brickbuilt church was large with a presbytery and a nave the same width and with a row of chapels attached to the south side of the nave shaping a south aisle. The presbytery consisted of two, maybe three bays, while the nave had three bays corresponding with the three chapels in the south aisle. Highly ranked knights were buried with their swords inside the church. The church was surrounded by a cemetery. In the 17th century a bonehouse was found at the southern wall. In the mid 16th century when the king had claimed the friary, the demolition of the church gave room to a new market place, and the rest of the friary subsequently vanished.

The dominican friary was situated in the south part of the town near the boundary. This friary too was constructed in brickwork, and a kiln has been found, but not wholly excavated just east of the friary. The Black Friars might have come to Næstved in 1242, but probably they did not begin to build the church until around 1266. The long lost friary was rediscovered during excavations since 1984. All remains over ground have disappeared since the friary was closed by 1531. The dominican church, as the franciscan, had a nave and an aisle, but in this case a north aisle as the church formed the north wing of the friary. Burials have been found inside the church and outside in the cemetery as can be expected, others

were found in the cloister garth and the slype. Inside the church furthermore there was a pit with casting waste, left over by a craftsman working with bronze. In the middle of the east wing we have found a room presumed to be the chapterhouse. An adjoining wing containing three storeys was attached to the southeast corner. This east wing is known from a drawing made around 1835 as the wing survived the Reformation to form a wing of a later manor. The south wing in three storeys had kitchen in the basement with a baking oven protruding out of the wall to the south, probably a refectory on the ground floor and cells for the friars on top. A south wing was attached to the southern wing. This wing also had three storeys with unknown functions. This wing formed the main part of the later manor and was also depicted around 1835. The west wing was in at least two storeys, a basement and a ground floor, and probably in three storeys like the east and south wings. Here in the west wing we expect the lay brothers to have lived and worked, and just outside the wing within the western yard we have found a kiln used for metalworking. The cloister garth was surrounded by a slype. According to the solid foundations consisting of big stones in three layers the slype quite certainly was erected in two storeys.

Nothing much can be said of the layout of the cloister garth except that we found tiles which may have been part of pavements. The conduit still has to be found.

Further investigations in the remains of the two friaries can be expected in the years to come.

## The Dominican Friary in Århus – An archaeological excavation of the northern wing of the ‘Vor Frue’ friary

*By Hans Skov*

Despite its limited character the present excavation of the friary has provided us with new essential knowledge about the development of the monastery. The survey has shown that a four-winged monastery was completed in the period from the monks' arrival around 1239 to the late decades of the 13th century (phase 1). The friary was built on the former churchyard of the St. Nikolai Cathedral which was given to the Dominican monks. The churchyard was placed on urban layers from the late Viking Age.

Fig. 1 shows the layout of the friary and the grey areas are where the excavation took place. Fig. 2 shows the present view of the NW-corner of the cloister garth. Fig. 3 from the northern wing shows the west wall in the room with a vault. Fig. 5 gives an overview of the archaeological excavated area. Fig. 6 and 7 show the west and south wall in the room with a vault. Many traces of rebuilding can be seen. Fig. 8 shows the phases in the west wall, while fig. 9 shows the phases in the south wall.

While the church and the east and north wings were brick-built, the original west wing was a half-timbered house. In phase 1 the north and west wings were separated by a 2 meter wide passage which led from the area north of the friary to the cloister (fig. 10). The passage was probably covered by a roof.

In phase 1 the northern wing had an entrance with a windbreak at the north wall. The entrance room had a vault and steps down to the room which might have been the monks' refectory. From the entrance room another staircase went up to a gallery (see fig.8). In phase 1 only the small entrance room was provided with a vault.

About 1450 the north wing was radically rebuilt and the old west wing was replaced with a new brick-built house (phase 2). The north and west wing were built together and the passage disappeared (fig. 11). The north wing expanded 2,5 meter to the north and made the windbreak disappear. The west wall of the north wing was partly rebuilt while the south wall remained almost untouched. Phase 2 meant an end of the entrance room and the gallery, and preparations for vaults were made. The entrance door to the north vanished and a new door was made in the west wall so access between the two wings was possible. The refectory was probably moved to another site in the friary. A partition-wall was made to divide the north wing into smaller sections. The floor level was raised with 1,10 meter from phase 1 to phase 2 (fig. 4).

In phase 3 the room was provided with vaults which did not use the preparations from phase 2 (fig. 12). Phase 3 followed shortly after phase 2. Much later the eastern wall in the room with a vault was completed so access to the other part of the northern wing was impossible. In the 1870-s the floor was lowered by 60 cm and the door from phase 2 in the west wall was bricked up and the present door opening was made.

Fig. 13 shows the west wall, and in the floor the remains of the entrance room can be seen.

## Almshouse and Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Aalborg 100 years of building activity

*By Jan Kock*

A donation from Maren Hemmings in Aalborg 1431 was the financial basis for the establishment of an almshouse of The Holy Spirit in the town. The establishment was located directly against the westerly part of the town ditch, on a piece of land which also was included in the original donation. The people behind the establishment had ambitions of turning the almshouse into a monastery under The Order of Rome, in which they were successful in 1451. Wise management and numerous gifts made it possible for alterations and extensions right up until the time of the Reformation, by which time it had become a fairly extensive building complex.

Based on past research and amendments made in connection with the restoration of the buildings, the article gives an account of the state of the buildings. The oldest parts of the complex are most likely the church and a building located north of and running parallel with the church. Apart from these two buildings, there probably have been a row of smaller buildings, but we have no knowledge of these. Since then, a west wing was erected which probably acted as housing for the sick. In terms of height this building had the height of two storeys. Not too many years after, the northernmost wing was built with the height of one storey. In addition to this, during the first decade of the 16th century, a lot of work was done on the eastern wing, which was also two storeys high. Shortly after this the northernmost wing was made higher by one floor, so that at the time of the Reformation, the complex acted as a double monastery with two courtyards surrounded by two-storey brick houses, except to the south where the church was located.

## A Water mill by Cistercian Abbey in Løgumkloster

*By Tenna Rejnholdt Kristensen*

Between 1990-1993 Haderslev Museum excavated an area southwest of the cistercian abbey in Løgumkloster. Among other things a watermill and the remains of a building, which has been the west wing of the abbey were found. In this building an oven and several tile floors were excavated this building may have contained the kitchen department of the abbey.

The watermill consisted mainly of a large frame construction which supported the mill wheel. Three sheet pilings were also found, which carried water to the mill wheel and the rest of the mill pond.

The mill wheel was situated on the southern side of the mill home, but only few remains of the house were examined. In the mill house we found several fragments of millstone and some clay used for filling. These finds indicate that the mill had at least two functions.

Two dendrochronological datings have been made. They indicate 1167 and 1518. Since the monks arrived at Løgumkloster in 1173, the watermill must have been one of the first things they established. According to written sources the mill was demolished in 1574.



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