

'Horse Heath'

'Extracted from *Trevor Cooper (ed.), 'The Journal of William Dowsing: iconoclasm in East Anglia during the English Civil War', Woodbridge, 2001'*

The Journal of William Dowsing

William Dowsing was a puritan, living in Suffolk, England, in the seventeenth century.

In late 1643 and 1644, during the Civil War in England, he visited parish churches, breaking up pictures, crosses, crucifixes, stained glass, monumental brasses, and altar rails. Some 250 churches in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk were subject to his attentions, as were all the Cambridge University Colleges.

Dowsing's Journal

Dowsing kept a diary, or Journal, of his activities, listing what he destroyed in each church and chapel. This is an extract from the combined Journal for Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Brief notes in italics explain where Dowsing is travelling. The published version has full comments on each individual entry, based on recent visits to the churches, and documentary evidence.

Journal extract

On Friday 5 January 1644 Dowsing began the journey back to his home at Stratford St Mary in Suffolk, having spent several weeks in Cambridge.

35. Jan. 5, At Babarham [Babraham], in Cambridgeshire, 1643. We brake down three crucifixes, and 60 superstitious pictures, and brake in pieces the rayles.

36. Jan. 5, 1643. At Linton, we took up 8 inscriptions, we beate downe 3 crucifixes, and 80 superstitious pictures, and brake the rayles, and gave order to deface 2 grave-stones, with *Pray for our souls*. [March 20.]

37. At Horse Heath, January 5. We brake down 2 crucifixes, 6 prophets pictures Malachi, Daniel, Ezekil, and Sophany [Zephaniah], and 2 more, and 40 superstitious pictures.

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www.williamdowsing.org