

DAYR AL-'ASKAR

This monastery is one of a group of four briefly described by al-MAQRIZI (A.D. 1442), in the neighborhood of Bilqas, to the northeast of the province of Gharbiyyah. He placed it at one day's march from the Dayr al-[Mightas](#) and near the salt marsh from which the so-called Rashid (Rosetta) salt comes. He added that it was dedicated to the apostles and that no more than one monk lived there (1845, pp. 45 [text], 109 [trans.]; 1853, Vol. 2, p. 508).

Ramzi (1953-1963, Vol. 1, p. 84) notes that [al-'Askar](#) was a village placed by Yaqut (A.D. 1229) in his *Kitab Mu'jam al-Buldan* near Damirah. In the later documents and up to 1809, this locality was associated with al-Maymah (see DAYR AL-MAYMAH) in the district of Danjaway, and their linking might have been the origin of the town of Bilqas in the *markaz* (district) of Talkha.

The name 'Askar was doubtless given to this place by reason of the presence of a military camp ([Maspero](#) and Wiet, 1919, p. 127), and the monastery mentioned by [al-Maqrizi](#) no doubt took the name of the neighboring small town. It is not to be concluded from this notation by al-Maqrizi that this monastery was still in existence in the fifteenth century, for this author compiled many chronicles and other, earlier works.

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