

DAYR AL-BALLAS (Qift)

This monastery-[village](#) is situated on the left bank of the Nile to the north of the town of al-Ballas, which has given its name to the large jars in which water is carried. There is neither archaeological nor ancient literary evidence, only the name of the hamlet, al-Dayr, to show that a monastery existed there, and the church that survives indicates that it was dedicated to Saint George (Mar Jirjis).

“The State of the Provinces” (al-Latif, 1810, p. 703), drawn up in A.H. 777/A.D. 1375-1376, mentions it under the title of Dayr al- Kahmas. A fifteenth-century manuscript published under the title *Book of the Hidden Pearls* (Daressy, 1917, p. 200) also mentions it.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the ruins of a monastery could still be seen (Weigall, 1913, p. 83). It is mentioned in reference to the Church of [Saint George](#) by S. Clarke (1912, p. 216, no. 2; it is attached to the bishopric of Isna).

‘Abd al-Masih (1924, p. 181) cited it as a monastery dedicated to Mar Jirjis. Quibell noted remains of hermitages to the west of the present hamlet of al-Dayr (1896, p. 1).

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