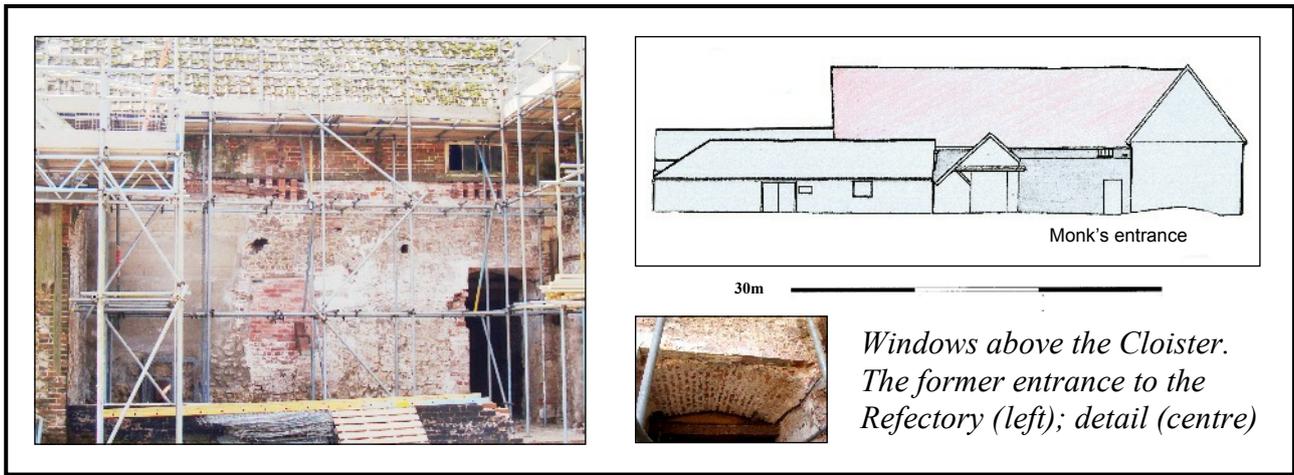


## New discoveries in the Refectory

The 2017 access to the interior provided an opportunity to study the ancient structure and augment the basic information published in the 1930s. The Refectory must have resembled the dining halls of old Oxbridge colleges with a high ceiling and row of windows above wainscotted lower walls. At a height of 10ft 6ins the Refectory walls reduced in thickness with a row of bevelled bricks and above this the walls were plastered. The elevated windows cleared the Cloister roof on the north wall and on the south prevented sunshine in the diners' eyes. Two are visible in the photograph and there were originally six along each side. Inside, long whitewashed sloping lower sills helped to admit more light.



*Windows above the Cloister.  
The former entrance to the  
Refectory (left); detail (centre)*

Nine exceptional oak trees were sourced to make huge beams spanning its width. Rebates on their upper sides show where they once supported a ceiling 18 feet above the floor. The ceiling panels will have been gaily painted and patterned with carved bosses at the intersections. The floor above it was a secure attic, accessed by a stair within the south-east corner wall.



*(left): Oak beams supported the flat ceiling. The brackets are modern; (right): A 15th century paneled ceiling survives in St Mary's Church, Bury. The text reads, 'Grace me governe'*