

5-222000

PATHE GAZETTE: 42/62. (DUBLIN)

SEVENTH CENTURY BAPTISM

Seven centuries have rolled by since the baptismal procession wended its way from Old Taplow Church to the nearby meadows, but seven centuries ago you couldn't have seen a picture of it. But today is a very special occasion. It is the Fourth Centenary of the Diocese of Oxford and to celebrate it there is to be a baptism at Baxley Pool which was last used 1,300 years ago by St. Birinus, First Bishop of Dorchester. The present Bishop of Dorchester greets his brother Buckingham at the ancient site as the procession makes its way across the green swarf to the pool. The pool is fed by an active spring and it is on this historic mound in the dim distant past that a Saxon Warrior Chieftain was buried. At an ancient font set up by the side of an ivy bound May tree the Bishop of Dorchester performs the baptismal ceremony. Nowhere in England are there so many tangible evidences of Saxon rule, nowhere else serves so well to recall the lessons of the history books. A baby of a few months has the distinction of bridging the centuries as the Bishop performs the sacred rite. A new chapter is being recorded in this lush Buckinghamshire meadow. The Bishop addresses his open-air congregation and gives them the blessing, a happy and historic commemoration.