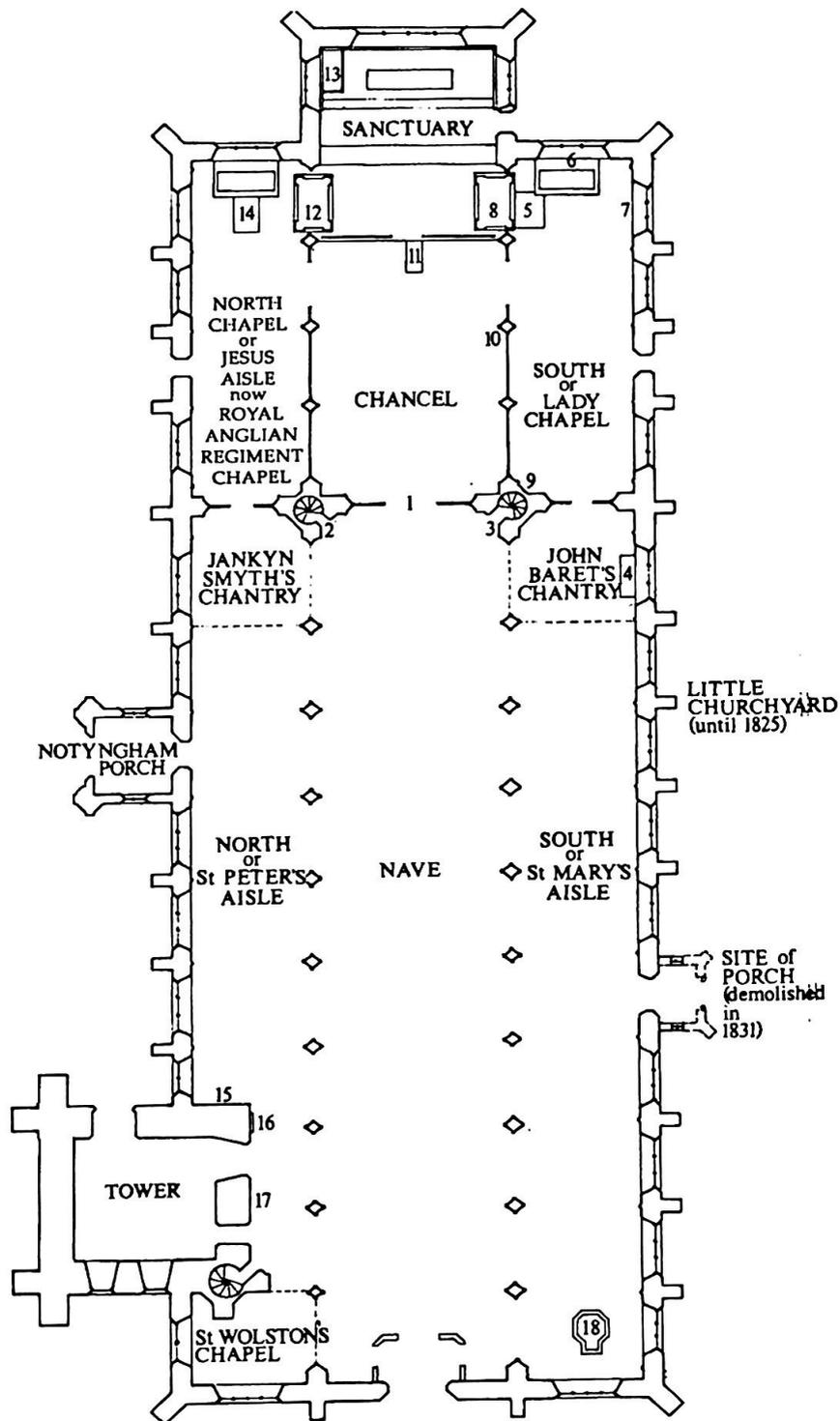


**ST MARY'S
BURY ST EDMUNDS**



INTRODUCTION

The earliest extensive history of St Mary's was written by Samuel Tymms in 1854, from which several line-drawings have been reproduced. The first guide book for visitors was compiled by the Revd John Sandford in 1931, and was revised through several editions into the early 1960s. A new guide was researched by Martin Statham in 1968 and revised by his wife Margaret in 1976. In compiling this present guide I am greatly indebted to them all for their earlier work.

My thanks go to Jane Cummins for typing the text from my 'medieval' handwriting; to Lance Bidewell for editing the text; to Robin Goodchild for the lay-out of the guide; to Ricky Wilkinson MBE, Michael Rimmer, Robin Goodchild and Chris Bower for their excellent photographs; to the Whitworth Co-Partnership for the plan of the church; to Roy Tricker for sharing his knowledge and love of vestments; to the late Peter Northeast for his transcriptions of medieval wills; and to my wife Christine for her sound advice on many aspects of my research.

After an historical introduction, the guide around the church begins with the nave roof. All the items of interest mentioned or numbered in the text are marked on the plan of the church to help you find your way around

Clive Paine, Reader.

Clive Paine
13.9.16

First published 1986

Reprinted 1993 and 2000

Revised and enlarged edition 2016 by Honey Hill Publishing

© 2016 Clive Paine and Honey Hill Publishing

The right of Clive Paine to be identified as the author of the work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.



ISBN 978-0-9554504-6-4

WELCOME TO ST MARY'S CHURCH

St Mary's has stood on this site for nearly 900 years. The present building is at least 700 years old. Compared to some churches, it is the newcomer on the block. But its beauty, size and age point us away from ourselves to a reality that is far bigger than any individual, congregation or generation. We are temporary custodians of a building that was built in honour of One who is unimaginably beautiful, who is bigger than us, and who will outlast every human monument.

St Mary's is its own guide. The visitor or worshipper enters under the magnificent West Window, with its depiction of Jesus on the cross. It is because of his death that we can come into the presence of God. We look upwards and we can see the angels, the heavenly host. And the building draws us forward: it invites us to go on a journey. We move through the nave surrounded by the worshipping community here on earth. We are nourished by the Word of God, the Bible, as it is read from the lectern and proclaimed from the pulpit. We walk forward and come to the sanctuary, where we are invited to kneel to remember God's love and to receive his grace. And as we look ahead we see a cross on the Lord's table. It is empty, because three days after he was crucified, Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

As this guide by Clive Paine will show, St Mary's has changed through the centuries: walls have moved; chapels and kitchens have been built; windows removed and installed; galleries have come and gone; pews have come and, one day, I suspect, they will go; rood screens have come and gone and come again! There is change here because this is the home of the living community who profess that Jesus Christ is alive, and who worship him as the eternal Son of God. Like all lived-in homes there have been and will be changes, as we continue to bear witness to the One who is beyond us and yet who, at the same time, invites us in life to become one with him.

The Revd Canon Malcolm Rogers
Vicar, St Mary's Church.

The congregation welcomes you to this magnificent and beautiful church. Within these ancient walls, which testify to the devotion of Christians in the past, we, the Christians of today, meet to worship God, to bear witness to our faith in the living Lord Jesus, and to give thanks for the salvation bought by his death on the cross and which is available to all who come to him in penitence.

*'Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ'.
(Philippians 1v.2).*

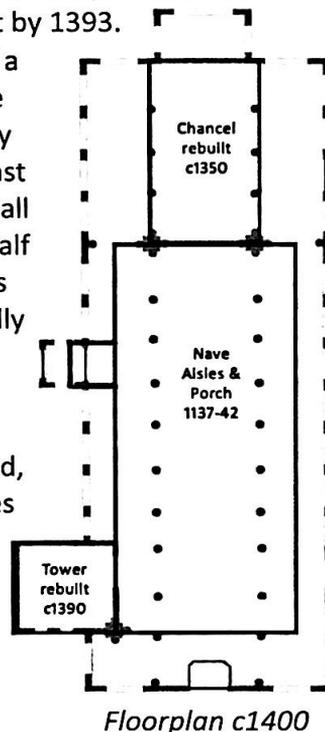
OUTLINE HISTORY

THE EARLY CHURCH

St Mary's is one of the largest 15th-century parish churches in England. It is also one of the largest and most architecturally important churches in East Anglia. The nave is 140 feet long, the chancel 74 feet, giving a total length of 214 feet. The nave and chancel are 30 feet wide and the aisles and chapels a further 19 feet, making a total width of 68 feet. In area, the church is larger than five cathedrals in the country. There has been a church on this site since c.1140. The earlier church of St Mary was demolished in the time of Sacrist Godfrey (c.1107-21) to make way for the north transept of the Abbey. A new 'church of Blessed Mary, with its tower' was built here, at the south-west corner of the Abbey precinct, by the Sacrists Ralph and Hervey, in the time of Abbot Anselm (1120-48) and was dedicated by Bishop John of Rochester (1137-42). However, there is nothing visible that survives from this Norman church. The chancel was rebuilt in the Decorated style (c.1300-1380), as can be seen from the chancel arch. Other features that remain from that period are the reused north doorway and the two windows in the porch. Local wills show that the tower was under construction at least by 1393.

By c.1400 the modified Norman church consisted of a chancel, nave, aisles, north porch and a tower at the north-west corner. The nave and aisles were one bay shorter than at present, the west end abutting against the tower buttress in line with the Abbey precinct wall outside. The aisles were also narrower, being only half their present width. The area of the raised platforms with benches, below the aisle windows, was originally outside the building.

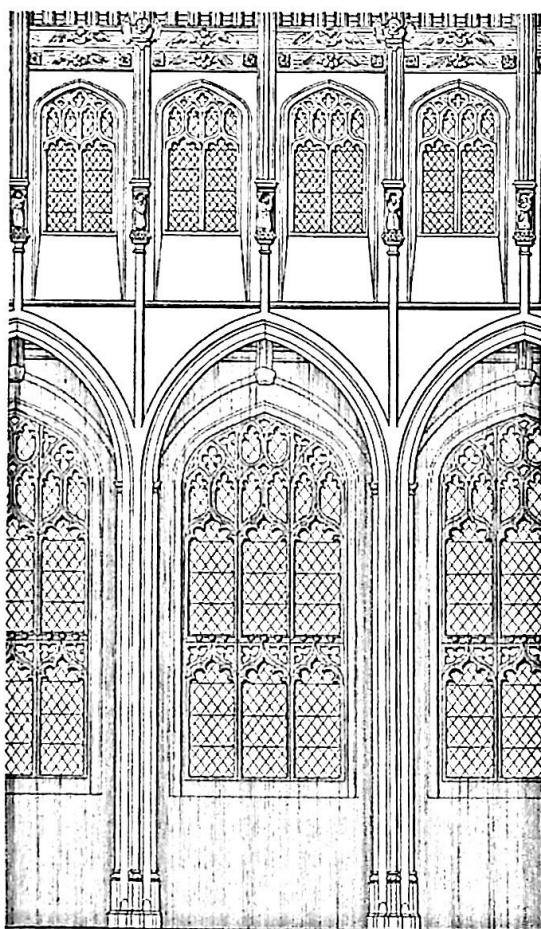
Bury St Edmunds was one of the most prosperous towns in England in the 15th century. The town was dominated by the Abbey of St Edmund, whose Abbot was patron of both the parish churches of St Mary and St James. The Sacrist of the Abbey was Vicar, but appointed chaplains to conduct and perform the religious duties in the churches. The chancel was the responsibility of the Sacrist to maintain – which explains why it was not updated when the nave and aisles were rebuilt.



THE NEW CHURCH

The rebuilding was financed by the townspeople of Bury, no doubt instigated by wealthy benefactors: including the clothier John Baret (d.1467), whose chantry chapel and cadaver tomb are in the south aisle, and who almost certainly paid for the magnificent hammer-beam roof of the nave; and the merchant Jankyn Smyth (d.1481) who built the chancel chapels and sanctuary (c.1457-70), and whose father-in-law John Roche bequeathed the huge sum of £20 to the work in 1425, even though he lived in St James' parish.

In the period 1424 to c.1433, the nave and aisles were demolished and rebuilt one bay longer to the west, the aisles doubled in width. As a result, the earlier tower now projected into the north aisle, creating a large recess at the west end, which became St Wolstan's chapel.



© Birkin Haward (1993)

The rebuilding scheme included a sophisticated and revolutionary pier design for the ten-bay arcade; a clerestory stage with two windows per bay; large transomed Perpendicular three-light windows framed by arcading in the new aisle walls; a five-light west window, which virtually filled the wall, flanked by four-light aisle windows; a magnificent single hammer-beam roof over the nave and elaborately carved aisle roofs. The master-mason responsible for this integrated design was most probably William Layer (fl.1419-44) of Bury and Rougham, who had worked on rebuilding the west tower of the Abbey. The arcade piers were the prototype of the asymmetrical lozenge pier design (wider north-south) copied in East Anglian churches

from the mid-15th century onwards. Columns rise from the piers and the apex of the arches to support the arch-braces of the nave roof. The arches have hoodmoulds on both the nave and aisle side. A rare feature, only found at Thurston, are the arcades around the aisle windows, which mirror those of the nave. When the chancel chapels were added (c.1457-70), these side arcades were included as part of the design. The rebuilding was financed by a variety of fundraising activities, including 'church ales' and encouraging people to make bequests in their wills. Only the latter have left any record, which enables the progress of the building and furnishing to be traced.

In June 1424 Joan Pyrie left the large sum of £10 to 'the fabric of the new church'; in 1425 two massive sums of £20 were bequeathed to 'the new structure' and the 'paving and fabric of the new church'. Smaller bequests amounting to £7.13s.4d (£7.68) were made (1427-39), the word 'new' being used until 1434.

While St Mary's was 'in the course of reconstruction' the congregation worshipped beneath the west tower of the Abbey. In 1431 they narrowly escaped disaster when the tower collapsed. In 1432 Thomas Brakenholm, formerly Rector of Risby, requested to be 'buried within the walls of the new church'. This may just mean to be buried inside the church, but probably indicates that the building was roofless. New 'stools', or pews, were mentioned in 1434, and money was bequeathed for a new rood loft in 1436.

John Notyngham, in 1438, left £20 to build a west and a south porch, although his executors, in 1440, used the money to build the north porch. Four bequests amounting to £13 were given for making the battlements (1442-45), which in October 1444 were described as 'newly begun'.



THE EXTENSIONS

Between c.1457 and 1470 the chapels flanking the chancel and the sanctuary to the east were constructed. This work began with the north chapel, first mentioned in 1457; then the south chapel replaced an earlier vestry after 1463 and was finished by 1470; and finally the sanctuary was completed in 1470. An inscription under the east window attributed the work to Jankyn Smyth, who in 1481 gave Turrett Close in Westgate Street for the 'reparacion of the new Eles...made by me'. Heraldry in the windows displayed the arms of Smyth, Roche (his wife's family) and Yaxley (his daughter's family). The east windows of the aisles were reset in the east walls of the new chapels. The tracery of the chapel windows is different from that of the earlier aisles.

As the chancel was encased by these additions, walls, doors and windows were removed and replaced by arcades. Thus all traces of the earlier Decorated architecture were lost, except for the chancel arch and the painted roof, which remained in place during the alterations.



The architect responsible for all this work was Simon Clerk, master-mason at the Abbey (c.1434-89) and who had worked at Eton College and King's College Chapel, Cambridge. The pier design is a development of those in the nave, although the bases are nearly a third higher.

There are hints in the local wills of the refurbishing of the interior of the nave and aisles as a result of these additions. In 1461 the front of a parclose screen was repainted; the candlebeam of the rood screen was repainted in 1462 at the cost of £20; and in 1469 desks and a parclose screen were repaired.

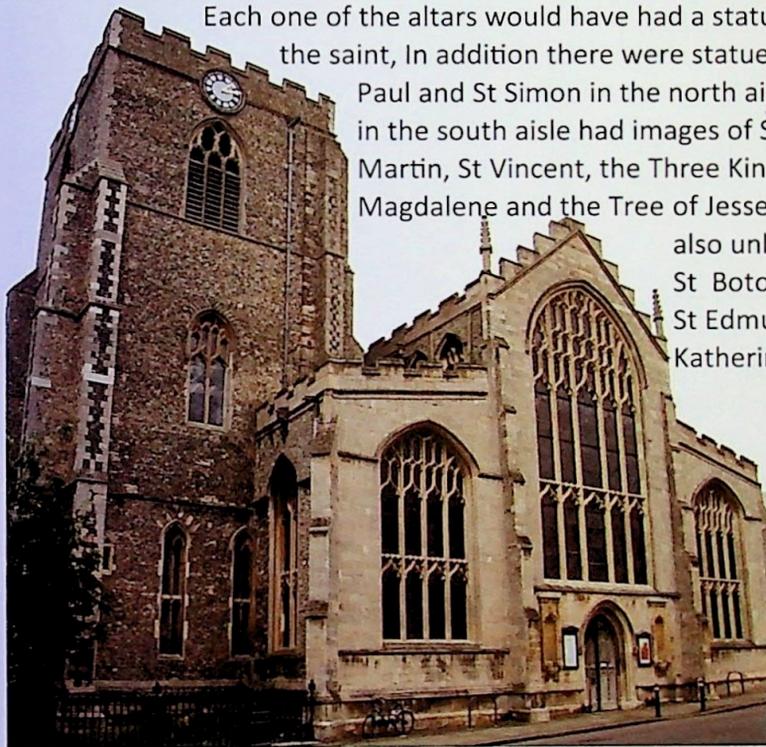
THE PRE-REFORMATION CHURCH

Before the Reformation in the 1540s the interior of the church had a very different appearance, with bright vivid colours used on the furnishings, stained glass windows, fabric hangings, altar cloths, vestments, wall paintings, painted tabernacles and statues of saints. In the chancel arch was the rood screen, with the figures of the crucified Christ flanked by Mary and John (John 19 v.26) to emphasize the centrality of the Crucifixion and Resurrection to the Christian faith.

There were four principal altars: Our Lady in the chancel, flanked by large statues of Mary as Madonna and Our Lady of Pity; the Holy Name of Jesus in the north chapel; St John the Baptist in the north aisle; St Mary and St Martin, originally in the south aisle, but moved to the south chapel (1463-70). There was a chapel of St Wolstan in the recess to the west of the tower. Other altars, without specific chapels, were situated throughout the church. The Resurrection altar was in the chancel; the Holy Trinity in the nave; St Nicholas and St Michael in the north chapel and St Peter in the north aisle. Unlocated altars were for St Edward the Confessor, described as 'new' in 1468; St George, St James, St Lawrence, St Stephen and St Thomas Becket.

Each one of the altars would have had a statue or painting of the saint, In addition there were statues of St Peter, St Paul and St Simon in the north aisle. The reredos in the south aisle had images of St Mary, St Martin, St Vincent, the Three Kings, Mary Magdalene and the Tree of Jesse. There were

also unlocated images of St Botolph, St Dorothy, St Edmund and St Katherine. There were paintings of St Christopher over the South door, the Deposition of Christ north of the west door, and Our Lady of Pity in the north aisle.



NAVE

ROOF: This magnificent roof is of single hammer-beam construction, with eleven pairs of life-sized angels, which alternate with arch-braced trusses. These latter have carved figures, which architect Munro Cautley described as 'embryo hammer-beams'. Both the hammer-beam principals and the trusses spring from wall posts with figures of forty-two saints and prophets. The cornice has a double band of angels with outstretched wings, who hold musical instruments and liturgical symbols. The spandrils of the braces are carved with animals and grotesques, and pierced tracery fills the spandrils of the upper part of the roof.



The eastern pair of painted hammer-beam angels originally formed a canopy of honour over the Rood. The figures on the wall plate represent the Annunciation, with the Archangel Gabriel on the north, holding the Rod of Jesse to emphasize the descent of Jesus from David, and the Virgin Mary on the south. The arched-braces have the mottoes 'God me gyde' and 'Grace me governe', which were used by John Baret. The figures and mottoes were recoloured by Thomas Willement in the 1844 restoration.

The remaining ten pairs of angels form corresponding pairs on each side. They show a procession in honour of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as it would have been seen on the Feast Day of 15th August each year. Starting at the east end, excluding the painted angels, the pairs are as follows: 1) incense bearers or boat boys, dressed in albs, apparelled (collared) amices and girdles, carrying 'boats' containing the blocks of incense and a spoon; 2) thurifers, dressed in albs, apparelled amices and tunicles,

carrying thuribles or censers; 3) taperers dressed in albs, apparelled amices and carrying pricket candlesticks; 4) sub-deacons, in albs, apparelled amices, tunics and maniples, carrying gospel books, with raised crosses on the covers; 5) deacons in albs, apparelled amices, dalmatics and maniples, carrying chalices; 6) celebrants in albs, apparelled almices, chasibles and maniples, with his hands in a prayerful attitude; 7) cantors in albs, apparelled amices, copes fastened with a morse or clasp, and with their right hands they conduct as they pass the choir; 8) the Archangel Gabriel, feathered from neck to ankles, wearing a coronet and carrying the Rod of Jesse in one hand and the scroll of the Annunciation in the other; 9) the Virgin Mary carrying her crown, awaiting the culmination of her Assumption at her Coronation; 10) the risen and ascended Christ wearing a crown and holding a sceptre as King of Heaven. The north figure also holds a book and the south a flaming orb or heart.

The book held by the north 'King' may be that mentioned in Revelation, 'I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a book written within...and sealed' (Rev.5v.1); 'And there shall in no wise enter into [the holy city] they but they that are written in the Lamb's book of life' (Rev.21v.27). The flaming orb or heart, held by the south figure, could represent the purifying refiner's fire (Malachi 3v.2, 3); or the gift of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised his disciples would come after his Ascension.



On a temporal level, the two last figures have been interpreted as also representing Margaret of Anjou and Henry VI. The art historian John Tolhurst, in 1962, suggested that because Margaret was holding, and not wearing, a crown, she was not married to Henry. He therefore tentatively dated the



roof's construction to be between their betrothal in October 1444 and her coronation in 1445. Gail Gibson has pointed out that John Lydgate, the Bury monk-poet, in his pageant verses called 'Queen Margaret's Entry into London' in 1445, specifically linked the coming coronation of Margaret with the crowned Virgin Mary 'Assumpt above the heavenly Herarchie'. Tolhurst interpreted the book and the flaming orb or heart, held by the King, as symbols of learning. Henry VI had founded Eton College in 1440, and King's College Cambridge in 1441.

There is no dating evidence for the roof in local wills, which probably indicates that it was funded by one or two wealthy individuals, an organization, or by some other kind of fund-raising. John Baret is an obvious candidate, but he may have only paid for the painting of the canopy angels. Yet if the western hammer-beams do represent Henry VI, that would strengthen the link with Baret, as we shall see.

Local wills do, however, show bequests being made to the battlements of the church from October 1442 to July 1445; one in October 1444 describes them as being 'newly begun', which supports Tolhurst's dating of the roof to 1444/45.

If Baret did finance the roof, then it is possible that the carpenter was Thomas Ide of Bury (d.1480) whom he mentioned in his will.

Among the many carvings are, on the sixth bay from the west, a pair of monkeys with urine flasks, opposite a pair of doctors, naked except for their hats, also holding urine flasks. Other subjects include a cat chasing a mouse, two dogs fighting, dragons, foxes, horse, hound, lion, unicorn, eagle, pelican, stork, fish, wildmen and human faces.

ROOF CARVINGS: There are over 400 carvings on the nave roof, including 42 canopied wall posts comprising 12 apostles, 21 biblical, national and local saints, 7 Old Testament prophets and 2 angels; 80 angels in double tiers with outspread wings on the cornice; 22 massive hammer-beam figures with 22 pierced spandrils below them; 40 'embryo hammer-beam' figures with 40 carved spandrils above and 40 below them; 22 pierced spandrils over the hammer-beams; 80 carved spandrils below; and 21 pierced tracery panels above the collar beams.



In total there are 409 carvings on the nave roof: 198 in the chancel, 111 in the south aisle, 94 in the north aisle and 47 in each of the chancel chapels. In addition, 32 carved stone corbels support each aisle roof, giving a total of at least 970 medieval carvings above our heads. This is the largest and most varied series of carvings in any East Anglian church. Birkin Haward described these carvings as '...one of the most extensive and finest collection of 15th-century woodcarvings in England'.

MONUMENTS: Throughout the church there are wall monuments, gravestones and war memorials. These have all been listed, located and indexed by name. The church member on duty at the welcome desk will be pleased to help in finding a particular memorial.

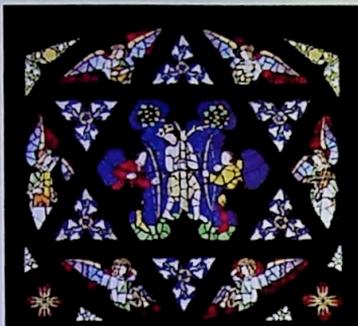
Most people would have been buried in the churchyard. Only a tiny minority of people were buried inside the church and had gravestones laid over them, or monuments erected on the walls. However, in 1844, when the church was restored, the gravestones were rearranged and wall monuments relocated to the wall of the tower. When the sanctuary was extended and paved in 1901, several gravestones were moved to the north chapel. When the Suffolk Regimental Chapel was created in 1935, many monuments were moved from the east wall. Although the gravestones may have been moved, the bodies remained in their original graves or vaults.



GRAVESTONES: To the north of the west porch door is a brown stone laid north-south, with brass indents of five figures, which could be a man and his four wives, or five children. The stone has a later inscription stating that 'Part of this middle aisle was new paved by Philip Winterflood and John Sharp, churchwardens 1747'. This was undertaken by Thomas Singleton, stonemason of Bury, between 1747 and 49, the parish allowing £45 for the work. The gravestone with two brass plates is for the Lancaster family, one generation commemorated by brasses and the next with inscriptions on the same stone. Notice that on the inscription for Margaret, 'who lived virtuously and died peaceably', the last word was carved as 'pecceably' and then altered.

At the east end is a large stone with the very worn indents of brasses, which are best seen facing west. The figure is of a 14th-century knight in armour, a sword hanging from his left side, with his feet on a lion whose head is to our left. There were four shields with coats-of-arms, the whole surrounded by an inscription. This has survived from the earlier church and is the oldest monument in the building.

GLASS: The east window tracery by Lewis Cottingham dates from the 1844 restoration, and replaced an earlier three-light window. The design is based on the Star of David, found on the nearby 14th-century Abbey Gate. As Jesus was descended from David and is the Messiah for both Jews and Gentiles, the Star of David is an important Christian symbol. The glass by Thomas Willement is based on a medieval pilgrim's badge, and depicts the martyrdom of St Edmund by the Danes at Bradfield St Clare in 870. The great west window is the largest west window in any parish church in England. The glass is by Heaton and Butler, and was paid for by public subscription in 1859 as a thanksgiving for the bumper harvest of 1854. It was floodlit from the inside in 2006. The two shields high up on either side are for the Revd Charles Eyre, Vicar 1842-57, to the left; and James Sparke, churchwarden 1845-84, to the right.



BENCHES: The benches are by Sir Arthur Blomfield and formed part of the 1867 restoration. The earlier restoration of 1844 left the box pews in place. Only in the space at the west end, created when the gallery was removed, were new benches, with poppy-headed ends and doors, erected. In 1867 the box pews and these new benches were removed. Some of the benches were sold and taken by ship from Ipswich, via Whitby, to Ugglebarnby church in Yorkshire, where they remain today. John Harrison Allen, a London ship owner, whose parents and aunts lived in Bury and who had property at Ugglebarnby, paid for some of the new benches in their memory. Two of the poppy-heads have their names. No. 19 has, at the south end, the Arms of Harrison and the names Elizabeth, Harriot and Hannah over a large H for Harrison. At the north end is the name Judith Allen and 1818, the year of her marriage, and a broken column with a snake around it, reminding us that because sin came into the world, life is cut short. Bench No. 18 has, at the south end, the Arms of Bury and the initials I. R. for the Revd John Richardson; at the north end are the initials I. S. for James Sparke, and the head of St Edmund.

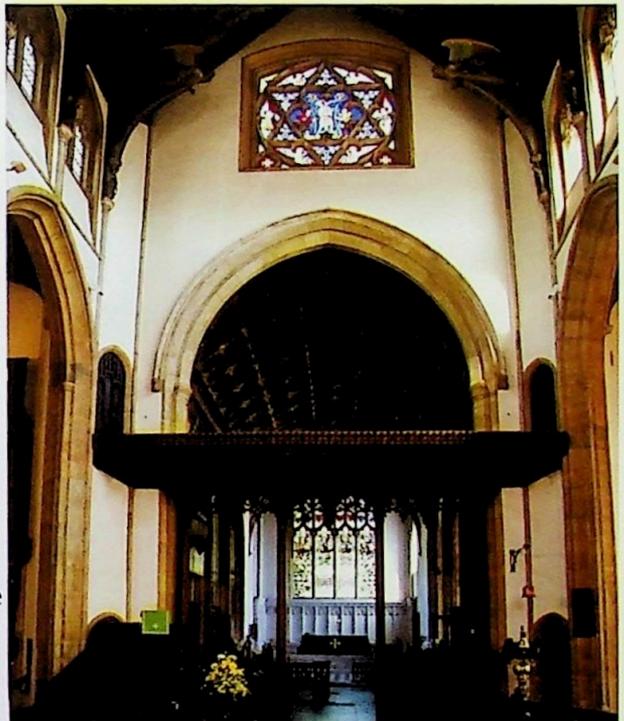
Until 1867 the organ and choir were positioned under the third arch from the west, on the north side; the prayer desk stood nearby in the centre of the nave; the pulpit was against the third pier from the east on the south side; and the chancel was only used for additional seating for the congregation.

BOAT BOY'S HAND (in the display case): Sometime before 1955 this hand became detached from the second angel on the south side of the nave roof. It was placed here to enable the high quality of the carving to be appreciated. The hand holds a spoon, which was used to remove incense from the 'boat' and place it in the thurible.

PALIMPSEST BRASS: This is the term used for a reused brass which has inscriptions on both sides. That facing us reads 'Her under lyeth the body of William Fairclyffe of bury S. Edmunds, he died the 22 of March Ano 1600' (he was buried 26 March). The slip of brass was cut from an earlier brass, which may have come from either of the parish churches or the Abbey. This inscription reads 'Hic iacet Elianom Wyn[te]r quandam ux [lost] qui obiit 15 die mensis march A d'm M [lost], which translated is 'Here lies Eleanor Wynter formerly the wife [lost] who died 15 day of month of March in the year [lost]'.

1) SCREEN: The rood screen and loft were erected in 1913 as a memorial to the officers of the Suffolk Regiment who died on active service. The original rood stairways on either side are surmounted by external crocketed pinnacles.

2) PULPIT: The oak hexagonal pulpit dates from the 1844 restoration. The casing of the cast-iron stem was copied from a chalice held by one of the nave hammer-beam angels. It can be assumed that this was the work of Mr Nash of London, who was employed for all the wood carving in 1844.



2) BRASS OF GEORGE BOLDERO, Gent (d.1609): 'who lyved in the feare of God, and dyed in the faith of Christ'.

3) LECTERN: Given in 1884 in memory of James Sparke.

JOHN BARET'S CHANTRY CHAPEL

4) The former Lady Chapel was converted into a chantry by John Baret, who died in 1467. He was a wealthy clothier and merchant who lived in Chequer Square; a gentleman of the Abbot's household, with his own room at the Abbot's house at Elmswell; a friend and perhaps patron of the monk-poet John Lydgate; and a recipient of the much prized collar of SS. This latter was a personal gift by Lancastrian Kings as a recognition of some special or personal service. It took the form of a collar, or chain, each link of which was a letter S, which probably stood for 'Sovereign'. Baret in his will described his collar as 'my colers of silver of the King's livery'. The SS collar was copied as part of the decoration of the chapel, and can be found on the tomb, roof and piscina.

Baret left detailed instructions to his executors for the decoration of his chantry. The chapel already contained an altar against the east wall, dedicated to St Mary and St Martin. Behind it was an elaborate reredos which may have been painted by Robert Pygot, who had painted some screens at Ely Abbey in 1455 and whom Baret mentions in his will. The reredos depicted the Magnificat or Annunciation, with statues of St Mary, St Martin, St Vincent, the Three Kings, Mary Magdalene and the Tree of Jesse. Above the reredos



was a loft with carved angels and a series of chiming bells. The window glass above had 'St Mary and the Virgins' (probably Our Lady of Compassion).

He directed Henry Peyntour, probably Henry Albreed (fl.1453-d.1493) to set 'three méroures of glas...in the myddys of the three woytes [vaults] above my grave, wiche be redy with four other glasys and diverse rolles with scripture'. The unique roof that Henry created is still above Baret's tomb. Each of the six decorated panels has his motto 'Grace me governe', painted diagonally across it. Within the lozenge patterns are the initials 'Ib' (for John Baret) crossing each other and surrounded by the collar of SS. At the intersection of the lozenge pattern is a star of gold, in the centre of which is a small circular piece of concave mirror glass, which gives the effect of stars twinkling in heaven. The ceiling was restored by Jan Kurske in 1968, and is one of the outstanding features of the church.

The edges of the ceiling and spandrils have Latin prayers. On the east edge 'Pray for the soul of John Baret'; on the north (left) spandrel 'Let us praise the Lord gloriously'; on the south edge 'Alleluia, Honour and glory to the only God'; on the inside of the western spandrel 'My soul shall delight in the Lord'; on the outside of the same spandrel 'Seek only the highest'; on the north edge 'May the pure Virgin Mary bless us with issue'.

Baret's effigy as a decaying corpse had been made in his lifetime to remind him of the inevitability of death. It is possible that it was made in the workshop of Simon Clerk, master mason at the Abbey (1445-89) a leading architect of his day, and whom Baret commissioned to repair one of the townsgates of Bury. The tomb originally stood on the north side of the chapel



against a parclose screen where, as a layman, he lay with his feet to the east, just as the other two tombs on the sanctuary. Baret directed that his body should be 'put in as neer undyr my grave as may be wyth oute hurt of the seid grave'. The tomb was subsequently moved to its present position when the south chancel chapel was built, (1463-70). The effigy was turned round in 1844 in order that the inscriptions could be read.

This type of cadaver monument was known as a Pardon Grave, as the person commemorated had obtained a pardon or remission from purgatory. Baret left instructions for his papal pardon to be displayed near the monument after his death. The idea for these monuments came from the *danse macabre* or 'dance of death', a poetic description of which was first translated into English by John Lydgate. The earliest known example of a depiction of the dance of death was in St Paul's churchyard in London. At Long Melford, before the Reformation, cloths hanging before the rood loft during Lent were painted with the 'dance of Pauls'. The dance showed a long line of people, starting with Emperors and the Pope and ending with a beggar, each one of which had death in the form of a skeleton at their shoulder.

Baret's piety still has a message for us today. On the side of the tomb chest is his motto 'Grace me governe', and holding the word 'me' is John Baret dressed in his best clothes and wearing his collar of SS. A reminder that we all, no matter how wealthy or successful, are ultimately no more than decaying flesh without pardon or salvation. At the end of the monument under the head are these words: 'Ho that wil sadly beholde me with his ie, May se hys owyn merowr [and] lerne for to die'.



The effigy was on loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of the 'Gothic: Art for England' Exhibition in 2003. During conservation flesh colouring was discovered, including traces of green and red veins, especially on the neck.

SOUTH CHAPEL

The building of this chapel meant that the east wall of John Baret's chantry was replaced by the present archway. Baret left detailed instructions about what was to happen when the new chapel was built. The altar and reredos were to be moved over to the south end of the east wall and a doorway made through to the new aisle. The tracery and glass of the east window above the reredos were to be dismantled and retained, while the empty surround of the window was to remain in place. He stipulated that nothing of his 'werk maad aboute seynt Marie alter...' be removed, except with the consent of the Alderman (Mayor) of Bury and leading townsmen.

Jankyn Smyth, who was paying for the new chapel, had been Alderman several times and was the leading citizen of Bury. It is most probable that the entire window, the altar and reredos were moved to the east end of the new Lady Chapel. This would account for the fact that the east window tracery matches that of the south aisle, and is shorter than all the other chapel windows, to allow for the elaborate reredos and loft.

ROOF: The roofs in both south and north chapels have 13 pierced or carved spandrils; 8 angels on the cornice and 26 whole or half-bosses at the intersections of the roof timbers.

5) BRASSES: The two kneeling figures are Jankyn Smyth and his wife Ann. The inscription, shields and prayers, shown like 'speech balloons', are all missing. The brass was probably made at the Bury workshop of Reignold Chirche, bellfounder. Jankyn is shown wearing a Yorkist collar of suns and roses with a lion pendant. He asked to be buried at the east end of the north aisle 'be fore the dore of the awughter of Seynt John [the Baptist]'. The brass shows the couple 'lifting up holy hands' (1 Tim 2v.8) expressing praise and adoration for the image of St John on or near the altar. The stone was probably moved from his chantry chapel to its present position, after the Reformation.



Amongst his many bequests was one for the commemoration of his own death on 28 June 1481. For many years the commemorative service was held on 2 February or the Thursday of Plough Monday week, the Thursday after 6 January. However, since 1969 the service has been held on the Thursday



before St Peter's Day, 29 June. In 2016 the commemoration celebrated its 535th anniversary, and this is often claimed to be the oldest endowed service in England. On that day the residents of the Guildhall Feoffment Almshouses, the children from the Guildhall Feoffment School, civic leaders and townspeople meet to give thanks to God for the generosity of Jankyn Smyth.

A 17th-century portrait of Jankyn hangs in the Guildhall, a copy of which was made in 1931 and presented to St Mary's for use at the service.

6) THE INCARNATION:

A painting by John Williams 1983, to commemorate the 21st anniversary of 'Childrens Church', which then met in this chapel and continues as 'All Age Worship' today.



COMMUNION TABLE:

This was made by Barry Chester of Pakenham in 1986. The cross dates from 1909; the 17th century-style candlesticks from 1932; and the Victorian lectern was given in 1927.

FONT: In memory of Len Buttifant (1924-2003), churchwarden 1977-82.

READING DESKS: The lower one is in memory of Emily Ryder (1857-1941), the higher one in memory of Olive Bartram (1925-97); the latter was made by Robert Lewis in 1999. There is another reading desk in her memory in the chancel.

GLASS: The east window is by Alfred Gerente of Paris, in the 13th-century French Gothic style, and dates from 1857. This is the only window by Gerente in Suffolk. The second window from the east is by Henry Hughes of London in 1872; the third by Charles Clutterbuck, of Stratford in 1854; and the fourth by William Constable of Cambridge in 1881.

7) MARY TUDOR WINDOW: This is by Clayton and Bell of London, and dates from 1881. It was presented by Queen Victoria in memory of Princess Mary Tudor, Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk. This is the Mary Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, after whom the ship 'Mary Rose' was named.

In the upper tracery are depicted Mary Tudor, Henry VIII, Prince Charles of Castille, Louis XII of France and Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk. The glass shows the main events in Mary's life.

Middle row: visit of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More to the royal children at Eltham Palace in 1500; Mary's proxy betrothal to Charles of Castile in 1508; Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon bid Mary farewell at Dover in 1514. Top row: the marriage to Louis XII in October 1514, she aged 18, he aged 52; the

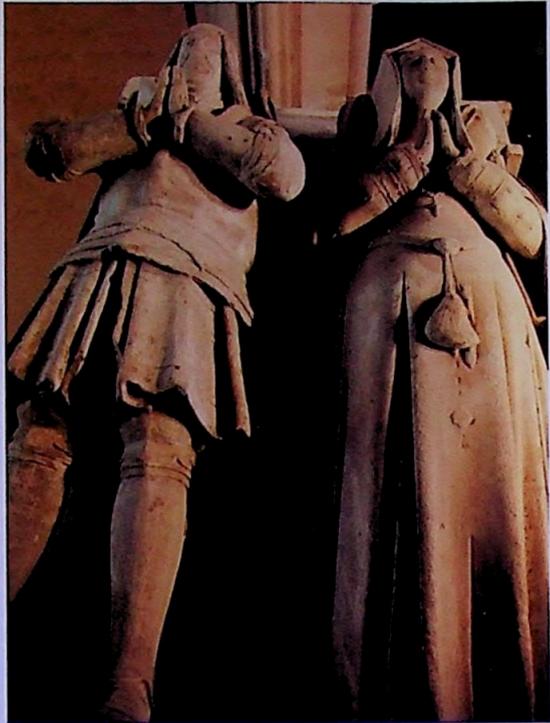
entry of Mary into Paris in November 1514; Mary as the 'White Queen' in her widowhood in January 1515, talking to Henry's ambassador Charles Brandon. Bottom row: her marriage to Charles Brandon in March 1515; their reconciliation with Henry VIII in England in May 1515; Mary's funeral at Bury Abbey in July 1533, conducted by Abbot John Reeve, whose grave is nearby (see No. 11). Mary's grave is in the chancel (see No.13).



8) TOMB OF SIR ROBERT DRURY

(c.1456 - 1535): He was a lawyer, MP, Speaker of the House of Commons and Privy Councillor to Henry VII. He lived at Hawstead Place, had a house in College Street in Bury and Drury Place in London, which eventually gave its name to Drury Lane.

Sir Robert is shown in full armour, his head on his helm and his feet on the Drury crest of a greyhound. Lady Ann's head rests on two elaborately tasselled and stitched cushions. She wears a double necklace with a cross and a purse hangs from her girdle. Two small collared dogs play at her feet.



Sir Robert requested to be 'buried in the Chauncell...by my First wife'. She was Ann Calthorpe and died in 1494. The tomb must have been constructed following her death, as his effigy has a hole drilled through it, to enable masons to remove it in order to put his coffin into the tomb. It is possible that the tomb may have had a stone canopy. The signs of the four evangelists are carved on the two western corners.

9) BRASS OF EDMUND LUCAS, Gent (d.1575): 'a fervant zeale unto the trewth he bore. And fixed his faith on Christ most constantly'...'God make us ready for Him when He shall call. That heven through Christ wee may have after gayne'.

9) MONUMENT OF JAMES OAKES (d.1829): A banker of Bury St Edmunds, whose business was carried out on the site of Lloyds Bank in the Buttermarket. In 1805 he presented the borough with the mayoral chain that is still in use today. His diaries (1778-1827) are an unrivalled source for the social, political and economic life of Bury.

CHANCEL



The Decorated chancel formed part of the earlier building, and its original area is covered by the splendid wagon roof. The angels on the cornice hold scrolls, beginning at the north-west corner, with 22 verses of the *Te Deum*. ('We praise thee O God' etc.). Here the angels wear a variety of robes, but each has a crown and surrounding nimbus. The background is powdered with lead gilt stars, to give the impression of them singing in the heavenly realms.

There are 198 carved and coloured bosses. The central row, from the west, has an angel with the shield of St George; souls being taken up into heaven; angels playing a lute, zither or cittern, drums, organ, and harp; followed by sun, moon and a star. This row may be based on Psalm 150: 'praise him upon the strings and pipe, praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals', and on the *Benedicite*: 'O ye Sun and Moon bless ye the Lord'. A modern hymn by D. J. Mansell is based on the same theme: 'sun, moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!'

Over half the carvings are symmetrical either side of the central row: for example, there are three pairs of bishops' heads at the east end. The majority of bosses on the edge of the roof correspond to the other side.

Subjects include the Lancastrian chained swan; a monkey with two urine flasks; a spotted boar; a fox in a pulpit preaching to geese; three rabbits in a warren; a chained dancing bear; fox and geese; stoat and rabbit; owl with a mouse, dogs, dragons, eagle, fish and a variety of beasts; human and grotesque faces; leaves and flowers. The entire roof was restored in 1880 by A. Mackintosh of Burlinson and Grylls, and again in 1968 by Jan Kurske.



10) BRASS OF THE REVD GEORGE EYSTE, preacher at St Mary's from 1598 to 1601. The Latin inscription was written and signed by Dr Joseph Hall, rector of nearby Hawstead(1601-8) and later Bishop of Norwich. Notice the dying candle with the words 'Luceo et absumor' (I give light and am consumed).

ORGAN: The earliest reference to an organ in the church occurs in the will of John Baret in 1463. This would have been a small portative instrument, such as can be seen on one of the central bosses of the chancel roof.

In the 18th-century singing was led, from the west end, by 'singingmen and boys', accompanied by a wide variety of string and wood instruments. Thomas Hardy describes a similar combination of singers and musicians in *Under the Greenwood Tree*.

In 1802 an organ was purchased and placed in the north gallery. In 1826 this was replaced by an organ by John Gray of London and sited, with the singers, in the new west gallery, across the third bay from the west end. During the 1844 restoration the gallery was removed and the organ moved, with seating for the singers, near the tower doorway.

In 1865 the organ was moved to its present position, but at ground level. The instrument was enlarged to three manuals by John Walker of London. At the same time the singers or choir were moved into the chancel. This move may also be the time when choir robes were introduced.

In 1931 the organ was rebuilt by Hill, Norman and Beard, thanks to a bequest by Mr Richard Plumpton, enlarged to four manuals and raised on a platform, allowing access to the North Chapel. The console was placed in the area which is now the choir library. The detached console was part of an overhaul in 1959 by John Compton of London. In 1988 another major rebuild by Kenneth Carter of Thurston, took place, which included making the console moveable.

In 2008 the Christie Transmission System failed and was replaced by a new 250 channel musicom system, together with certain extras. This work was carried out by Warren Marsh of Clevedon Organ Services. Now the console is usually located in the nave behind the choir stalls of 1997. For Civic services, both the console and choir move to their traditional positions in the chancel.

CHOIR STALLS: Some of the stalls incorporate 15th-century bench ends, but they mainly date from 1844 and have wonderful medieval animals on the arm rests. The two reading desks for the worship leader and the preacher completed the scheme in 1901. The screens behind the stalls are mainly 15th century with Victorian additions and cresting, the glass being added in 1901.

11) GRAVE OF JOHN REEVE: Last Abbot of Bury St Edmunds (1514-39), who died in 1540. He was buried on this spot, and his grave marked by a large stone with a brass of the Abbot and his coat of arms. The brass was removed in 1643, and the original gravestone moved to the churchyard in 1746. The replacement stone dates from 1901-9.

12) TOMB OF SIR WILLIAM CAREWE (d.1501): He requested to be buried 'on the north side of the chancel...before the image of Our Lady there'. The tomb is similar, but less elaborate than the Drury tomb opposite. He has his feet on the traditional lion, to show his knighthood. His second wife Margaret (née Chedworth, d.1525) has two small collared dogs at her feet.

Sir William had property in Eastgate and Westgate Streets. He bequeathed two houses in Westgate Street to the Jesus Guild, who met in the adjacent north chapel, the proximity of which must have influenced his choice of burial place. The Carewe arms are three lions, which can be seen on the grave of their son John (d.1523). This was originally to the south of the tomb, but was moved, along with several others, to the north chapel when the sanctuary was enlarged and paved in 1901.



GRAVESTONES: The stones date from 1674 to 1842. The earliest one is between the chancel and north chapel, in memory of Ann, daughter of Gardiner Webb of Elmswell. Her coat of arms included three owls; she died 15 March 1674/5.

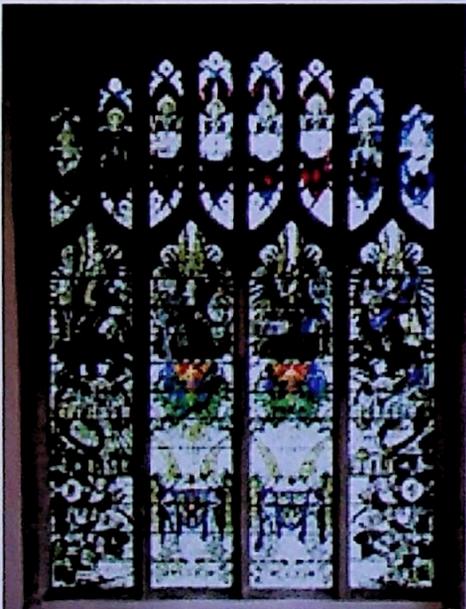
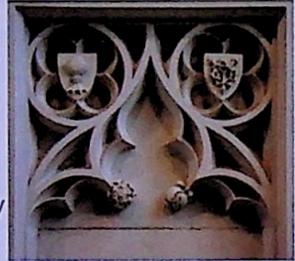
SANCTUARY

This, and the crypt beneath, had been added by Jankyn Smyth between 1463 and 1470. There were coats of arms in the side windows of Smyth, Roach (his wife Ann) and Yaxley (his daughter Rose) which were dated 1470. There was also an inscription under the east window, 'Pray for the soules of John Smyth esquire and Ann his wife, the which did more enlarge this presbiterye and quire Anno 1470.' Thomas Cranewys, a chaplain, gave 1s 8d to the 'amplification and dedication of the high altar' in 1479.

Two pulleys for the pre-Reformation Lenten veil survive on the west side of the sanctuary roof.

The two chairs date from the 1844 restoration and were designed by Cottingham, carved by Nash of London and were the gift of George Image.

The reredos on three sides of the sanctuary also dates from 1844. The cresting and arches of the panels are decorated with symbols of the Passion of Jesus, the Holy Communion, and St Mary. The Communion Table dates from 1844; it was lengthened in 1963 and given a new oak top in 2005. The candlesticks were designed by Ninian Comper in 1932. The large litany desk was designed by Cautley and Barefoot of Ipswich in 1949 for use in the nave aisle.



GLASS: The east window, depicting Archangels, is by Percy Bacon of London, and dates from 1914. It replaces glass of 1847 by William Wailes, which was in memory of members of the Bloomfield, Smith and Conran families, whose names appear in the side panels. The two pairs of angels and cresting in the central lower lights are by Greyfriars and were added in 1964, when a tall reredos of 1910 was removed to reveal plain glass. The other two windows are by Clutterbuck: the south c.1856, and the north 1857. The glass in the former was removed from all but the tracery in 1909.

13) GRAVE OF MARY TUDOR: Queen of France, Princess of England and Duchess of Suffolk (1496-1533). At the dissolution of Bury Abbey in 1539 her tomb and body were transferred to the north side of the sanctuary in St Mary's. In September 1784 the tomb was dismantled, her lead coffin opened and her embalmed body revealed. Locks of her hair were cut off, one of which can still be seen in the Borough Museum. She was reburied in the sanctuary and a pre-Reformation altar stone with five consecration crosses, engraved 'Mary, Queen of France 1533', was placed over the grave. When Edward VIII visited in 1904 he ordered that a marble kerb should be placed around the gravestone. This was carried out by his host, Lord Cadogan of Culford, in 1907. A photograph of the royal visit can be seen at the back of the church. The marble plaque over the grave was originally placed on the end of the tomb in 1758 by Dr John Symonds of St Edmunds Hill, now Moreton Hall. Note the wrong date of 1517, instead of 1515, for Mary's marriage to Charles Brandon (see also the Mary Tudor window in the south chapel).



Sacred to the Memory
of MARY TUDOR,
Third Daughter of HENRY 8th KING of ENGLAND
and QUEEN of FRANCE,
Who was first married in 1514, to
LEWIS 12th KING of FRANCE,
and afterwards in 1517, to
CHARLES BRANDON DUKE of SUFFOLK.
She died in Her Life-time in 1533,
at y^e Manse of WESTBURY in Her Countie
and was interred in y^e same Year in y^e
Monastery of ST EDMUNDS BURY,
and was removed into this Church
after y^e Dissolution of the Abbey.



NORTH CHAPEL

This chapel had been built by 1457, at the cost of Jankyn Smyth. As in the south chapel there were coats of arms in the windows for Smyth, Roach and Yaxley. A painted shield for Yaxley survives over the eastmost window on the north side. The stonework of the east window was, like that of the south chapel, reused from the former east end of the aisle. The chapel was dedicated to 'the Holy Name of Jesus' and became known as Jesus Aisle. A guild of the Holy Name and a guild of St Nicholas met in this chapel before the Reformation.

It became the Suffolk Regimental Chapel in 1935, the 250th anniversary of the raising of the 12th Foot in 1685. The decorations are by Sir Ninian Comper and include the communion table, riddle curtains, frontal, falls, cushions, the woodwork, the organ case, the regimental honours, displayed within Minden roses, under the organ, and the wrought-iron gates.

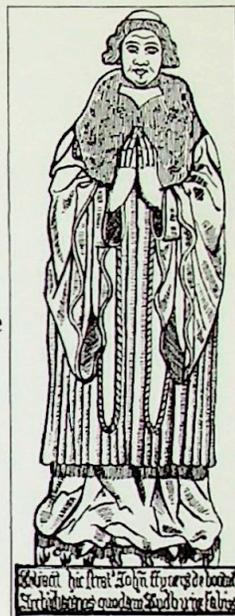
The Suffolks were amalgamated with the Royal Norfolks to become the East Anglian Regiment in 1959, which became the Royal Anglian Regiment in 1964.

The officers are commemorated in the stained glass panels, two of which are by Comper and have his strawberry mark, dated 1953 and 1957. Both officers and men are commemorated on the wooden panels and brass plates on the chairs. Below the east window are brass memorials to officers of the Suffolk Regiment, many of whom died in the Boer War. The chapel was rededicated to the Royal Anglian Regiment in September 2009.



ROOF: Over the north-east window is a wooden corbel with the arms of Yaxley, for the daughter of Jankyn Smyth. This may indicate that originally there were other coats-of-arms displayed on the corbels. The roof bosses have roses, human and grotesque heads. The north-east boss has the face of Jesus on a handkerchief, known as the 'vernicle'. St Veronica is supposed to have wiped Jesus' face on his way to crucifixion, and the image became impregnated in the cloth.

14) BRASS (underneath the carpet): JOHN FYNERS, ARCHDEACON OF SUDBURY (1497-d.1509). He is dressed in a cassock, surplice and almice. This latter item was a cape with a collar and long tails at the front; on this brass it was originally shown by an inlay of enamel. Tymms records that until 1844 the eastern bay of the chapel was partitioned off and used as a 'lumber room and coal-hole', and the brass was used as a base for breaking up lumps of coal! The parish fire engine was kept in this chapel and the fire buckets in the lumber room, until 1830.



GRAVESTONES: There are some interesting stones, several with coats-of-arms dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries. Towards the front are the indents of brasses showing a man, wife, children and shield. By the door curtain is a stone with two, out of four, shields remaining with the arms of Carew, and the indents for John Carew (d.1523), his wife and children.

GLASS: The east window is by Heaton, Butler and Bayne of London in 1857; the first and second from the east by Comper 1958-61 and 1973; the third and fourth (behind organ) have shields, by Willement, commemorating those who contributed to the 1844 restoration, and were removed from the nave west window in 1859.



NORTH AISLE

ROOF: The roof has 19 carved or pierced spandrils, 56 whole or half-bosses; 19 cornice angels and 32 stone corbels. The cornice angels hold items including a censer; a fish, an early Christian symbol; a candlestick; a star-shaped monstrance; the scallop shell of St James and the sacred heart. The north carved spandrils have the signs of the four evangelists. At the corner of the tower is a delicate hovering angel. The south pierced spandrils include antelopes and other animals. The bosses depict Jesus at his Second Coming; a chained swan; two clerics with a cloth representing either the Resurrection or St Edmund's shirt; and two grotesque figures holding a doctor's caduceus.

MONUMENTS: This area was created in 2014 for memorials to the Suffolk Regiment, Yeomanry and Hussars. The memorials commemorate officers and men who died in India 1864-78; Afghanistan 1878-80; Egypt 1890; the First World War 1914-18; and the Second World War 1939-45. Those who have died since 1945 are commemorated on Rolls of Honour in the Royal Anglian Chapel and the Rood Screen.



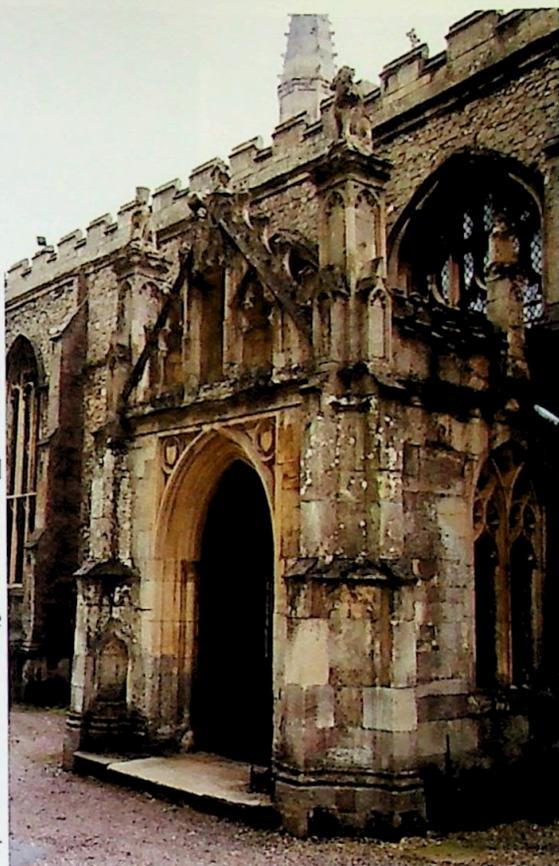
GRAVESTONES : On the floor in front of the second window from the east is the indent of a pre-Reformation priest's brass, with an inscription below a chalice and host. Level with the window beyond the north door is an indent showing two kneeling figures, left and right, above an inscription. Each has a prayer scroll invoking the aid of a saint, shown above them in the centre.

MOVEABLE COMMUNION TABLE: This is in memory of Jim Morris (1904-81) and his wife Marjorie (1905-2000), made by Robert Lewis in 2000.

GLASS: The first window from the east is by Clayton and Bell in 1895; the second by Ward and Hughes in 1884; and the fourth contains the rest of the shields formerly in the west window.

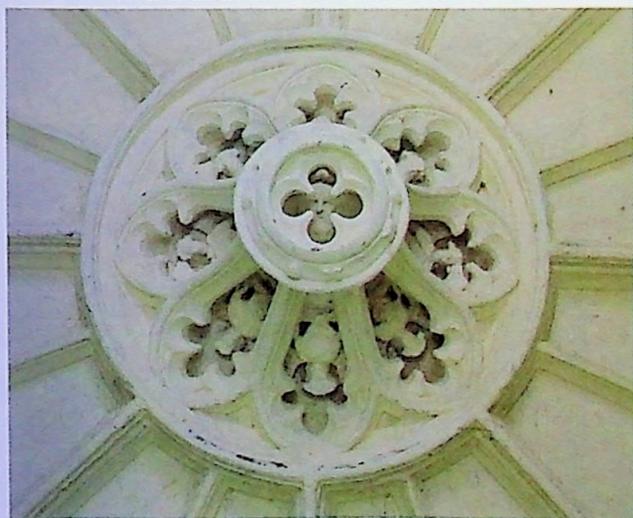


NOTYNGHAM PORCH: In 1438 John Notyngham, a grocer, bequeathed £20 for the construction of a south and a west porch, neither of which was built. The western was never constructed, and the southern was described as 'new' in 1523. Instead, following his death in 1440, his executors built a magnificent north porch with niches in a crocketed pediment; pedestals with seated animals on the battlements; and an inscription over the entrance asking for prayers on behalf of John and Isabel Notyngham. The niches either side of the entrance were for holy water stoops.



The architect may have been either William Layer (d.1444) or Simon Clerk, master-mason at the Abbey from 1445.

The entrance from the side aisle is a reused Decorated doorway from the earlier church, as are the two side windows.

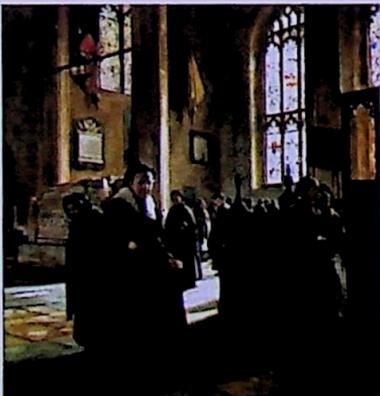


These may have come from the earlier porch here, demolished after 1424 when the aisle was widened, in which John Parkard requested to be buried in 1389. In the middle of the unique ceiling is a pendant, at the centre of which is the face of God, surrounded by eight ministering angels.

PAINTINGS: The right hand painting was originally in Cupola House, and can be dated to between 1707, when the north gallery was built, and 1712, when the window over the chancel was removed.

Note the 15th-century rood screen with two figures and the arms of William and Mary; the box pews; the font with its tall cover surmounted by a dove; the pulpit with its sounding board; the pre-Reformation lectern; and the screens around St Wolstan's Chapel. The rood screen had been removed by 1739, but apart from that, the interior remained virtually unchanged, with the exception of a south gallery built in 1811, until the restoration of 1844.

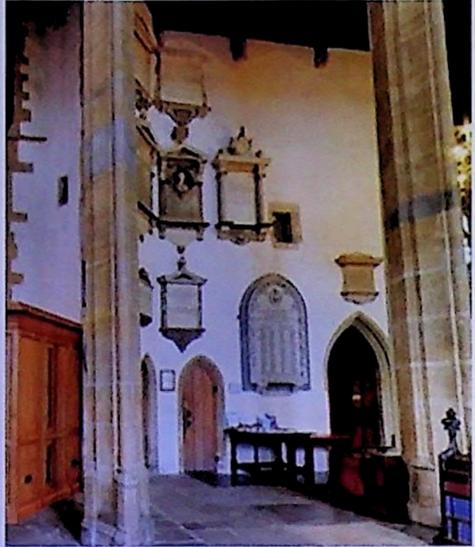
The other two paintings are by Rose Mead (1867-1946) of Bury, and were painted c.1899. They show different views of the distribution of one of the parish charities in the Lady Chapel. In 1639 Francis Pynner, a leading Burgess, bequeathed 40 loaves of bread to be distributed on the last Friday of every month to 40 poor people who came to be catechized. The central painting was called 'Distribution of Guildhall Feoffment Charity' and the other has the title 'Friday Morning at St Mary's', and was exhibited at the Royal Academy summer exhibition in 1899. This was bequeathed to St Mary's by Miss Mary Bulling in 1990. The funeral of Rose Mead was held in the Lady Chapel on 2 April 1946.



TOWER

17) The parish sexton lived in the tower. He had a room on the first and second floors, both of which had a fireplace. The upper room also had a garderobe (loo) inside the north-west buttress. The 'squint' (or hagioscope) enabled him to keep watch on the church, and to see when to ring the sanctus bell during the pre-Reformation mass.

Until 1995 the ground floor was the vestry, with a ringing chamber and belfry above. In 1995 the interior of the tower was reordered by the removal of timber floors, repairs to flint walls, construction of reinforced concrete foundations, erection of four-storey structural steel frame with timber floors, stairs and a lift, to provide kitchen, toilets and storage, parish office, meeting room, choir school, and ringers' chamber.



BELLS: A national survey of bells in 1553 recorded six bells in the tower. The present eight bells were re-founded in 1734 by Richard Phelps of London, and five bear that date; one is dated 1627; one was recast by Pack and Chapman of London in 1776; and two are by Mears and Stainbank of London in 1869 and 1903. They were all rehung in 1975 and can now only be chimed. The clock, by Gillett and Johnson of Croydon, was erected by public subscription in 1897 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.



In 1509 John Parfay, a draper, bequeathed to the churchwardens a piece of meadow in Fornham all Saints '...towards the ryngers charge of the gret bell in Seynt Marychuche, called Corfew belle'. Parfay is said to have lost his way in the marshy land between Fornham and Bury and was guided home by this bell. The land situated in Fornham Road was sold in 1926, but the name Bell Meadow still survives. Originally the curfew was probably a warning that the town gates were about to be closed and may have been linked to the evening service of Compline.

In the post-war period the curfew was rung at 8 pm Greenwich Mean Time and 9 pm British Summer Time. The day of the month was rung on the second bell, followed by the total days in the month on the tenor bell; thus on October 31st, for example, a total of 62 rings were made.

Between them John Marsh, Priscilla Clews and Ted Ashton rang the curfew for the last few years until 1980 when it ceased.

ST WOLSTAN'S CHAPEL

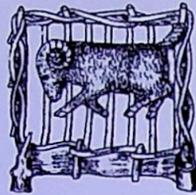
The extension of the nave west of the existing tower created this recess, which became the chapel of St Wolstan, patron saint of East Anglian farmers. An altar was mentioned in a will of 1503, but the chapel may have been established anytime between 1424 and 1503. The area of the chapel extended into the aisle, with wooden screens around the west bay of the nave, as shown on the painting of 1707-12. From c.1566 the Archdeacon of Sudbury held his Visitations and Consistory Courts here until 1874. The north window is by Henry Hughes in 1869, and the west by Ward and Hughes in 1868. Until 2014 the Cenotaph, war memorials and colours of the Suffolk Regiment and Yeomanry were located here. In 2016 this area was converted into the church kitchen named after St Wolstan.



Women in the Bible: detail of the St Wolstan Chapel north window

SOUTH AISLE

ROOF: The roof has 31 carved or pierced spandrils, 60 whole or half-bosses, 20 cornice angels and 32 stone corbels. The stone-corbels hold various shields, including those of the three patron saints of England, St Edward the Confessor, St Edmund and St George. Those on the cornice include the three holy oils; and an angel holding two hosts, a fish, a book, a mitre and musical instruments. The south-carved spandrils have the arms of St Edmund and the Papacy; a man eating fruit in a tree; a mermaid with a comb and mirror (a symbol of temptation); a woodwose or wild man; fox and goose (a symbol for the devil stealing a soul); a hound chasing a rabbit; two rams and a heron. The north-pierced spandrils include a man sitting on a bench; an ape with a urine flask; a chained bear; a pelican in her piety; an owl and mouse; a hedgehog with grapes stuck on its spines, and other animals. The bosses include a ram in an enclosure; a chained hart; angels with the head of St Edmund in a napkin and an angel with two chalices and hosts.



18) FONT: Bequests of £2 and £1 were given for making the 'new fonte' in 1506 and 1512, and £2 for a new canopy in 1507. The stem, which may be earlier, has seated lions and human figures holding swords. The original carvings on the bowl were hacked off in 1783 and replaced by painted shields, which were in turn removed in 1928. The carving on the western shield seems to have been the cross-keys of St Peter. The square recesses have pointed quatrefoils.

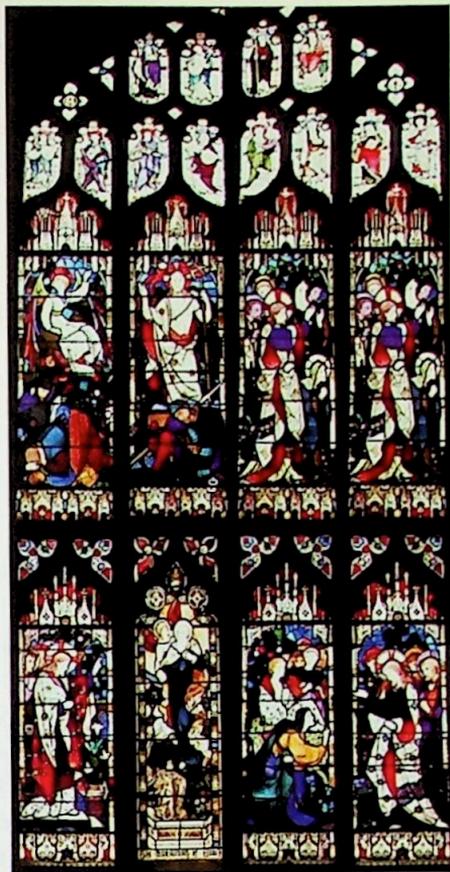


Between the bowl and the stem are alternating flowers and bells, the latter being a rare decorative carving on fonts. This may indicate that the work was carried out during the life of the donor, rather than as a result of a will bequest. An obvious candidate would be Thomas Chirche, bellfounder (d.1528) in memory of his father Reignold, also a bellfounder (d.1498).

GRAVESTONES: There are several 18th -and-19th century stones with heraldry. At the west end, adjacent to the back benches, is a brass indent for a priest, reused by the Winterflood family in the 1720s.

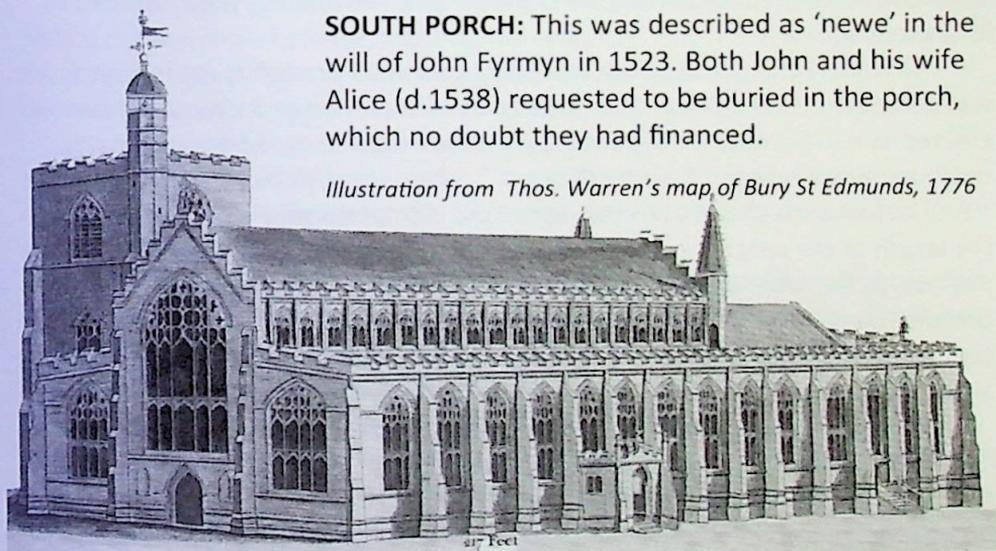
GLASS: The first six windows from the east, by Heaton, Butler and Bayne in 1881, were designed as a sequence of ten, showing the 'Triumph of Faith' based on Hebrews ch. 11. The seventh was added in 1893 but the series was never finished. The tenth is by Ward and Hughes in 1869. The west window (right), in memory of the second Marquis of Bristol, is by Heaton, Butler and Bayne c.1865.

MASON'S MARKS: The piers of the nave and chancel have various 'marks' or symbols, made by the master-mason to show how the blocks of stone should be fitted together. The best examples are on the sides of the piers in this aisle.



SOUTH PORCH: This was described as 'newe' in the will of John Fyrmyn in 1523. Both John and his wife Alice (d.1538) requested to be buried in the porch, which no doubt they had financed.

Illustration from Thos. Warren's map of Bury St Edmunds, 1776



WHAT TO SEE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

Leaving by the west door, carefully cross the road and move to the traffic-free Tuns Lane, in order to view the magnificent west front. The use of stone on the west and south side is a statement of the wealth of the parishioners as, in a non-stone area, every block had to be brought from Rutland and Lincolnshire via the Fens or King's Lynn.

This is the largest west window in any English parish church, and is flanked by the four-light windows of the aisles. The entrance doorway has niches for statues on either side.

To the left, the outer or precinct wall of the Abbey joins on to the tower. Before the 1420s the west end of the church was flush with this face of the tower and the precinct wall. Between 1424 and 1445 the aisles were widened and the nave and aisles lengthened towards the street. Notice how the north aisle wraps around the tower.

Now move to the right in order to see the south side of the church. Each window-bay of the aisle is matched by two clerestory windows in the nave. The two pinnacles over the rood stairs are a very rare feature in Suffolk; only Clare and Little Waldingfield also have twin pinnacles.

The area along the edge of the church has been a garden since 1938, and has been awarded several certificates in the annual 'Bury in Bloom' competition. This area was called the Little Churchyard to distinguish it from the Great Churchyard on the north side. Money was given in 1517 for the brick walls enclosing the churchyard, which originally extended to the middle of the road. In 1825 it was closed for burials, the walls demolished and the area reduced to its present size.

In 1831 the porch, which was described as an 'unsightly excrescence', was purchased by Orbell Ray Oakes. He had it dismantled and eventually re-erected as a folly in the grounds of his home Nowton Court, where it remains today as part of Nowton Country Park.

Now cross the road to the right-hand side of Honey Hill and walk down the length of the aisle. The 'join' of the aisle and later chapel of 1463-70 is obvious, as the latter was faced with flints rather than stone. Notice how the battlements, buttresses and hood-moulds around the window have been continued. However, the tracery of the chapel windows is different from the aisle windows.

At the road junction, cross the road (traffic from left) and enter the church garden by the gate opposite the chapel door. Follow the path to the right near the bench. The east window of the chapel was originally the east window of the aisle, moved here when the chapel was built by Jankyn Smyth. The

windows of the sanctuary, also built by Jankyn, are the same as in the south and north chapels.

As a consequence of being built on the sloping side of the Lark valley, the plinth of the church becomes higher towards the east. When the sanctuary was added, a crypt was constructed underneath, a rare feature in any parish church.

The door in the sanctuary gave access to a vestry that stood in this corner. The three stone corbels may have been supports for the vestry roof, or a later stable block, built against the church and demolished in the 1870s. The vestry may have had a basement which connected to the crypt via the lower door.

Moving round the east end of the sanctuary, notice how the two string-courses form delicate crocketed ogee arches, on the buttresses. There are two memorials to members of the White family under the east window. Near the gate into the churchyard is a block of stone commemorating the 1844 restoration.

Pass through the gate and round to the north side. Note on the corner buttress of the north chapel a monument to Orson Bidwell (d.1768), aged 90, and his wife Sarah (d.1779), 'in the 102nd year of her age'. [Bury is still well known for the longevity of its inhabitants who were born here].

On this less fashionable side of the building, free stone was only used for buttresses and battlements, the walls being of flint. Near the porch, in the aisle wall, note the monument for Thomas Dorling (d.1754) and Mary his wife (d.1770). 'Say what a Wife should be and She was that' [which of them left instructions for the inscription?].

The front of the Notyngnam porch has three-sided buttresses with ogee niches for holy water stoups, flanking the entrance. Above the inscription are three more niches framed in a crocketed pediment. On top of the four tall pedestals are, much weathered, carvings of beasts, two of which are lions.

Inside, the face of God can be seen through the quatrefoil of the pendant, surrounded by eight angels. To see the central carving, stand about a metre in, facing the outside doors, look up and move backwards until God looks you in the face.

Outside again, the tower has a doorway on the east side. An illustration of the church in 1770 shows the scar of a similar filled-in door on the street side of the tower. These openings were an essential part of pre-Reformation processions around the church, without leaving the churchyard. The Abbey precinct wall enclosed the churchyard from St Mary's tower to the Norman Tower. So the only answer was to go through the tower, then left along the west side of the church which was built over in 1424. Similar arches can be seen at local churches at Stanton St John, Stowmarket and Combs

RESTORATIONS AND STRUCTURAL CHANGES

- 1707 Gallery with Mayor's seat built in the north aisle.
- 1712 Stone tracery of nave east window replaced with ironwork.
- 1775 New pulpit with sounding-board positioned at fourth bay from east, on south side of nave.
- 1802 Organ placed in north gallery.
- 1811 Gallery built in south aisle, seven bays from east in length.
- 1823 Inner porch at west door erected by Mr Carliel at a cost of £27.10s.
- 1825 Walls of the Little Churchyard, on south side of church, removed.
- 1826 Gallery built across nave, three bays from west, designed by Mr Abraham of London; new organ by Gray of London placed in gallery.
- 1831 South porch dismantled and removed to Nowton Court.
- 1844 Restoration: Lewis Cottingham architect, Thomas Farrow of Bury and Diss contractor, Mr Nash of London wood carver. West gallery removed; north and south galleries shortened to six bays; nave roof restored; vestry in east bay of south chapel, and lumber room in east bay of north chapel, removed; bottom of tower converted into a vestry; new tracery and glass in nave east window; chancel arch strengthened; lower rood stairway doors unblocked; new tracery to clerestory and west window of nave; surround to west door recarved; two external niches renewed in west front; organ removed to north aisle under third bay from west; new pulpit in same position as earlier one; new benches at west end of nave. Total cost £2,372.4s.
- 1853 Railings put on south side of church by Thomas Farrow at the cost of £200.7s.
- 1864 Baker's shop and two cottages removed from north side of the tower.
- 1865 Railing put on west side of the Great Churchyard by Lot Jackaman of Bury at the cost of £289.9s.
- 1867 Restoration: Arthur Blomfield architect, Lot Jackaman of Bury contractor. All box and other pews removed, and entire church fitted out with benches designed by Blomfield and made by Jackaman at a cost of £2,056.1s.6d. Organ enlarged by Walkers of London and placed at west end of north chapel at a cost of £874.10s.6d. Pulpit moved to south-east corner of nave. Total seating now 251 in north gallery, 400 in the south gallery and 1,470 in the floor benches.
- 1870 Screens in chancel filled with plate glass.
- 1876 House and buildings adjoining the south and east sides of the chancel demolished.
- 1880 Restoration: Lot Jackaman of Bury contractor. North and south galleries removed; walls and piers repaired; chancel roof restored and repainted by A. Mackintosh of Burlinson and Grylls of London; Walkers added more stops to the organ; pulpit moved to present position.
- 1884 Brass lectern in memory of James Sparke.
- 1897 Jubilee clock placed in tower.
- 1900 Brass card-frames, for occupants' names, fitted to benches

- 1901 Restoration: A. Ainsworth-Hunt of Bury architect, J. Shillitoe and Sons of Bury contractor. Sanctuary area extended from east end of the two tombs to the west end; choir stalls reconstructed as at present; two new reading desks at chancel arch; electric light in chancel; sanctuary and north chapel floors relaid; many floor memorials removed from the new sanctuary to the north chapel.
- 1909 Restoration: Screens with doors placed on each side of the chancel; glass removed from south sanctuary window; screen placed at west end of Lady Chapel; Chancel communion table and rails placed in Lady Chapel.
- 1910 New tall reredos in chancel, the gift of E. W. Lake Esq., designed by Henry L. Hicks of Hicks and Charlewood of Newcastle, and modified by Temple L. Moore.
- 1912 Cresting added to chancel screens.
- 1913 New rood screen designed by Hicks and Charlewood, made by Messrs R. Hedley, all of Newcastle.
- 1914 New east window stained glass, in memory of Blanch Lake (d.1913).
- 1920 Cenotaph, unveiled by Lt Gen. Sir T. Morland, in St Wolstan's chapel, designed by William A. Pite of London, the figures carved by Charles Wiffin, who also carved the three sculptural groups on the 1922 Victory Arch at Waterloo Station; inscriptions by Earp and Hobbs of London.
- 1924 Restoration: Notyngam porch by E. E. Bowden of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings.
- 1927 Brass lectern for Lady Chapel, given by Richard Plumpton.
- 1931 Organ rebuilt by William Hill and Son, and Norman and Beard Ltd, and raised on a platform in present position; tomb of Sir Robert Drury repainted.
- 1935 Electric light throughout the church, at the cost of £68.16s, in memory of Sidney Day, churchwarden 1924-28. North chapel converted into Suffolk Regimental Chapel, Ninian Comper architect, dedicated 23 June 1935. Tomb of Sir William Carewe repainted; sound reinforcement introduced.
- 1937 Numbers added to each bench, as name-cards discontinued.
- 1938 Tower restored: Munro Cautley of Ipswich architect, Harvey Frost of Bury contractor. Garden on south side of church created with two shrubs per bay; new communion rails designed by Munro Cautley.
- 1948 Plate glass in west screen of south chapel.
- 1958 Organ console moved from north chapel into chancel; Boat Boy's hand put on display.
- 1961 Colman gas heaters introduced.
- 1962 Reredos of 1910 removed; communion table moved away from east wall and lengthened.
- 1963-8 Restoration: Interior walls and stonework cleaned; nave roof treated against death-watch beetle; chancel roof relaid; tower walls repaired; bells removed; reredos of 1910 removed; new glass in centre lights of east window (1964) chancel and Baret roofs repaired and repainted (1968).

- 1972 Nave chandeliers installed, designed by Best and Lloyd of Birmingham; Royal Arms placed over Mary Tudor's grave, earlier plaque of 1758 moved to present position.
- 1975 Bells which had been removed in 1964, rehung for chiming by Taylors of Loughborough.
- 1979 Nave roof floodlighting renewed.
- 1981-4 Restoration: The Whitworth Co-Partnership of Bury architects, R. Hogg of Coney Weston contractors. Tower strengthened with ring beams; west window reroofed; west front of nave and aisles repaired and cleaned.
- 1987-8 Restoration, phase 2: North and South Aisles, Lady Chapel and Suffolk Chapel parapets repaired; South Aisle and Lady Chapel reroofed; crossing wall and pinnacles strengthened.
- 1988 Clock by George Graham moved from vestry to above 'Birkenhead' memorial.
- 1990 Lady Chapel carpeted and benches replaced with chairs. Two Rose Mead paintings hung in the north aisle (restored 2011).
- 1992-3 Restoration, phase 3: Notyngnam porch restored; nave roof reroofed: Valiant of Barrow contractors.
- 1994 Cabinets with pigeon-holes introduced.
- 1995 Reordering of the tower interior: The Whitworth Co-Partnership, architects, G. J. Bream and Sons Ltd., main contractor.
- 1997 Benches at the east end of the nave turned to face each other, to form choir stalls. Later these two banks of stalls and the eagle lectern were made moveable, to create space for concerts. Some of the benches in the aisles were removed and others made moveable.
- 1999 A screened storage area created at west end of north aisle. A large screen was suspended from the rood screen.
- 2000 New moveable nave communion table made by Robert Lewis, who also made the matching credence table in 2002.
- 2001 New notice board in the south-west corner of the church garden.
- 2006 Great west window floodlit from the inside.
- 2007 Racks of pigeon-holes and a new welcome desk installed at the west end of the nave.
- 2009 Nave roof repaired and reroofed: F. A. Valiant, contractor.
- 2010 Music desks added to nave choir stalls.
- 2014 Cenotaph, all war memorials and colours, moved from St Wolstan's Chapel to the east end of the north aisle, outside the Royal Anglian Chapel. Bishop David Thompson dedicated this work on 23rd August 2014 at a service to commemorate the death of the first soldier from the Suffolk Regiment, Private William Flack of Whepstead, whose descendants still worship here: Universal Stone of Wickford Essex, contractor.
- 2016 New kitchen created in St Wolstan's Chapel: Lodge and Sons of Gt Dunmow Essex, contractor.





ISBN 978-0-9554504-6-4