

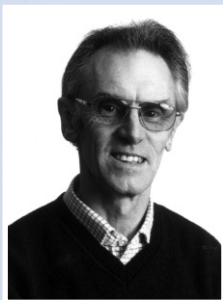
## Bury St Edmunds

Alan Childs

Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk was once the capital of East Anglia, and the town and surrounding area are full of history. This lovely mediaeval market town with its ancient buildings attracts visitors in their thousands each year.

Perhaps best known for its abbey ruins, there has been a church on the site of Suffolk's cathedral for nearly 1000 years. Once part of the great Abbey of St Edmund, St James' Church dates from 1503, its nave formed from the earlier building. Though little remains of the Benedictine Abbey, following the Dissolution in 1539, St James' church has continued to grow over the centuries, and Bury St Edmunds Cathedral was created when the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich was formed in 1914. The striking Millennium Tower, completed in 2005, is now the crowning glory of the Cathedral.

In this book photographer Alan Childs captures the perfection of Bury St Edmunds both in the broader sweep of the town and through the individual and distinctive character of its buildings. His skilled eye has alighted on many features otherwise easily overlooked; for residents, and for those visiting the town this is the perfect memento, while for those wishing to discover more the book includes a series of five town walks accompanied by superb maps specially recreated from Victorian originals.

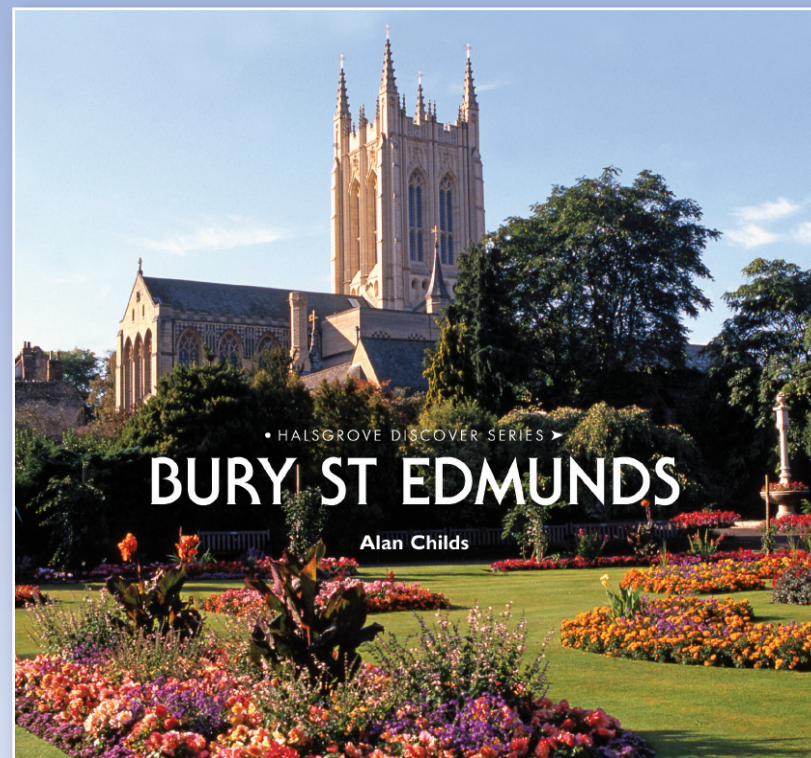


### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Alan Childs**, photographer and author, lives in Norfolk and has produced a number of books about East Anglia including *A Portrait of Norwich* and *Discover the North Norfolk Coast*. He is also co-author of *The Man Who Loved Horses: The Story of Jack Juby*, *Face to Face*, and *Holt Hall - An Illustrated History*.

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Left: In Bury St Edmunds, there is a long tradition of brewing. Greene King Brewery.

Right: A recent addition to Bury's street scene is the large shopping centre built adjoining St Andrew's Street, under the auspices of 'arc' developments which includes a striking design for Debenham's store.

Below: Charles Dickens stayed at the The Angel when he visited the town.



Left: The Theatre Royal in Bury has been described as a 'hidden jewel' in the National Trust's crown.

Below: Bury is fortunate in having so elegant a meeting place as The Athenaeum.

Example of a double page spread.



BURY ST EDMUNDS

The word jettied is used to describe the way in which a timber-framed house seems to get wider as the house goes taller. Sometimes the 'overhang' (it can be as much as four feet) is just on one or two sides, but occasionally it is all the way round. It is a feature much seen across the country and, as in Bury or Lavenham, even where stucco (plaster) has been applied, the evidence of an overhang betrays the timber-framing. So a house could be much older than it first glance.

One of the intriguing things is that, despite the widespread use of jettied in the Middle Ages and Tudor periods, there is no clear cut answer as to why jettied was used at all. Perhaps it was to gain more floor area in the cramped conditions of towns (although it is found usually in the countryside). With no gutters or down-pipes to remove surface water, perhaps it was to protect the lower storey from damp, especially the plasterwork, which was typical of a house's construction then. It is also possible that the answer was a structural one. In normal houses, heavy wooden furniture in the centre of a room might cause the joists to sag. The additional joist length, weighted by the wall above, pressing down, could perhaps have prevented that. Another possibility was that in dividing the house vertically in this way, timbers could be shared. The wall-timbers could be just one storey high, not the full height of the house. Perhaps money was at the root of the question after all - with taxes on 'ground area', owners gained 'free space' above! Or perhaps it was simply 'fashion'. The true explanation may have been lost over the centuries, but I'll bet!

