

Book of Martyrs

One of the largest books in the Ancient Library is a second edition of Foxe's Book of Martyrs, printed in 1570 by the Suffolk man John Daye. This is an account of Christian Martyrs throughout Western history concentrating on the sufferings of English Protestants in the Tudor period.

It tells of St Edmund's fate - 'The wicked and craftie Dane ... most cruelly bound hym unto a tree, and caused hym to be shotte to death; and lastly caused hys head to be smitten from the bodye, and cast into the thicke of the bushes.'

From Queen Mary's reign, there is description of the martyrdom of Roland Taylor, Rector of Hadleigh and Archdeacon of Bury, who was cited to appear before Bishop Stephen Gardiner (a former pupil of Bury Grammar School) and then burnt at Hadleigh in 1555, and accounts of the examination and condemnation of the seventeen Suffolk martyrs whose memorial is in the churchyard between the cathedral and St Mary's. The inscription in the book reads 'This book was given by Robt plummer to the Librery of St james parish for ever in the year 1680. Cursed be he that depriveth the church of itt.' Robert Plummer was a barber who lived at 5 Angel Hill (now Scandinavia House).

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