

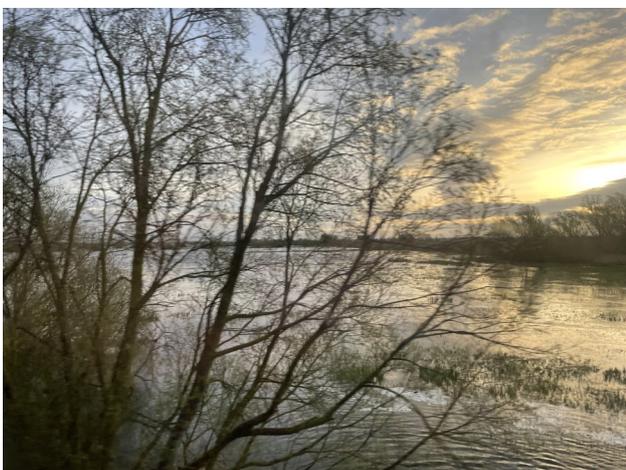
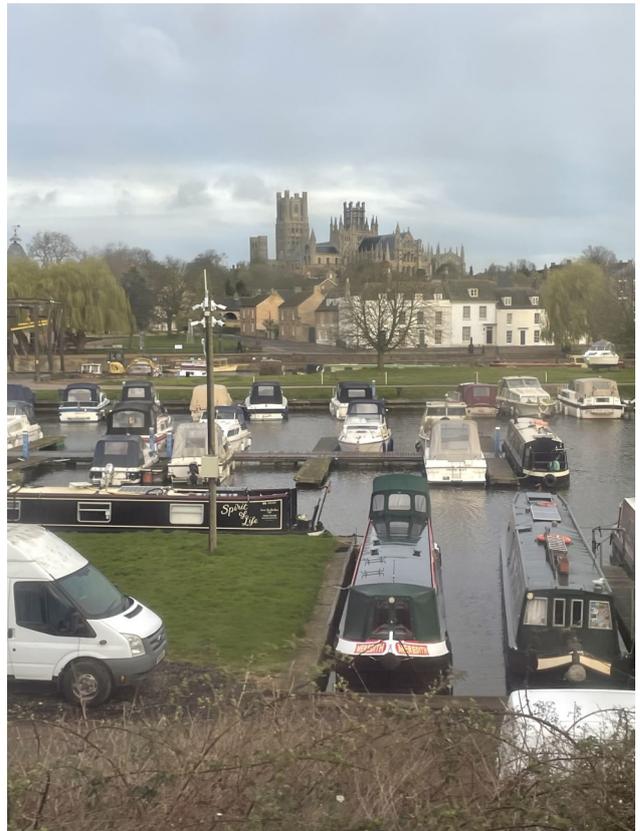
Bury St Edmunds

Wednesday 6 April

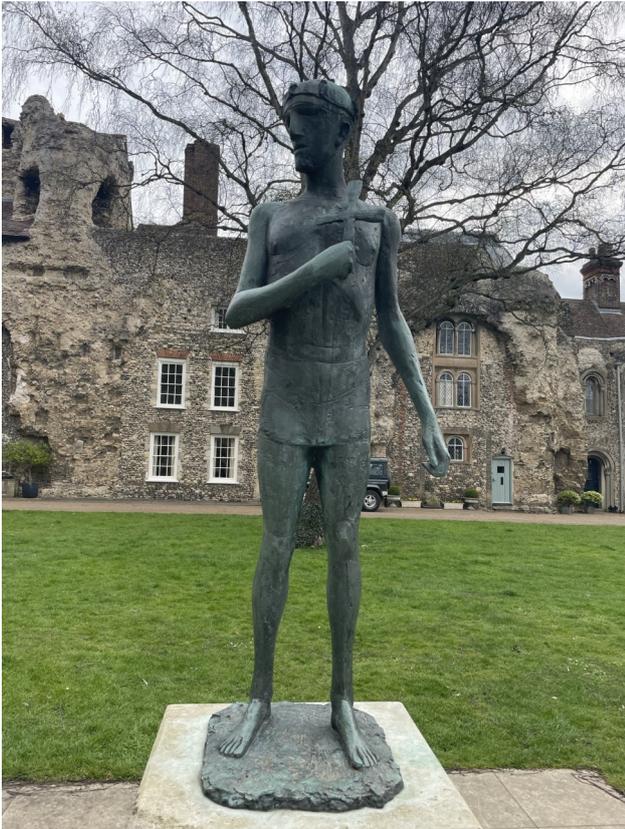
RAILWAY 32

Loughborough		0511
Ely	0701	0714
Cambridge	0734	0744
Bury St Edmunds	0823	
Thetford		1856
Ely	1926	2015
Leicester	2149	2218
Loughborough		2227

In a sensible world I would not go on a conference in East Anglia the day after we got back from the North East, but a day in Bury on Pilgrimage was too good to ignore. The first train south from Nottingham does not stop at East Midlands Parkway so I had to drive to Loughborough - then we rounded the Syston curve and went to Peterborough. New track on to Ely - lovely to watch the sun rise over the Ouse Washes. Time for a coffee, then south to Cambridge. It is not right that the station has a middle platform, but at least the Bury train still goes from the correct platform. Still proper gates and a 'box at Dullingham, and Bury Yard box still stands too (probably going later this year). I am ambled slowly down St John's Street and did a circuit round the town, Churchyard and past the (derelict) St James, before taking up refuge in the Refectory (sorry "The Pilgrims' Kitchen"). Paul the Chef was glad to see me, and Sarah Friswell was trying to get the day organised.



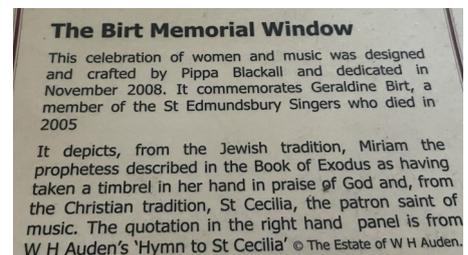
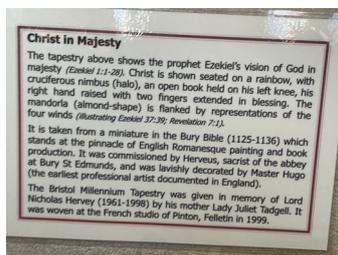
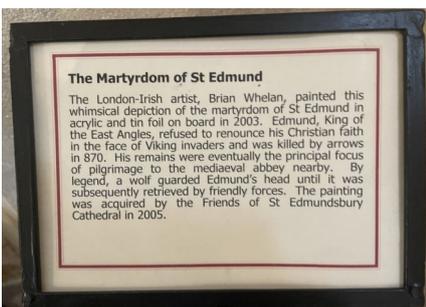
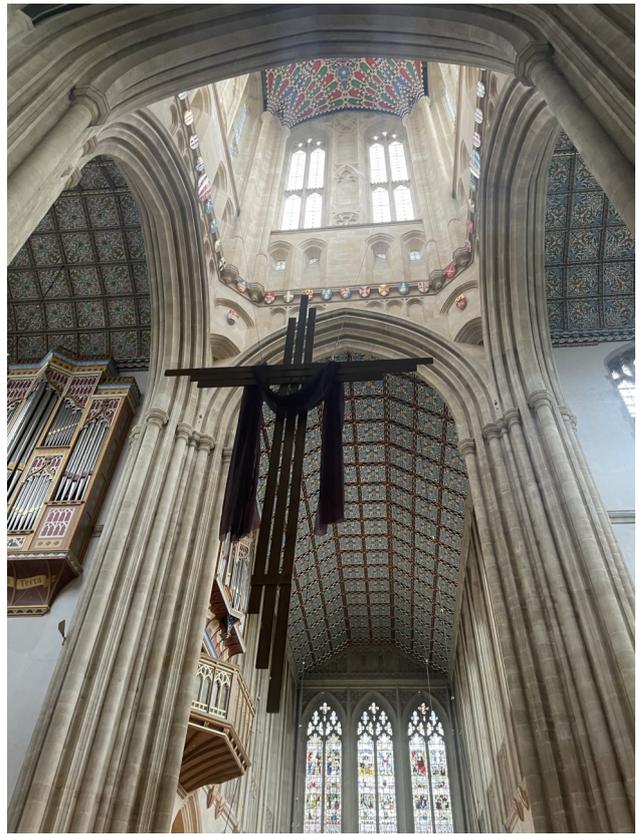


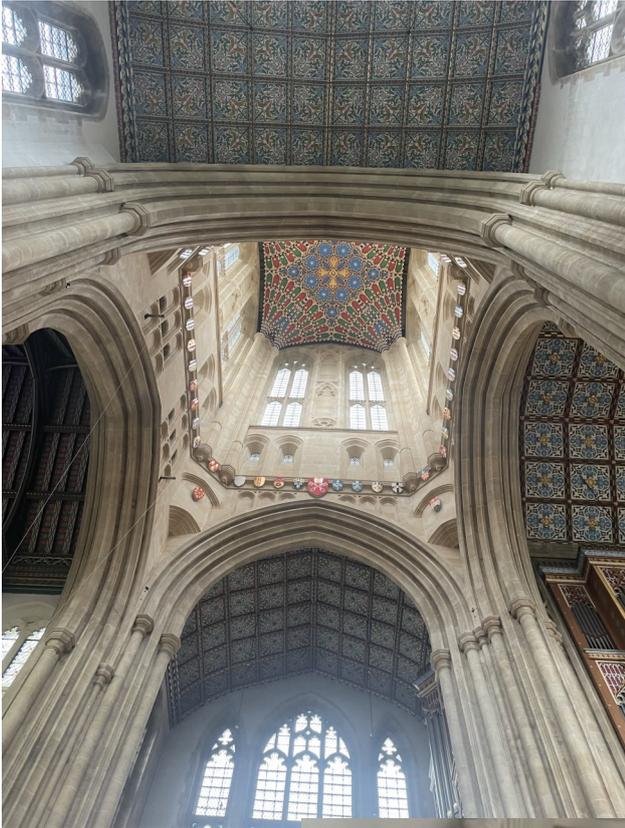
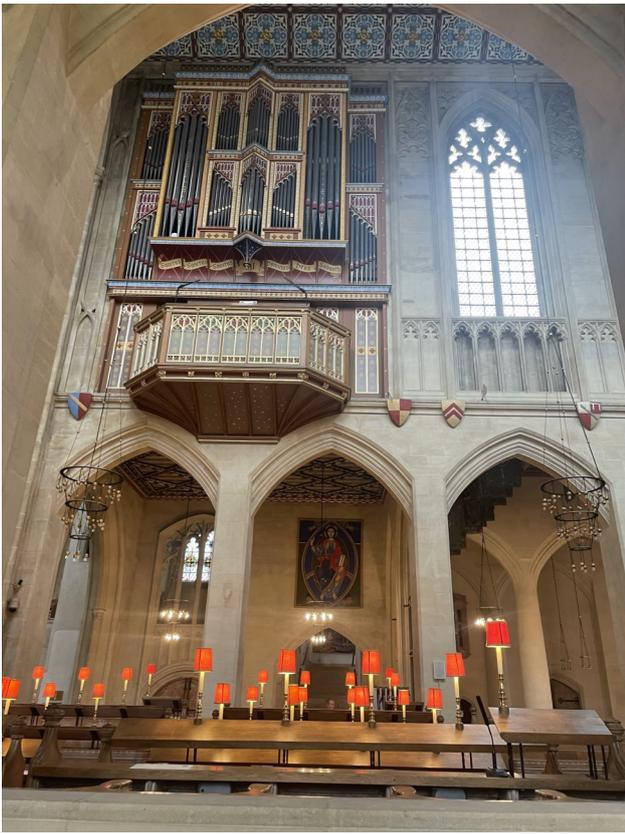




Saint Edmund

We had some very good talks - and I managed to blag the lecture notes off a young lady called Lydia <08lmccutcheon@gmail.com> who is studying for her Masters with Historic Royal Palaces. In typical form, the Cathedral clergy welcomed us and then buggered off, then we had an excellent lecture from Rebecca Pinner from UEA on Bury as a centre of Pilgrimage. Then we moved on to the crypt of St Edmund's for a talk by Guy Hayward (British Pilgrimage Trust), and discussions about all the Bury had to offer. A soup lunch, then on to St Mary's for specific talks on pilgrimage and the local economy. I had forgotten how gorgeous St Mary's is. I had time for a quick explore of the Cathedral and a sit in my stall. Then the final session, and Vespers in the ruins, by the site of the Shrine. "Thank you for coming Canon Peter" said the Dean - I didn't have the heart to correct him!



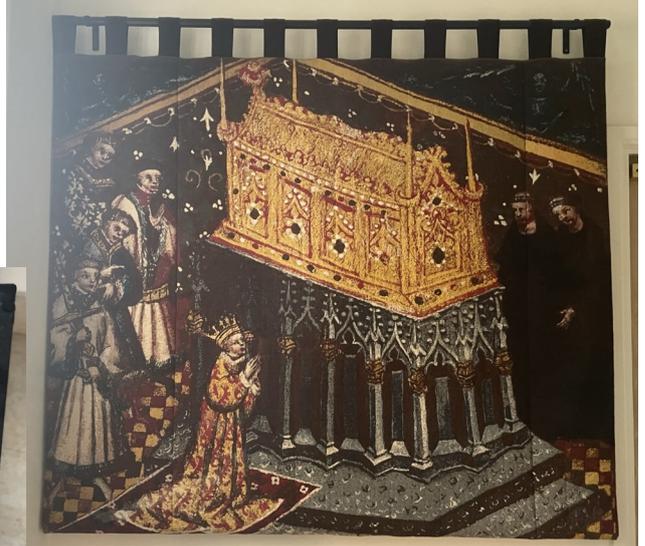


Henry VI at the Shrine of St Edmund

In 1433 King Henry VI (aged 11) stayed at the abbey of Bury St Edmunds. In honour of the visit the abbot commissioned an English version of the 'Life of St Edmund' from one of the monks, John Lydgate.

This tapestry image is taken from the lavish and heavily illustrated copy of the 'Life' which was a presentation copy for the King. It depicts the kneeling King before the shrine of St Edmund at the abbey.

The tapestry is worked in wool and silk and took over four years to complete by a team of 27 needle workers. It has 1,172,160 stitches and was completed in 2005.



I had booked a first class advance single to London, then to use my F&F ticket back from St Pancras. It was not to be. There were a hundred people on the station, but no staff - and no trains. Freight train derailment apparently. No sign of any replacement buses either. I thought laterally and caught the local bus up to Thetford. I was in the company of Peter Doll, the Precentor of Norwich, and it was good to chat to him. We went up through Fornham St Martin and Culford, then cut across and did a guided tour of RAF Honington. There was one point where we arrived at a T junction. "Thetford 6 miles" to the left, so we turned right.

At Thetford station I got a train to Ely - I waited for someone to come and sell me a ticket, no one came. I found a cheap single from Ely to Leicester so purchased that. The train from Thetford does not connect with the train to Leicester, but the fish and chip shop was lovely and the sunset gorgeous. Another change at Leicester, and I don't know which way Mittens took me home from Loughborough, but it seemed a long way! I was glad I had gone, but I was a little tired once I got home.



Thursday 7 April

Derby	1411
Sheffield	1442 1733
Derby	1807

A lovely Toddlers started with an Easter service in church - everyone seemed to enjoy it. A bit of work, then a dash to Sheffield for platelets. I had an advance first on the 1429. That was running late, so they let me catch the earlier one - and gave me compensation. I had time to sit and read in the Winter Gardens before giving my armful. Back to the station, and I used the return part of my friends and family ticket (since I got so little use out of it yesterday). Wedding couple in the evening.

