



HISTORY ON OUR DOOR-STEP... ONE SQUARE MILE.



St Botolphs Priory

Did you Know?

- It was founded about 1100, St Botolph's was one of the first Augustinian priories in England.
- The priory church was built in Norman style on the site of the earlier Church of St Botolph, the work having been completed by 1177 when it was dedicated.
- It was badly damaged by cannon fire during the Civil War siege of 1648.
- In the middle of the fourteenth century a violent altercation took place between the priory and St John's Abbey. The Abbey complained to the pope that prior John with two of his canons, John Noreys and Thomas de Gipwico, along with several laymen, attacked one of the monks of St John's with a sword and dagger and blockaded them within the abbey, before a third canon with some laymen forced entry and attacked the abbot and convent.
- The main west door into the church was called the Pardon Door, because it was where pardons were granted at the feast of St Denis (9 October, known as Pardon Day in Medieval Colchester).
- The house was headed by a Prior, and initially contained twelve canons representing the Twelve Apostles.
- Around Colchester the priory owned land at Greenstead and Cannock (or Canwick, from Canon's Wick) in West Donyland, and several watermills in and around the town, including East Mill, Cannock Mill and Hull Mill (the latter two located on Bourne Brook, where there was a third mill, Bourne Mill, belonging to St John's Abbey)
- Most of the abbey remains are constructed of flint and incorporate reused Roman bricks. The ruins of the priory church are most impressive, with large round columns and the rounded arches so characteristic of the Norman Romanesque period. The west front of the church is especially notable for its ornamentation.
- The priory ruins are on Priory Street, at the bottom of Queen Street, only a short stroll from the Colchester tourist information centre and castle. The priory is accessible at any time.

