

Antonia Gransden

Obituary for Suffolk Records Society Web Site

Dr Antonia Gransden, editor of Suffolk Records Society's Volume 5 and sometime subscriber to our Charters Series, died on 18th January aged 91. She was a distinguished medieval historian and an expert in the field of medieval chronicles. For much of her academic career she was Reader in Medieval History at the University of Nottingham.

In Suffolk she will be remembered chiefly for her two books on the *History of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, 1182-1256* and *1257-1301*, published in 2007 and 2015. Her volume for the Suffolk Records Society, published in 1963, was entitled *The Letter-Book of William of Hoo, Sacrist of Bury St Edmunds 1280-1294*, a record of Hoo's activities as sacrist of the abbey, archdeacon of the town and papal agent. A year later she published *The Chronicle of Bury St Edmunds 1212-1301*. In 1973 she published *The Consuetudines Buriensis*, the customary which laid down the rights and duties of the abbot and his obedientiaries, concerning the special needs and circumstances of the abbey, following the Rule of St Benedict. Her other major contribution to Bury was her publication of the transactions of the British Archaeological Association's conference held there in 1994, which includes twenty scholars' papers on medieval art, architecture, archaeology and the economy in and around Bury. She wrote over a dozen other articles on the history of the abbey and she contributed a dozen biographies of its abbots to the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Her last visit to Bury was probably in 2012 when she spoke at the end of a conference on Bury St Edmunds and the Norman Conquest.

She published the customary of Eynsham Abbey (Oxfordshire) and manuscripts from several other monastic houses; and she wrote two volumes on historical writing in England from c. 550 to the early sixteenth century. She wrote one historical novel, *Last Days at Lanercost. The Priory and Brother Thomas in Border Warfare*. Only M.R. James's writings of around 1900 have approached anywhere near to the amount of information she has given us on the history and life of Bury St Edmunds Abbey seen through its surviving manuscripts.
R.I.P.