

OUR LADY OF IPSWICH

In 1538 the statue of Our Lady of Ipswich was removed from its shrine in Lady Lane by Thomas Cromwell's men and taken to Chelsea in London, to be burned, along with statues from many other shrines around the country including Walsingham.

But the story goes that the statue of Our Lady of Ipswich was rescued and taken by sea to Italy. In the seaside town of Nettuno (where St Maria Goretti was born) there is a statue of Our Lady which the locals call 'The English Lady.' It is thought to have appeared in 1550. Tests have shown that there is a higher-than-expected salt content in the wood, such as might be consistent with the statue having spent some time at sea. These and a few other details suggest with a surprising degree of certainty that the English Lady in the coastal town of Nettuno, roughly half-way between Rome and Naples, is indeed the original statue from Ipswich.

In 2022 St Pancras parish commissioned a copy of that statue from the Italian workshop of Stuflessers.

The new statue arrived, safely crated, on 23rd June 2023. So, after an absence of 485 years from any Catholic church in the town, we can now say to our Blessed Mother, welcome home!



The newly carved statue of Our Lady of Ipswich, a copy of the statue in Nettuno, before leaving the workshop of Stuflessers in Italy.