

Saint Edmund

c841 – 20th November 869

Edmund the Martyr, also known as St Edmund, was king of East Anglia from about 855 until his death.

Almost nothing is known about Edmund. He is thought to have been of East Anglian origin and was first mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, written some years after his death. The kingdom of East Anglia was devastated by Vikings, who destroyed any contemporary evidence of his reign.

He may have been slain by the Danes in battle, but by tradition he met his death after he refused the Danes' demand that he renounce the Christ: the Danes beat him, shot him with arrows and then beheaded him, on the orders of Ivar the Boneless. According to one legend, his head was then thrown into the forest, but was found safe by searchers after following the cries of a wolf.

The saint's remains were temporarily moved from Bury St Edmunds to London for safekeeping in 1010. During the Middle Ages, Edmund was regarded as the patron saint of England.

