

Ipswich – A Hanseatic Port

During the 13th – 15th centuries east coast ports such as Ipswich, King’s Lynn and Boston traded alongside merchants of the Hanseatic League in the North Sea and the Baltic. In that period, at the height of the wool and cloth trade with Europe Ipswich was one of the most important and prosperous ports in the country, and of course continues to be a considerable trading port to this day. However, as a result of constant development and re-building, very little physical evidence from the Hanseatic period seems to remain, in comparison with Boston and King’s Lynn.

A new Hanseatic League (www.hanse.org) was founded in 1980, with headquarters in Lubeck, and the Ipswich Maritime Trust encouraged an application for membership by Ipswich Borough Council, which was accepted in 2018.

To support our membership, it was felt that more information about this significant period in Ipswich’s history needed to be available, and so we have produced a booklet for the general public, and which I hope will interest visitors and tourists too. The booklet is available (price £2) at the Tourist Information Centre, at Ipswich Museum and at Christchurch Mansion.

Pat Grimwade

