

a year later, Dorothy moved in herself, buying the house next door and knocking the two together. It was here that she wrote many of her novels, including *'The Nine Tailors'*. Dorothy died at Witham on the 17 December 1957.

Opposite the house is her statue, complete with her cat 'Blitz'. Visit the local library, which houses the Dorothy L. Sayers Centre. Inside is a fascinating collection of books, letters and cuttings.

Afternoon tea: Witham

→ Take the A12 north to Ipswich.

Overnight - Ipswich

DAY 3 - Ipswich to Southwold (56m/90km)

MORNING - Orford and Aldeburgh

P. D. James - one of today's most popular crime writers. Born in 1920, James was educated in Cambridge, and also enjoyed holidays in the area, such as on the Suffolk coast. Later she worked as a civil servant for the Home Office, including time in both the Police and Criminal Policy Departments. Retiring in 1979, this career proved a useful background for her novels, the first being *'Cover Her Face'* (1962). This introduces her poet-detective Adam Dalgliesh, whose career is followed in subsequent novels. Many of these stories are set in the East of England.



P. D. James

→ Leave Ipswich on the A12 north towards Lowestoft. Just after passing the town of Woodbridge, turn right (at the roundabout), onto the A1153. Then 2½ miles later, turn right again onto the B1084 to Orford.

Orford - this attractive town is dominated by its 12th C. castle. Brick and timber buildings lead to a little quayside. It is featured in Ruth Rendell's *'No Night is Too Long'* (1994).

Morning coffee: Orford

→ Take the B1084/B1078 to Tunstall. Turn right onto the B1069 to Snape. At the T-junction with the A1094, turn right to the town of Aldeburgh.

Aldeburgh - charming and sedate seaside town. Fishermen pull their boats onto the steep shingle beach and sell their catch. Attractive High Street and 16th C. Moot Hall. **Tourist Information Centre** - 152 High Street +44 (0)1728 453637.



The Victorian writer, Wilkin Collins (1824-89) visited Aldeburgh in 1862, finding inspiration for his novel *'No Name'*. He had already received critical acclaim for *'The Women in White'* (1860). Five years later he would write the first full-length English detective novel *'The Moonstone'*.



Lunch: Aldeburgh

Aldeburgh

AFTERNOON - Dunwich, Blythburgh and Southwold

→ Leave Aldeburgh on the B1122. After 7 miles, turn right onto the B1125 to Westleton - where you take the unclassified road to Dunwich.

Dunwich - founded by the Romans, this little village was once the 12th C. capital of East Anglia, and one of England's greatest ports. However its downfall was the constant erosion by the sea of the sandy cliffs on which it had been built. Over the centuries, parts of the city toppled over the edge, such as in 1326, when a great storm washed away over 400 houses. In *'Unnatural Causes'* (1967) by P. D. James - Adam Dalgliesh's aunt has a house overlooking the sea.

→ Leave Dunwich along the unclassified road heading northwest. At the crossroads with the B1125, turn right to Blythburgh.

Blythburgh - overlooking the Blyth estuary, this village is noted for its superb 15th C. Holy Trinity Church. It was used by P.D. James in *'Unnatural Causes'* - whilst on his way to Dunwich, Adam Dalgliesh stops off to see 'the cold silvery whiteness of the one of the loveliest church interiors in Suffolk'. The seven deadly sins are carved on the pew ends.

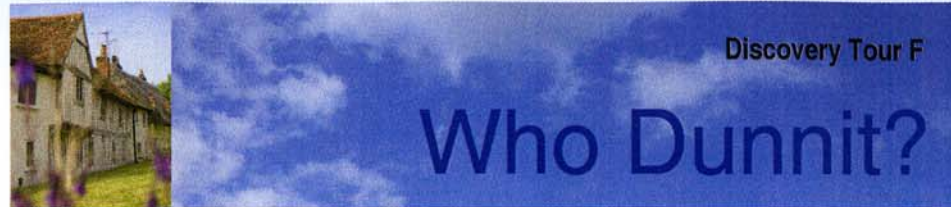
Afternoon tea: take the A12/A1095 to Southwold. This charming town is overlooked by its 19th C. lighthouse, with period houses and old fishermen's cottages set around attractive open greens. Crime writer P. D. James owns a house here.



----- **END OF TOUR** -----

Who Dunit? Discovery Tour F

For further information on this tour (including opening times of attractions listed), please contact the **East of England Tourist Board** on +44 (0)870 225 4800, or visit www.visiteastofengland.com



Get all clued up on crime fiction, and follow our trail of some of Britain's best loved crime writers. From Wilkie Collins in the 1860's, to Ruth Rendell and P. D. James a century later, at least a dozen leading crime writers have littered the region with dead bodies and red herrings - and their thrillers double as guidebooks.



Starting point: Huntingdon (Cambridgeshire)

Duration: Three days **Distance:** 221 miles/356 kilometres

Route of tour:

- Day 1: Huntingdon - The Fens (Bluntisham - March - Christchurch) - Bury St. Edmunds (overnight)
- Day 2: Bury St. Edmunds - Sudbury - Polstead - Tolleshunt D'Arcy - Maldon - Witham - Ipswich (overnight)
- Day 3: Ipswich - Orford - Aldeburgh - Dunwich - Blythburgh - Southwold



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Discovery Tour F

Who Dunit?

DAY 1 - Huntingdon to Bury St. Edmunds (80m/129km)

MORNING - The Fens (Bluntisham, March and Christchurch)

Dorothy L. Sayers, the detective novelist and theological writer, was born in Oxford on the 13 June 1893, the only child of the Rev. Henry and Helen Sayers. Four years later, the family moved to the little village of Bluntisham (nr. St. Ives) in the Cambridgeshire Fens.

The Fens - stretching out from The Wash across Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, the Fen landscape of today is the result of man's desire to tame and control this former wet wilderness - and in turn, create some of the most fertile land in Britain (used to grow cereals, flowers, fruit and vegetables). The Romans were the first to try their hand at drainage, but it was not until the early 17th C. that a major reclamation scheme was undertaken. Today an intricate network of rivers, artificial drains, sluice gates and pumps help to protect the land. The Fens are one of the country's most important wildlife areas, home to a huge array of birds, insects and rare flora species.



The Fens

→ Leave Huntingdon on the A1123. After 8 miles, you reach the village of Bluntisham.

Bluntisham - at the junction of Rectory Road and the High Street is Bluntisham House (marked with a plaque). This was the former rectory, where Dorothy L. Sayers spent her childhood. Inside the church, a board refers to her father's time as rector. In 1909, she left Bluntisham (aged 15) to attend school at Salisbury in Wiltshire. Here she won a scholarship to Oxford University, and in 1915, Dorothy graduated with first class honours in modern languages. She then taught briefly at schools in England and France, and from 1922-1931, worked as an advertising copywriter in London.



Dorothy L. Sayers

Sayer's first novel - *'Whose Body'* (1923), introduced her rich aristocratic sleuth Lord Peter Wimsey - hero of fourteen volumes of novels and short stories. In *'The Nine Tailors'* (1934), Wimsey visits the region where Dorothy grew up, and several locations are invented from the area's originals.

→ *Remain on the A1123 to Earith. After crossing over the Bedford rivers, turn left onto the B1381 to Sutton. Then at the roundabout with the A142, turn left to Chatteris. Here you join the A141 to March.*



March - busy market town, which originally prospered as a minor port, trading and religious centre. Attractive riverside area. *Market - Wed, Sat.*

14/15th C. St. Wendreda's Church is renowned for its outstanding double hammer beam roof, with 120 carved angels (their wings outspread). In *'The Nine Tailors'*, it features as the church of Fenchurch St. Paul, where Lord Peter Wimsey looks up 'entranced with wonder'

St. Wendreda's Church, March - home of angels



Morning coffee: March

→ *Take the B1099 east into Binnimoor Fen. After 3½ miles, you reach a T-junction where you turn left onto the B1098 towards Upwell.*

In *'The Nine Tailors'*, Lord Peter Wimsey is driving his car along this road on a snowy New Year's Eve. Unfortunately he crashes at the hump-backed bridge, and is stuck overnight at the nearby rectory. When he helps ring in the New Year on the church bells, he hears about the mystery of 'The Thorpe Necklace'.

'Mile after mile of the flat road reeled away behind them. Here a windmill, there a solitary farmhouse, there a row of poplars strung along the edge of a reed-grown dyke. Wheat, potatoes, beet, mustard and wheat again' (*'The Nine Tailors'* 1923)

→ *After 2½ miles on the B1098, turn right onto the B1094 to the village of Christchurch.*

Christchurch - in 1917, Henry and Helen Sayer moved into the rectory in this little Fenland village, and Dorothy was a regular visitor. Inside the church is a photograph of Henry, along with a commemorative tablet. Both parents are buried in the churchyard. *For the final part of Dorothy L. Sayer's life, see 'Witham' on Day 2.*

→ *Remain on the B1094 north eastwards to the reach the village of Nordelph. Turn right here onto the A1122 to Downham Market.*

Denver - this village (just to the south of the A1122), has a fully-restored windmill. Nearby was the imaginary village of 'Denver Ducis', the ancestral home of Lord Peter Wimsey.

Lunch: Denver Windmill



AFTERNOON - Bury St. Edmunds

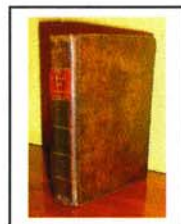
→ *From Downham Market, take the A10 south for 10 miles to reach the roundabout at Littleport. Here you turn left onto the A1101 (via the town of Mildenhall, and the large roundabout at Barton Mills) to Bury St. Edmunds.*

Bury St. Edmunds - this fine Georgian town is named after St. Edmund (the Saxon King of East Anglia). 12th C. abbey ruins, cathedral (complete with its new Gothic-style tower), award-winning gardens, a Georgian theatre and the smallest pub in Britain 'The Nutshell'. *Market - Wed, Sat. Tourist Information Centre - 6 Angel Hill +44 (0)1284 764667.*

Ruth Rendell is one of today's leading crime writers. Born in 1930, she was educated at Loughton in Essex. After leaving school, she worked as a reporter - then in 1950, married a fellow journalist. For the next decade, she became a housewife and unpublished writer. Her first novel 'From Doon with Death' (1964), introduced Detective Chief Inspector Wexford. By the mid 1990's, she had produced almost fifty crime novels and short stories, some under the pseudonym of Barbara Vine. Many of her novels are based in the East of England - with Bury St. Edmunds featured in *'The Brimstone Wedding'* (1995).



Ruth Rendell



A book of human skin

Pay a visit to the Moyses Hall Museum. Inside are the gruesome relics of the Red Barn Murder (see *Polstead* on Day 2). These include the death mask of William Corder, who was tried and hanged in the town for the murder of Maria Marten in 1827. A book giving an account of the murder, and bound in Corder's skin can also be seen.

Afternoon tea: Bury St. Edmunds

Overnight - Bury St. Edmunds



DAY 2 - Bury St. Edmunds to Maldon (85m/137km)

MORNING - Sudbury and Polstead

→ *Take the A134 south to Sudbury.*

Sudbury - this ancient market town, was the birthplace of Thomas Gainsborough (the famous painter) in 1727. It also provided the scene for Ruth Rendell's *'Gallowglass'* (1990). *Market - Thurs, Sat. Tourist Information Centre - Town Hall, Market Hill +44 (0)1787 881320.*



Morning coffee: Sudbury

→ *Leave Sudbury on the A134 towards Colchester. After 6 miles, turn left onto the B1068 to Stoke-by-Nayland. Here you turn left onto an unclassified road north to the village of Polstead.*

Polstead - this pretty village, with its pastel-washed cottages and duck pond, was once the home of crime writer Ruth Rendell. Here she based some of her novels, such as *'A Fatal Inversion'* (1987).

The Red Barn Murder

Maria Marten was born in 1801, the daughter of Polstead mole-catcher Thomas Marten and his first wife Grace. Maria grew up to become a pretty and well-educated young woman. At the age of 18, Maria became involved with Thomas Corder, the respectable son of a wealthy Polstead farmer. Their courtship was largely carried out in secret, as Maria was not his equal in status. Thomas fathered Maria's first child, but during the pregnancy his visits became increasingly infrequent. He did not marry her and provided little financial support.



Maria Marten



William Corder

In March 1826, Maria took up with his younger brother William Corder (born in 1805). Once again the relationship was kept secret. But after Maria fell pregnant, she pressed William to marry her. Although he often promised marriage, he always found an excuse to delay the wedding.

On May 18 1827 William told Maria to meet him in the Red Barn. This was used by the Corder family for the storage of grain. Maria's family never saw or heard from her again. William had murdered and buried her in the Red Barn. For a time afterwards he continued to run the family farm, telling Maria's parents that she was well and staying with friends.

In April the following year, Thomas Marten was promoted by his second wife Ann to search the Red Barn. Here he discovered a shallow grave which contained Maria's body. William was arrested and taken to Polstead for the inquest. He was then sent to Bury St. Edmunds (see *Day 1*) to stand trial. William was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death by hanging. His body was then to be anatomised (or dissected). William was executed on Monday 11 August 1828 in front of thousands of spectators.

Today the cottage where Maria lived can be seen along 'Marten's Lane' in Polstead. Whilst the Corder's farm still stands in the centre of the village. Maria's tombstone at the church was so badly chipped away by souvenir hunters that its spot is unknown - although a plaque marks the approximate position. The Red Barn burnt down in 1842.



THE RED BARN

Lunch: Polstead/Stoke-by-Nayland



AFTERNOON - Maldon and Witham

→ *Retrace your steps to Stoke-by-Nayland, and take the B1087 to Nayland. At the T-junction with the A134, turn left to Colchester. Leave the town on the B1026 to Maldon. Along the way you pass through the village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy.*

Tolleshunt D'Arcy - from 1935, this village was the home of crime writer *Margery Allingham* (1904-1966), creator of the Albert Campion detective stories. The first of these was 'The Crime at Black Dudley' published in 1929.



Margery Allingham

Maldon - ancient hilltop town, port and sailing centre. Famed for its unique crystal sea salt and majestic Thames sailing barges. The museum contains a display on crime writer *Margery Allingham*, featuring photographs and first editions of her books. *Market - Thurs, Sat. Tourist Information Centre - Coach Lane +44 (0)1621 856503.*

→ *Take the B1018 to Witham.*



Witham - standing on the River Brain, this town has been a cloth-making, spa and coaching centre. *Market - Sat.*

22 Newland Street (marked with a plaque) was the last home of the crime writer *Dorothy L. Sayers*. After her father's death in 1928, she brought the neighbouring cottage to accommodate her mother. On the latter's death