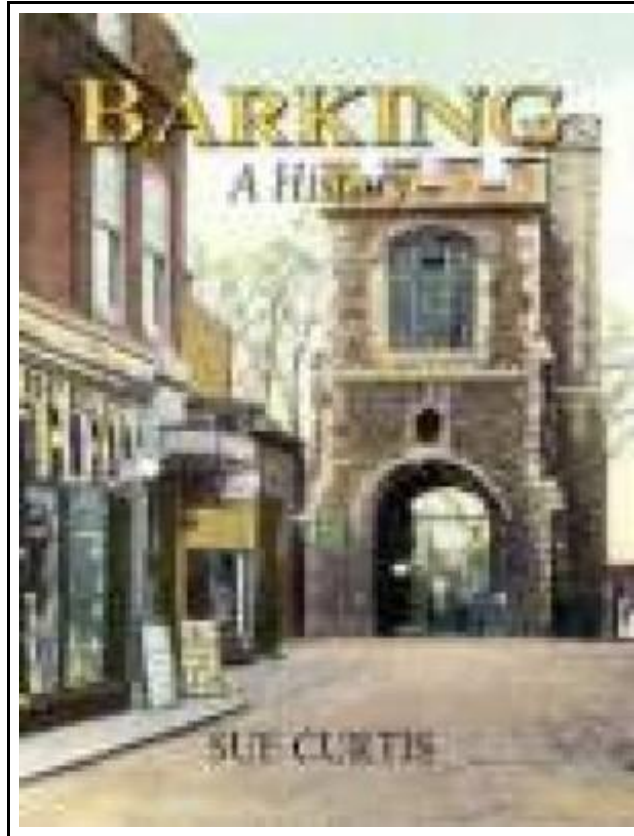


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The History Press Ltd. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Barking: A History, Sue Curtis, Barking's location on the banks of the Thames and the Roding was a strategic choice for the early Saxon settlement and religious foundation established there. This engaging new book charts the town's growth in association with its abbey, which became by far the most significant medieval nunnery in England. Many of the abbesses were rich, powerful women with influential - and sometimes royal - connections. William the Conqueror made the abbey his headquarters while the Tower of London was being built. After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539, Barking was saved from obscurity when Henry VIII himself became secular lord of the manor, which was the largest, and one of the oldest, in Essex. Surviving records of the Elizabethan Court House in Barking Broadway give entertaining insights into the manor cases that were tried there. The author also shows how, deprived of the lucrative trades involved in servicing a great abbey, the townsfolk concentrated on fishing, which had its heyday in the 19th century, when the Hewett family introduced the fleeting system, among other innovations. The arrival of the railway was another event that almost lost Barking its individuality: this time it was fated to become a London suburb. It was saved by the Charter of Incorporation gained in 1931, and in 1965 became a London borough. Illuminated by a wealth of old pictures, many never previously published, "Barking: A History" provides a lively account of Barking's past. Detailed research has made the neglected, yet fascinating, history of Barking available to residents and local historians alike, who will be equally pleased by this foray into a surprisingly rich and ancient heritage.

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