

## 1. Parish : Wetherden

**Meaning:** Wether valley (Ekwall)

**2. Hundred:** Stow

**Deanery:** Stow (- 1972), Stowmarket (1972 -)

**Union:** Stow

**RDC/UDC:** E. Stow RD (1894 - 1934), Gipping RD (1934 – 1974), Mid Suffolk DC (1974 - )

### Other administrative details:

Stowmarket Petty Sessional Division  
Stowmarket County Court District

**3. Area:** 1,856 acres (1912)

**4. Soils:**

**Mixed:**

- a) Fine loam over clay with slowly permeable subsoils, slight seasonal waterlogging. Some calcareous/non calcareous slowly permeable clay soils
- b) Small section of deep well drained sand/coarse loams, some with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, risk wind erosion.
- c) Stoneless clay soils over peat, variably affected by groundwater, risk localised flooding

**5. Types of farming:**

1500–1640	Thirsk:	Wood-pasture region, mainly pasture, meadow, engaged in rearing and dairying with some pig keeping, horse breeding and poultry. Crops mainly barley with some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp. Small area similar to sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilising agent, bred for fattening, barley main cash crop.
1818	Marshall:	Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow in preparation for corn products. Rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands.
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, beans, roots
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

**6. Enclosure:**

**7. Settlement:**

1958 Small compact development around The Common and Church. Secondary settlements at Little London, Base Green and Upper Town. Wetherden Hall Park may have affected development at Base Green. Airfield intrudes into NW corner of parish. Railway crosses parish W - E.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 38, 1801 – 60, 1851 – 111, 1871 – 108, 1901 – 102, 1951 – 123, 1981 – 156

**8. Communications:**

**Roads:** Roads to Haughley, Woolpit, Great Ashfield and Elmswell

**Rail:** 1891 Carrier to Stowmarket on Thursday  
1891 1½ miles Elmswell station: Bury St.  
Edmunds – Cambridge line opened (1879),  
unmanned halt (1967)

**Air:** Great Ashfield airfield: built 1942. Class A airfield, USAF station. Reverted to RAF (1945). Sold (1959/60), returned to agriculture

**9. Population:**

1086 — 62 recorded  
1327 — 22 taxpayers paid £2. 17s. 10¼d.  
1524 — 39 taxpayers paid £4. 19s. 2d.  
1603 — 176 adults  
1674 — 44 households  
1676 — 80 adults  
1801 — 346 inhabitants  
1831 — 487 inhabitants  
1851 — 541 inhabitants  
1871 — 445 inhabitants  
1901 — 400 inhabitants  
1931 — 431 inhabitants  
1951 — 415 inhabitants  
1971 — 410 inhabitants  
1981 — 438 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Rectory**

1254 Portion of Rector £6  
Portion of Prioress of Blakeberg (Benedictine Nunnery in Middleton, Norfolk) £6. 13s. 4d.  
Portion to Magistri Scolari (Master of Scholars) of St. Edmunds £2. £14. 13s. 4d.

1291 Valued £6

1535 Valued £6. 13s. 4d.  
 1815 Commodious rectory house built  
 1831 Curate. Stipend £55 p.a. Glebe house. Gross income £385 p.a.  
 Incumbent also holds Prebend in Exeter Cathedral and Vicarage of Sheephall, Herts.  
 1835 Valued £371  
 1891 20 acres 1R 7P glebe. Tithes commuted for £484. 10s. p.a. plus £6. 1s. 9d. for glebe land  
 1912 Valued £280. 15 acres glebe.

**Patrons:** Crown (1831), Lord Chancellor (1891)

**11. Church**      **St. Mary**  
 (Chancel, nave, S. aisle, porch, W. tower)

1086 Church plus 15 acres/15 acres free land, 1 acre/1 acre meadow  
 14<sup>th</sup> cent. Chancel, tower  
 15<sup>th</sup> cent. Nave, S. aisle and porch  
 1470 Will leaves 6s. 8d. to the nave  
 1484 Porch and aisle built by Sir John Sulyard (Chief Justice of England)  
 1643/44 Puritanical Vandals (William Dowsing) destroyed 100 superstitious pictures, 68 cherubim, chancel steps leveled and 19 inscriptions weighing 65 lbs. removed.  
 1861 Restoration

**Seats:** 300 (1915)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1603 13 recusants, 17 persons refuse Holy Communion  
 1606 2 recusant papists, 2 persons not receiving Communion  
 1611 2 persons neglect to attend church (2 also listed as papists), 1 recusant papist  
 1627 12 popish recusants  
 1676 18 papists, 4 nonconformists  
 1711-1821 7 houses set aside for worship  
 1837 New chapel built, listed - Baptist chapel (Kates Lane)  
 1927 New chapel opened  
 1967 'History of Baptist Church at Wetherden' by J. Duncan

**13. Manorial:**

**Wetherden**

12<sup>th</sup> cent. de Scales family owns (linked to Worlington, Shelland and Stowmarket)  
 Circa 1463 Sir John Sulyard owns (linked to Haughley and Stowmarket)  
 1809 Sir George Jerningham owns

1847 Rt. Hon. E.T.H. Thurlow owns

**Sub Manors:**

**Pulham Hall**

13<sup>th</sup> cent. Abbot of St. Edmunds claimed free warren  
Circa 15<sup>th</sup> cent.

Sulyard family owns (absorbed at some point by main manor)

**14. Markets/Fairs**

**15. Real property:**

1844 £2,304 rental value  
1891 £2,753 rateable value  
1912 £2,257 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844/1912 Land sub-divided

**17. Resident gentry:**

1679 Sir Edward Syliard  
1844 Hon. Rev. Sir Henry Leslie  
1912 J.S. Wakelin

**18. Occupations:**

1500-1549 1 yeoman  
1550-1599 6 yeomen, 1 tanner, 1 cordwainer  
1600-1649 14 yeomen, 1 wheelwright, 1 cooper, 1 labourer, 1  
clothworker, 1 tailor  
1650-1699 9 yeomen, 1 inn holder, 1 cordwainer, 2 spinsters, 1 linen  
weaver, 1 clerk  
1844 Plumber/painter, farm steward, schoolmistresses, 2 corn  
millers, shoemaker, maltster/beerhouse keeper,  
blacksmith, relieving officers, wheelwright/blacksmith,  
victualler, grocer, 12 farmers, auctioneer  
1912 Sub-postmaster, marine store dealer, 9 farmers,  
miller/threshing machine owner/blacksmith/wheelwright/  
poor rate collector, assistant overseer, 2 bootmakers,  
grocer, beer retailer, 2 shopkeepers, blacksmith/cycle  
agent/repairer, publican, dairyman

**19. Education:**

1818 1 Sunday school on Br. Bells plan (42 attend)  
1833 2 dally schools (53 attend), 1 Sunday school (54 attend)  
Lending library

1844	National school teacher listed. Boarding school and day school listed
1891	Parochial school built (1868). Ladies Day and boarding school recorded
1912	Public Elementary school built (1868), average attendance (1912) 82
1980's	One of smallest schools in Suffolk (14 attend), threatened with closure

## 20. Poor relief:

1776	£92. 6s. 3d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£286. 17s. 4½d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£392. 13s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£642. 3s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£473. 10s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£440	spent on poor relief

## 21. Charities:

### Town Lands:

1840	11 acres 3R 34P let at £20. 15s. £5. 5s. to support of Sunday school. Residue to purchase of coals for poor in winter
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### Chinery's Gift:

1730	Rent charge of 20s. p.a. given for poor by Margaret Chinery from lands in New Street, Haughley for distribution among poor
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### Crawford's Bequest:

1868	by will of Rev. W.H. Crawford: £3,000 invested. Interest applied to maintaining 6 poor widows
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## 22. Other institutions:

circa 1400	Guild of Jesus in the church
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## 23. Recreation:

1668	Innholder recorded
1844	The Maypole public house (dated circa 15 <sup>TH</sup> cent.) 1 beerhouse and maltster
1891	The Maypole public house and 1 beerhouse
1912	The Maypole public house, modernised and extended (1982) 1 beer retailer

**24. Personal:**

Sir John Sulyard: (15<sup>th</sup> cent.) Lord Chief Justice of England (1483), among first to take up arms and levy men in Queen Mary's service against supporters of Lady Jane Grey. Given manor of Haughley in return for his loyalty. Part of his home at Wetherden Hall remains in a farmhouse of that name.

Robert Rosier: (circa 1556) believed to be of Mutton Hall (a Protestant) said to have been arrested by Sir John Sulyard and burned at stake in field on Wetherden-Woolpit road at Brennen (Burning) Hill.

**25. Other information:**

Wetherden Hall: Ancient mansion pulled down (15<sup>th</sup> cent.) and present mansion built by Sir John Sulyard. Mary I (16<sup>th</sup> cent.) said to have stayed at Wetherden Hall on her way to claim the throne. 'An Historical Tale of the Days of Queen Mary' by Rev. A. Brown (19<sup>th</sup> cent.)

Engraving of Wetherden Church by H. Davy (1827)

House in village said to be meeting place of supporters of Lady Jane Grey even though the Lord of the Manor supported Queen Mary.

Cottage said still to exist (1927) with room where Mass was celebrated in secret.

Mutton Hall: moated site, once reputedly the property of Abbey of St. Edmunds.