

1. Parish: Blythburgh

Meaning: Dwellers on the Blyth (Ekwall)

2. Hundred: Blything

Deanery: Dunwich (-1868), Dunwich (South) (1868-1914), N. Dunwich (1914 – 1972), Halesworth (1972 -)

Union: Blything

RDC/UDC: Blything RD (1894-1934), Blyth RD (1934-1974), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Blything Petty Sessional Division
Halesworth County Court District

3. Area:

4,325 acres of land, 5 acres of water, 23 acres of tidal water and 95 acres of foreshore (1912)

4. Soils:

Mixed: a) Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland. Risk wind erosion
b) Fine loams over clay, slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged.

5. Types of farming:

1086		3,000 herring
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Light lands, sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilizing agents, bred for fattening. Barley main cash crop
1818	Marshall:	Management varies with the condition of sandy soils. Universal feature – turnips as preparation for corn and grass
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, oast, sugar beet
1969	Trist:	Main crops are barley and sugar beet but on better sands rotation of wheat, barley, sugar beet or kale is practiced. Also cattle farming

6. Enclosure:

1086	4 th penny dues of enclosure of Riseburg belonging to the King
1863	84 acres enclosed under General Acts 1862

7. Settlement:

1958/1975 Compact development around central church and river crossing. Declining ancient market town
Blome: 1679 "Tis now a poor decayed town"
Restricted development by marsh land to E., wet lands to W., and River Blyth to N. Few scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 57 in Blythburgh (total), 12 in Bulcamp hamlet and 10 in Hinton, 1801 – 43, 1851 – 125, 1871 – 141, 1901 – 118, 1951 – 143, 1981 – 127

8. Communications:

Road: To Henham, Walberswick, Wenhaston and Thorington
1844 Mail cart, coaches, carriers to Ipswich and Yarmouth daily
Junction of Beccles and Lowestoft turnpike roads
1912 Situated on main London – Yarmouth road. Carrier from Southwold daily

Rail: 1891 rail station: Southwold – Halesworth line opened (1879), closed (1929)

Water: River Blythe. Navigable to point beyond Blythburgh (15th cent.)

9. Population:

1086 — 75 recorded
1327 — 71 taxpayers paid £4. 10s. 1d. (includes Walberswick)
1524 — 70 taxpayers paid £25. 12s. 4d.
1603 — 230 adults
1674 — 71 households
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 886 inhabitants
1831 — 983 inhabitants
1851 — 1,118 inhabitants
1871 — 861 inhabitants
1901 — 646 inhabitants
1931 — 584 inhabitants
1951 — 649 inhabitants
1971 — 445 inhabitants
1981 — 414 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Perpetual Curacy (1831) Vicarage (1891)

1254 valued £17. 6s. 8d.
1650 Valued £35
1831 Glebe house. Incumbent also holds Perpetual curacy of Walberswick and the Vicarage of Arncliffe, York.
1844 Impropiator (Sir Charles Blois) allows £45 p.a. to incumbent from tithes. Reduced to £15 (1891)

Patrons:

John Brooke (1650), Sir C. Blois (1831), Sir R.M. Blois (1891)

- 11. Church** Holy Trinity (128' long, tower 83' high)
(Chancel, side chapels, clerestoried nave, aisles, S. porch, W. tower)
- 1086 1 church + 2 carucates land
Norman N. & W. walls
- 1442 Bequest for building chancel
- 1450 Built on site of Austin Priory. Remains of which exist to
NE of church
- 1452 N. chapel (Hopton) founded
- 15th cent. Tower
- 1577 Spire fell damaging the font
- 1643 William Dowsing ordered 20 superstitious pictures
destroyed, 3 crosses, 20 cherubim and another 200
pictures to be removed. £1. 5s. 6d. paid by
churchwardens for removal of brasses, rails etc. (1644)

Seats: 200

Other religious institutions:

Augustinian Priory:

Dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary
Founded as dependency of St. Osyth.

- 1291 Income £594. Sea encroachment and the balck death
reduced the income in 14th cent. Sustained 4/5 canons
(15th cent.)
- 1537 House suppressed

Hospital/Priory of Black Friars:

- 1384 Removed from Dunwich to Blythburgh due to
encroachment of sea
- 1760 Remains of ancient chapel called Holy Rood N. side main
street leading to bridge

12. Nonconformity etc:

- 1882 Primitive Methodist chapel (built 1837)

13. Manorial:

1086	Manor of 5 carucates 15 acres belonging to the King
1086	Manor of 1 carucate belonging to Roger Bigot
12 th cent.	Bishop of Norwich owns
	Mid 12 th cent. John Fitz Robert owns (Charter at Suckling)
	Late 12 th cent. William de Norwich owns
1372	Sir Robert de Swillington owns
Circa 1585	Links with Bucklesham and Nacton (Sir Robert Broke)
1909	Sir R.B.M Blois owns

Sub-Manors:

Blythburgh Late Priory

12 th cent.	Abbot of St. Osyth owns
1538	Absorbed by main manor (Sir Arthur Hopton)

Hinton Late Priory

12 th cent.	Abbot of St. Osyth owns
1538	Absorbed by main manor (Sir Arthur Hopton)

Westwood (questionable as to manorial status)

1415	Links with Aldringham (de la Pole)
1489	Absorbed by main manor (Sir Arthur Hopton)

14. Markets/Fairs

1066	Market mentoned
12 th cent.	William de Norwich had licence for weekly market on Thursday and 3 annual fairs
1324	Market and 2 fairs
1679	Market no longer exists
1844	2 annual fairs held on 5 th April for toys and pleasure, and on 22 nd June (at Hinton), obsolete (pre 1844)

15. Real property:

1844	£2,818 rental value
1891	£3,550 rateable value
1912	£3,125 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844/1891	Land sub-divided
1912	Sir Ralph Barrett Macnaghten Blois and Earl of Stradbroke principle owners

17. Resident gentry:

- 1680 2 gents listed
- 18. Occupations:**
- 1086 2 mills, 3,000 herring, 1 money-changer, 1 salt pan
- 1500-1549 1 mercer, 2 cordwainers, 1 butcher
- 1550-1599 4 yeomen, 6 husbandmen, 1 mercer, 1 cooper, 1 tinker, 1 weaver, 1 painter
- 1600-1649 10 yeomen, 4 husbandmen, 2 blacksmiths, 1 mercer, 1 thatcher, 1 shoemaker, 1 carpenter, 1 chapman
- 1650-1699 11 yeomen, 4 husbandmen, 1 vinter
- 1831 133 in agriculture, 16 in retail/handicrafts, 2 in labouring, 25 in domestic service, 3 others
- 1844 Pre-1844 considerable fishing industry
Millwright, governor of workhouse, wheelwright/beerhousekeeper, policeman, corn merchant, schoolmistress, registrar, victualler, 3 boot/shoemakers, 12 farmers, miller, 3 grocer/drapers, tailor
- 1912 Public offices, sub-postmistress, station master, teachers, beer retailer, 2 apartment owners, cart builders, grocer/draper, 2 shopkeepers, shoemaker, 4 farmers, dressmaker, surgeon, game-keeper, blacksmith, miller, publican, 3 farmers and gamekeeper at Bulcamp and 4 farmers at Hinton

19. Education:

- 1818 1 Sunday school (50 attend)
- 1833 1 Infants school (6 attend), 2 daily schools in the Poorhouse (181 attend, 151 assisted from poor rate), 1 Sunday school endowed with £3 p.a. (46 attend)
- 1844 Sunday school. 1 schoolmistress listed
- 1875 School built for 145. public Elementary school, average attendance (1912) 104, closed 1964. Children transferred to Wenhaston
- 1879 School Board established

20. Poor relief:

- | | | |
|------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1776 | £111. 4s. 6d. | spent on poor relief |
| 1803 | £212. 5s. 11¼d. | spent on poor relief |
| 1818 | £488. 1s. | spent on poor relief |
| 1830 | £849. 5s. | spent on poor relief |
| 1832 | £1,085. 4s. | spent on poor relief |
| 1834 | £1,109 | spent on poor relief |

21. Charities:

Neales Charity:

1701 by will of Thomas Neale. £3 p.a. to support of Sunday School

Dole:

1840 £1 p.a. distributed in bread and money

Walter's Dole, Raymond's Gift:

1589 Bequest of Matthew Walter. £1 p.a. for the poor

1728 Bequest of Benham Raymond. £5 p.a. for education of 12 poor children

Church Land:

1844 At Thistley Meadow and Penny Pightle let at £19 p.a.

22. Other institutions:

No dates Guilds of St. Barbara, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Andrew and St. John

1500 Almshouse east of church

1754 Jail in existence. House of Correction said to be in great decay (1641)

1765/66 Union workhouse built at Bulcamp, partly destroyed by mob during construction, dispersed by military. Opened (1766) housing 56 paupers. 352 inmates in 1767 and 264 in 1843

No date Quarter Sessions previously held in Blythburgh

1926 Working Mens Club

23. Recreation:

1520 Inn of the Hart in existence

1844/1912 1 beerhouse/retailer, THE WHITE HART public house

1904 Working Mens Club, demolished 1950's

1920's Womens Institute formed

1973 Annual race by Southwold Sailing Club from Southwold to Blythburgh

24. Personal:

1614 Robert Brooke, High Sheriff of Suffolk

25. Other information:

Decline of town from flourishing town and port with considerable fishery has been attributed to the suppression of the Priory and the silting up of the river making navigation accessible only by small barges.

An accidental fire destroyed many houses, damage estimated at £18.030 (1679)

Terrific thunderstorm occurred Sunday, lightning damaged church killing 2 and burning approximately 18 others (1577)
 Westwood Lodge: built mid 17th cent. by John Brooke. Original ancient house thought to have been destroyed by fire.
 Legend: Anna, King of East Angles, and Firminus his son were slain fighting Penda, King of Mercia, in Bulcamp forest and were buried there (654 AD)
 More than half the town said to have been destroyed by fire (1667)
 New turnpike road constructed (circa 1780)
 Chapel of Holy Cross (wayside chapel) located beside great bridge (1525)
 Old church chest containing churchwardens' accounts and other documents destroyed by accidental fire (1831)
 Gallows situated by Hulver (Holly) Heath (1400)
 Lease exist relating to Westwood Lodge (1573). Alterations (1614).
 Former Lodge of park or warren, converted to farmhouse (1637)
 Sir Owen Hopton said to have enclosed the common land of Blythburgh "with pail and dyke and laid into his park" (1567)
 Disputes over common land still occurred (17th cent.) sometimes occasioning violent clashes with Sir Robert Brooke's men
 Held priority over Dunwich in administration of corporal punishment (1086)
 Town at height of it's prosperity (15th cent.)
 Churchwardens' accounts in print (15/16th cent.)
 White Hart Inn doubled as courthouse (16th cent.)
 Blythburgh Lodge: (16th cent.) Grade II listed manor house, extended (17th cent.)
 'Blythburgh' by M.J. Becker (1935)

Archaeological Sites

Med. hearths, postholes, pits and ditches (CRN 801)
 Site of Blythburgh Priory (CRN 1876)
 Rom. Salt working site, tile production site (CRN 1878)
 Rom. Square enclosure (CRN 1883)
 Field system, track (CRN 1884)
 Ring ditch (CRN 1887)
 Reputed site of 7th cent. battle, human skeletons (CRN 1895)
 Stray finds: Med. Key (CRN 1902)
 Pottery (CRN 1903)
 Coin (CRN 1513)
 Neo. Flint axe (CRN 1877, 1886, 1888)
 Worked flint (CRN 1889)
 Un. Inhumation/human skeleton (CRN 1882)
 B.A. axe (CRN 1890)
 Rom. Pottery and coin (CRN 1891)
 Sax. Whalebone writing tablet (CRN 1892)
 Scatter finds: Med. Pottery (CRN 1901, 1881, 1885)

Sax. Pottery (CRN 1879, 1880)
Un. Human skeletons (CRN 1896)