

1. Parish: Debenham

Meaning: Enclosed meadow by deep river (Ekwall)

2. Hundred: Thredling

Deanery: Claydon (-1972), Loes (1972-)

Union: Bosmere and Claydon

RDC/UDC: (E. Suffolk) Bosmere and Claydon RD (1894-1934),
Gipping RD (1934-1974), Mid Suffolk DC (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Framlingham Petty Sessional Division
Framlingham and Saxmundham County Court District

3. Area: 3,322 acres (1912)

4. Soils:

Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk
water erosion

5. Types of farming:

| | | |
|-----------|-------------|---|
| 1500–1640 | Thirsk: | Wood-pasture region. Mainly pasture, meadow, engaged in rearing and dairying with some pigs keeping, horse breeding and poultry. Crops mainly barley with some wheat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp. |
| 1818 | Marshall: | Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products |
| 1937 | Main crops: | Well cultivated land |
| 1969 | Trist: | More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet |

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1953 River Deben crosses parish NW-SE and forms part of southern boundary. Small town development around river crossing. Church centrally situated.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 127, 1801 – 390, 1851 – 356, 1871 – 324,
1901 – 290, 1951 – 301, 1981 – 562

8. Communications:

Road: Roads to Winston, Earl Soham, Aspall, Mickfield and Kenton
1844 Carriers to Ipswich and London Monday and Thursday
to Yarmouth Wednesday and Saturday
to Ipswich Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday
to Stowmarket Tuesday and Friday
1891 Carriers to Ipswich daily
1912 Omnibus to Ipswich daily
Carrier to Ipswich daily
To Stowmarket Friday
Rail: 1891 8 miles Framlingham station: Wickham Market –
Framlingham line, opened (1859), closed for
passengers (1952), closed for goods (1965)
1912 2½ miles Aspall station: Mid Suffolk Light Railway line,
opened (1904) for goods, opened for passengers
(1908), closed (1952)
Water: River Deben

9. Population:

1086 — 68 recorded
1327 — 31 taxpayers paid £3. 15s. 1½d. (includes Winston)
1524 — 93 taxpayers paid £15. 12s. 6d.
1603 — 300 adults
1674 — 200 households
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 1,215 inhabitants
1831 — 1,629 inhabitants
1851 — 1,653 inhabitants
1871 — 1,349 inhabitants
1901 — 1,182 inhabitants
1931 — 1,016 inhabitants
1951 — 906 inhabitants
1971 — 1,119 inhabitants
1981 — 1,442 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Vicarage

1254 Valued £33. 6s. 8d.
1291 Valued £30
To the vicar of the same ^6. 13s. 4d. £36. 13s. 4d.
1535 Valued £15. 2s. 6d.
1603 Valued £15
1831 Glebe house, Gross income £175 p.a.
Tithes commuted. Rectorial for £651 p.a. Vicarial for £282
p.a. (1838)
1912 Nett value £185

Patrons: Sir H. Gawdye (1603), Lord Henniker (1831-)

11. Church

St. Mary

(Chancel, nave, aisles, W. tower, Galilee porch and priests chamber)

1086 3 parts of church St. Mary + 30 acres land
4th par of church of St. Andrew, 4th part of its lands
1260 Chancel, restored (1883)
14th cent. Tower, upper section, lower section exhibits Saxon work
1871 Restoration
1883-84 Work begun on restoration of chancel

St. Andrew

Site unknown, suggested sites at Ulveston and Winston

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597 2 persons not attending church or receiving communion for 12 months
1603 1 recusant
1644/46 Vicar of Debenham ejected by Suffolk Committee for Scandalous Ministers
Congregational chapel founded (1662), rebuilt (1824), renovated (1895 and 1924), seats 800
Independent chapel formed (1700)
Mission Room (1908)
Salvation Army hall (1927)

13. Manorial:

1066 Manor of 1 carucate held by Edric
1086 Manor of 1 carucate belonging to Robert Malet
1066 Manor of 8 acres held by Saxi under patronage of the Abbot
1086 Manor of 1 carucate 22 acres belonging to Ranulf Peverel

Crows Hall al Woodward

1221 Robert Aguilers owns
1331 Robert Talbot owns (linked to Rickinghall Superior and Hintlesham) passing to Gawdy family (linked to Pettaugh and Ashfield)
Circa 1707 John Pitt owns (linked to Ashfield)
1905 Lord Henniker owns (linked to Gislingham, Mellis, Stoke Ash, Thronham, Wickham Skeith and Ashfield)

Sub-Manors:

Ulveston Hall

1313 John de Ulveston owns
1506 Christopher Thwaytes owns
1552 Left to Corporation of Ipswich for charitable purposes

Debenham Priory

At early date vested in Butley Priory
1542 Gawdy family owns (absorbed by main manor)

Bludhall

1350 Elizabeth Luttrell owns (linked to Great and Little
Waldingfield)
Circa 1440 John Cheke owns (linked to Stonham Parva)
16th cent. late 16th cent. John Pitt owns (absorbed by main manor)

Sackvilles

13th cent. Fulco de Beaufo owns
1315 Sir Andrew de Sackville owns
1429 Robert Crane owns (linked to Gislingham, Mendlesham
and Stonham Parva)
1531 Christopher Thwaytes owns

Harborough Hall cum Aspell or cum Debenham

1304 Walter de Langton owns
14th cent. Late 14th cent. Broke family of Aspell owns
1770 Temple Chevallier owns (absorbed by Harborough Hall)

Giesting al Gostings/Goslings Hall al Gostelens Hall

No date Robert Cheke owns (possible linkage with Bludhall)
Circa 1636 John Bretton owns
1847 Charles Chevallier owns (absorbed by Harborough Hall)

Scotnetts with the Haugh

1307 Gilbert del Hawe owns
1470 Gawdy family owns (absorbed by main manor)

14. Markets/Fairs

1221 Grant of market to Robert Aguilers
Market and fairs existed (circa 1316)

1844 Market formerly held on Friday discontinued. Revived (1851) but not used between April and September.
Market place in existence
Lower part of market house used as police station.
Row of lime trees lines one side of market place.
Fair for cattle etc., held on 24th June.
Lamb Show held 2nd September, abolished (pre 1891)

15. Real property:

1844 £5,041. 18s. 6d. rental value
1891 £4,577 rateable value
1912 £4,688 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844/1891 Land sub-divided
1912 Lord Henniker, principle owner

17. Resident gentry:

1680 1 gentleman
1686 Sir Charles Gawdy
1844 Very Rev. J. Bedingfield, R. Clark, G. Mordant and M. Wade
1912 H. Abbott JP

18. Occupations:

1500-1549 4 yeomen, 1 cooper
1550-1599 6 yeomen, 1 blacksmith, 2 carpenters, 1 wheelwright, 1 husbandman, 1 mercer, 1 tiler, 1 weaver
1600-1649 1 tailor, 15 yeomen, 1 blacksmith, 1 butcher, 1 carpenter, 1 wheelwright, 1 spinster, 3 husbandmen, 1 inn holder, 2 joiners, 1 turner, 1 glover, 1 grocer, 1 cutler, 1 apothecary, 1 currier
1650-1699 2 tailor, 18 yeomen, 3 blacksmiths, 3 butchers, 1 razier, 2 carpenters, 1 wheelwright, 1 spinster, 4 husbandmen, 1 inn holder, 1 joiner, 1 woollen draper, 1 linen weaver, 1 shearman, 1 glover, 1 saddler, 1 apothecary
Note: Shearman: One who cuts woollen cloth
1831 161 in agriculture, 150 in retail trade, 9 professionals, 16 in labouring, 42 in domestic service, 8 others
1844 Gun maker/whitesmith, mill manager, 2 founders, attorneys clerk, clerk, cooper, 4 attorneys, dish turner, 7 teachers, 2 auctioneers, 5 bakers, 1 bank, 4 blacksmiths, 3 beerhouse keepers, 11 boot/shoemakers, 3 bricklayers, 3 butchers, 2 cabinet makers, 3 millers, 2 curriers, 2 druggists, 12 farmers, 4 gardeners, 3 glovers, 5 grocers, 3 hairdressers, 4 publicans, 1 iron foundry, 1 ironmonger, 5 joiners, 2 maltsters, 3 milliners, 3 painters/plumbers, 3

saddlers, 2 straw hat makers, 3 surgeons, 7 tailor/drapers, 1 tinner/braziers, 1 watchmaker, 2 wheelwrights

1912 Sub-postmistress, police officers, 21 firemen, town crier, clerk to parish council, medical officer, teachers, 19 farmers, 4 grocers, shopkeeper, 3 bakers, bankers, 3 hairdressers, chemist, corn/flour dealer, fried fish shop,, chimney sweep, millwright, thatcher, 2 apartment owners, wood hurdle maker, millers, basket maker, 4 publicans, draper/tailor, gas light company, printer, building society, 3 insurance agents, pork butcher, builder, surgeon, 3 hawkers, 2 cyclemakers/ironmongers, blacksmith, cooper, 4 carriers, 3 dressmakers, taxidermist, threshing machine owner, 2 butchers, fish dealer, draper, miller, 2 saddlers, bootmaker, 2 carpenter/wheelwrights, watch/clockmaker, beer retailer, farm bailiff, plumber/painter, bricklayer, shopkeeper/wheelwright, monumental mason.

19. Education:

1818 1 charity school (founded by Sir Robert Hitcham (1648), 50 attend, 20 taught free
5 day schools (228 attend)
2 Sunday schools (270 attend) held in upper part of Market House

1833 55 attend charity school, 20 free
2 daily schools (78 attend)
1 established church Sunday school (147 attend)
1 Independent Sunday school (132 attend)
2 National schools built (1834), amalgamated (circa 1912)

1844 Academies (5 attend)
Public Elementary school built (1838), enlarged (1895), average attendance (1912) 73
Public Elementary school built (1879), average attendance (1912) 129

1891 Boarding school run by Miss Bransby
Congregational schoolroom

1912 Boarding/day school run by Miss Boulton
Congregational Sunday school
Debenham Modern school opened

20. Poor relief:

| | | |
|------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1776 | £406. 1s. 4d. | spent on poor relief |
| 1803 | £612. 11s. 7½d. | spent on poor relief |
| 1818 | £1,342. 9s. | spent on poor relief |
| 1830 | £1,017 | spent on poor relief |
| 1832 | £1,059. 6s. | spent on poor relief |
| 1834 | £890. 10s. | spent on poor relief |

21. Charities:

Garney's Charity:

1684 by will of Wentworth Garneys: Messuage, cottage, farm and lands in Kenton (22 acres) let at £31. 10s. p.a. half of which is distributed among the poor

Sir Robert Hitcham's Charity:

1648 Foundation of free school and relief of poor

Simpson's Charity:

1697 by will o John Simpson: £30 p.a. from farm; £17. 6s. 8d. distributed in bread, £12. 13s. 4d. to buying cloth/stuff for coats/gowns given to poor on 25th December

22. Other institutions:

1776 Workhouse (40 inmates)
1844 Association for the Prosecution of Felons
Town lit by Gas Light Co., established in Water Land (1858)
1891 Sick Club called Debenham Congregational Society
Debenham Literary Institute established (1853) (80 members)
Police station built ((1849), residence for 2 policemen
Foresters Hal built (1905), seats 600
1912 Fire Brigade, compliment of 21 men
Institute opened as war memorial (1920)

23. Recreation:

1600-1699 2 inn holders listed
1844 3 beerhouses, 4 public houses
1891 2 beerhouses, 5 public houses
1912 Village Club and reading room, Foresters Hall used for entertainments, Ancient Order of Foresters, 4 public houses, 1 beer retailer
20th cent. Recreational Development Council

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Town suffered from severe fire (1744), 30 houses destroyed at north end of town.

Copyhold courts are said to have been held by all the manors.

Bludhall: said to be built on site of battle with Danes.

Transcription of documents relating to Debenham and area collated by P. Northeast in RO.

Crows Hall: built (1510) by Framlingham family, moated building long used as farm house.

2 incidents of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest (1844)

'Medieval Moated Farmhouse at Debenham' by E.J. Owles (study of moated site at Bloodwood)

Red Lion: said to be ancient building situated in centre of town.

Water supply derived from wells (1912)

Planning report discouraging development and large scale extension of parish (1972).

Fire destroyed community centre (1975), opened (1972), rebuilt (1976).

Archaeological Sites

Med. pit (CRN 4148)

Med. ruined building (CRN 4149)

Med. moated sites (CRN 4151, 4152, 4161, 4162, 4164, 7488)

Med. priory/brick (CRN 4163) (circumstantial evidence)

Stray finds: Rom. Gang chain (CRN 4146)

Brooch (CRN 6804, 7359, 7360)

Coin (CRN 41467)

Med. coin (CRN 41450)

Pottery (CRN 1273)

Token (CRN 4168)

Buckle (CRN 7357)

Neo. Axe (CRN4165)

Worked flint (CRN 4166)

Scatter finds: Med. buckle (CRN 7358)

Rom. Pottery (CRN 4147)

Neo. Burnt area (CRN 4145)