

1. Parish: Earl Soham

Meaning: Meadow/enclosure by the lake (Earl refers to the land being owned by the Earls of Norfolk) (Ekwall)

2. Hundred: Loes

Deanery: Bosmere (-1853), Loes (1853-)

Union: Plomesgate

RDC/UDC: (E. Suffolk) Plomesgate RD (1894-1934), Deben RD (1934-1974), Suffolk Coastal DC (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Framlingham Petty Sessional Division
Framlingham and Saxmundham County Court District

3. Area: 1,977 acres (1912)

4. Soils:

Mixed; a) Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion
b) Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay soils

5. Types of farming:

1086		Wood for 100 pigs, 12 acres meadow, 2 cobs, 4 cattle, 30 pigs, 42 sheep, 60 goats
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:	Wheat, roots, barley, hay
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1958 Length of Roman road crosses parish NE-SW and appears to have passed through the village. Large ribbon type development along main A1120 (Pettaugh-Saxstead) road. Church situated at junction of main road with road to Framlingham in NE sector of village. Secondary settlement at Soham Town Corner. Few scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 45, 1801 – 76, 1851 – 97, 1871 – 153, 1901 – 133, 1951 – 152, 1981 – 150

8. Communications:

Road: Roads to Brandeston, Kettleburgh, Saxstead, Bedfield, Ashfield cum Thorpe, Monk Soham, Cretingham and Framlingham.
1891 Carriers to Ipswich Tuesday, Friday and Saturday to Framlingham daily
1912 Carriers to Framlingham daily to Ipswich Tuesday and Saturday

Rail: 1891 3½ miles Framlingham station: Wickham Market-Framlingham line, opened (1859), closed for passengers (1952), closed for goods (1965)

9. Population:

1086 — 38 recorded
1327 — 36 taxpayers paid £2. 16s. 6d. (includes Kenton)
1524 — 46 taxpayers paid £5. 8s. 8d.
1603 — 160 adults
1674 — 58 households
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 563 inhabitants
1831 — 762 inhabitants
1851 — 729 inhabitants
1871 — 683 inhabitants
1901 — 551 inhabitants
1931 — 528 inhabitants
1951 — 475 inhabitants
1971 — 434 inhabitants
1981 — 393 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £13. 6s. 8d.
1291 Valued £16

1535	Portion of Monastery of Thetford £1 Valued £10	£17. 0s. 0d.
1831	Glebe house. Gross income £518 p.a. Incumbent also holds Monk Soham	
	Tithes commuted for £607 (1840)	
1844	Residence and 35 acres 3R 16P glebe	
1891	Valued £607. 29 acres glebe and residence	
1912	Nett value £374. 29 acres glebe and residence	

Patrons:

The King (1603), J.H. Groome (1831), Wadham College, Oxford (1891)

11. Church St. Mary
(Chancel, Nave, south porch, west tower)

Circa 1320	Chancel
Circa 1470	Nave and tower
15 th cent.	Porch
1891	Restoration
1899/1900	Restorations

Note: During restoration a dry flint well was found (24" X 19" deep) in the aisle between the chancel and the tower.

Seats: 220 (1915)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597	Incumbent dismissed for not reading the injunctions
1844	Baptist and Wesleyan chapels in existence
	Baptist chapel built (1842/63) 400 seats, former chapel converted to use as a village club (1889)

13. Manorial:

Earl Soham Manor

1066	Manor of 4 carucates held by Anund, a free man under patronage of St. Edmunds.
1086	Held among the lands of Count Alan
1140	Hubert de Montcheney owns (linked to Eyke, Edwardstone and Stratford St. Mary).
Circa 1177	Hugh Bigot, Earl of Norfolk owns (linked to Framlingham)
1554	Thomas, Duke of Norfolk owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
17 th cent.	John Cornwallis owns (linked to Cretingham and Badingham)
1625	John Cotton owns (linked to Cretingham)
Mid 17 th	Leicester Devereux owns, 6 th Viscount Hereford

1753 John Boyfield owns
 Circa 1786 John Ayton owns (linked to Mendham and Knodishall)
 1838 Comprised 70 messuages, 6 cottages, 1,200+ acres copyhold land
 1896 Charles Henry Capon owns
 1909 George Frederick Beaumont owns (linked to Haughley, Stowmarket and Lindsey)

14. Markets/Fairs

Grant of market and fair to Roger Bigod (1291/92)
 Further grants (1302/03), (1314/15) and (1327/28)
 Fair held on August 4th for lambs (1759)
 1844 Lamb and stock fair held on July 23rd/24th, abolished (1872)
 'Earl Soham Fair in George III's reign' by G.E. Fussell. Suffolk Local History Council No. 8 p.3

15. Real property:

1844 £3,261 rental value
 1891 £2,947 rateable value
 1912 £2,428 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844/1912 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1844 Rev. J. Udney Robson BA
 1891 Rev. R. Abbay MA
 1912 Rev. Canon R. Abbay MA, Lady C.I. Grant-Duff, Rev. J. H. H. Groome BA and Rev. W.H. Groome MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1599 3 husbandmen, 8 yeomen, 1 tanner, 1 twill weaver
 1600–1649 1 husbandman, 16 yeomen, 1 glover, 1 cordwainer, 1 tanner, 2 coopers 1 vintner, 1 weaver
 1650–1699 1 husbandman, 12 yeomen, 1 clerk, 2 blacksmiths, 2 coopers, 1 linen weaver, 1 physician
 1831 107 in agriculture, 56 in retail trade, 7 professionals, 3 in labouring, 36 in domestic service, 11 others
 1844 Corn dealer, bricklayer/plasterer, painter/plumber/glazier, 2 school teachers, surgeon, brickmaker, maltster, thatcher, watchmaker, saddler, victualler, butcher, glover, whip maker/hairdresser, 2 blacksmiths, 6 boot/shoemakers, beerhouse keeper, 2 corn millers, 13 farmers, 3 grocer/drapers, 5 joiners, 2 tailor/drapers, 2 wood turners, 2 wheelwrights

1912 Sub-postmaster, school teachers, police officer, 2 farm bailiffs, miller, innkeeper/carpenter, 11 farmers, builder/contractor, gardener, insurance agent, shopkeeper, surgeon, bootmaker/carrier, 2 bricklayers, grocer, grocer/draper, carrier, beer retailer, blacksmith, dressmaker, butcher, threshing machine owner

19. Education:

1818 1 Sunday school on Madras system (60 attend)
1833 2 infants day schools (36 attend), 4 day and boarding schools (72 attend), 1 Sunday school (40 attend)
1844 Schoolmaster and mistress recorded
School built (1850), enlarged (1874/75), library added (1890), enlarged again (1911), average attendance (1912) 130
School board formed (1874/75)

20. Poor relief:

1776	£80. 8s. 4d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£169. 6s. 8d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£720. 2s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£621. 8s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£642. 8s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£661. 8s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

Wyards Charity:

1677 by will of Robert Wyard. £5 p.a.: 10s. to minister for sermon on 25th February, 25s. distributed to poor attending church, 5s. to bellringer, 10s. for entertainment of churchwardens, constables, overseers of the poor and bellringers, £2. 10s. applied as above of 23rd April.

Charity Land:

1798 2 cottages (5 tenements) let to poor at low rent (£9. 10s. p.a.)
46 acres let at £62. 4s. p.a. applied to benefit of poor.

Kerseys Gift:

1816 by will of Joseph Kersey: Interest on £800 (dividends of £33. 6s 1d. (1840)) distributed in bread or coals among the poor of Earl Soham, Charsfield, Dallinghoo and Marlesford.

Cappers Gift:

1818 bequest of Rev. Capper: dividends on £195 (£6. 6s. p.a.) applied to purchase and distribution of bread on Sunday.

22. Other institutions:

Charity tenement built (1581/83) called 'Black Dames'
Reading Room and Club established in converted Baptist
Chapel (1889)
Friendly Society (80 members) (1803)
1891 Police officer listed
Indoor Equestrian Centre built (1979)
Village Hall in existence (1981)

23. Recreation:

1844 The Falcon Inn (timber-framed circa 16th cent.) and
beerhouse
1891/1912 The Falcon Inn and 1 beerhouse
Bowling Club, Cricket Club, Horticultural Society
The Victoria Inn and The Falcon Inn (1969)

24. Personal:

The Cornwallis family
Sir John Cotton: sometimes Alderman of London, resident of the parish
(1644), High Sheriff (1644). Gave large amounts of
money to provide clothing for the King's troops. His
supposed opposition to Parliament resulted in
Commission being sent to the village (see '25. Other
Information'), died (1655). Portrait believed to exist. East
Anglian Miscellany (1915) p.43

25. Other information:

Soham Lodge: originally (13th cent.) hunting lodge, rebuilt (1789) by
John Ayton, incorporates traces of brick bays (16th cent.)
moated, enclosed by brick wall. Former seat of the
Cornwallis family.
'Earl Soham Lodge' East Anglian Miscellany (915) p.43
Street Farmhouse: contains remnants of wall painting (18th cent.)
Parliamentary commission sent to village (1644) to compel all residents
to sign the Solemn League and Covenant in the Parish
Register. Brought about by the supposed opposition and
Royalist sympathies of Sir John Cotton, then resident of
the parish.

Area of marshy bog to west of village: formerly lake. Medieval records reveal communal fishing. 'Suffolk Landscapes' by N. Scarfe p.88

Period of starvation and poverty recorded (circa 1795).

'Custom Roll of the manor of Earl Soham 1635' by G.F. Beumont. East Anglian Notes and Queries New Series Vol. 2 p.215

Borough English prevails.

Document made at command of John Cotton.

Deer Park and warren in existence (1635) believed to originate from (13th cent.).

Victoria Terrence: former barley-maltings converted into cottages (19th cent.)

Village Coronation sign depicting a Falconer in oak erected by Womens Institute (1953).

'Earl Soham'. 'A View into the Village' by E. Sandon p.50

Churchwardens accounts date from (1561).

'Earl Soham: Deben Valley Place Names' (1977)

Girlings Mill (1785), demolished (1935)

Large post mill (1930), demolished (1947)

Archaeological Sites

Rom. road (CRN 3193)

Med. moated sites (CRN 3194, 5553)

Stray finds: Neo. axe (CRN 3192)

I.A. quern (CRN 3195)

Rom. pottery (CRN 3196)