

1. Parish: Kessingland

Meaning: Land of Cyssi's people (Ekwall)

2. **Hundred:** Mutford (–1764), Mutford & Lothingland (–1764)

Deanery: Lothingland

Union: Mutford and Lothingland

RDC/UDC: (E.Suffolk) Mutford and Lothingland RD (1894–1934),
Lothingland RD (1934–1974), Waveney DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Mutford & Lothingland Petty Sessional Division
Lowestoft County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,687 acres land, 5 acres water, 19 acres foreshore
(1912)

4. **Soils:** Deep well-drained sandy and coarse loam, some
slowly permeable with slight seasonal
waterlogging. Risk wind erosion.

5. Types of farming:

1086: 8 acres meadow, 1 mill, 1 cattle, 23 pigs, 40
sheep, wood for 7 pigs.

1500–1640 Thirsk: Sheep-corn region where sheep are main
fertilizing agent, bred for fattening. Barley
main cash crop.

1818 Marshall: Management varies with condition of sandy
soils. Rotation usually turnip, barley, clover,
wheat or turnips as preparation for corn and
grass.

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, roots.

1969 Trist: Barley and sugar beet are main crops, with
some rye grown on poorer lands, and a
little wheat, herbage seeds and carrots.

6. Enclosure:

1788: 383 acres enclosed under Private Act of Lands 1787

7. Settlement:

1974 Hundred river forms natural boundary to south.
Moderate sized compact coastal development with
associated holiday accommodation. Church situated to
south of development.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 44, 1801 – 63, 1851 – 168,
1871 – 231, 1901 – 340, 1951 – 576,
1981 – 1,400

8. Communications:

Road: To Lowestoft, Gisleham and Henstead.
1891 Carriers pass through daily to Lowestoft.
1912 Omnibuses between Lowestoft and Southwold pass through
Carriers to and from Lowestoft daily, from Wrentham to Lowestoft pass through daily, from Southwold
Bus service began operations between Kessingland and Lowestoft 1904.

Rail: 1891 3½ miles Lowestoft station: Norwich–Yarmouth
–Lowestoft line, opened 1844 still operative
Yarmouth–Lowestoft line, opened 1903, closed for goods 1967, closed for passengers 1970
Ipswich–Lowestoft line opened 1859, still operative.

Water: Hundred River

9. Population:

1086 — 88 recorded (including Domesday villis of Kislea and Rodenhala)
1327 — 73 taxpayers paid £4. 2s.
1524 — 68 taxpayers paid £9. 13s. 6d.
1603 — 120 adults
1674 — 54 households
1676 — Not recorded
1801 — 475 inhabitants
1831 — 666 inhabitants
1851 — 777 inhabitants
1871 — 958 inhabitants
1901 — 1,420 inhabitants
1931 — 1,799 inhabitants
1951 — 1,763 inhabitants
1971 — 2,836 inhabitants
1981 — 3,461 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Vicarage 1831, Discharged Vicarage 1891

1254 Valued £22. 13s. 4d.
1291 Valued £30.
1535 Valued £10.
Valued £10 1603
Parsonage has 4 hearths 1674
1831 Glebe house unfit for occupation. Gross income £440 p.a.
Residence built 1831
Modus of £405. 12s. p.a. awarded 1839
1844 53 acres glebe

1912 Nett value £325 p.a.

Patrons:

Sir Robert Montalt 1307–1324, Abbess and Convent of the Minories London 1361–1533, John Corbet 1543, Roger Rugge 1554, Bishop of Norwich 1556, The King 1603, Bishop of Norwich 1844–

11. Church St. Edmund
(Nave, chancel, tower)

13th cent. Church reputedly given to Nuns of St. Clare
1470 Large church built, only tower remains (95' high – sea-mark)
14th cent. Arcade – traces remain
16th cent. Chancel, S. aisle and chapel pulled down
 S. arcade built up, E. wall added to nave, S. porch built
1694 N. wall dilapidated, roof fallen in. Rebuilt
1871/1908 Restorations

Seats: 366 (1831)

11a. Other religious institutions:

It is believed the parish contained a nunnery, however this has been unsubstantiated by this study.

12. Nonconformity etc:

1844 Wesleyan chapel recorded
1891 There is a 'Bethel' (a Nonconformist chapel; seamens church)

13. Manorial:

1066 Manor of 2 carucates held by Burghard
1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Earl Hugh
1066 Manor of 30 acres held by free men under patronage of Edric of Laxfield
1086 Manor of 30 acres belonging to Hugh de Montfort

Kessingland Stapleton's

1251 Roger de Montalt owns (linked to Framsdan)
c.1275 Lands of Queen Isabella (linked to Dallinghoo and Hemley)
1549 William Robert owns (linked to Burgh Castle)
1626 Sir Owen Smith owns
1645 Robert Proctor owns
1786 Jane Denton owns
1826 John Morse owns

1885 John Hall Moore Boycott owns

Sub-Manors

Kessingland Itchinghams/Echinghams

c.1375 Sir Peter AtteTye owns
c.1460 Sir Thomas Etchingham owns
1528 John Jerningham owns (linked to Blundeston, Bradwell and Flixton)
mid 16th cent. Henry Hobart owns (linked to Gisleham, Kirkley and Pakefield)
c.1615 Robert Proctor owns (absorbed by main manor)

Kessingland and Kingstons

1382/3 John Megre owns
c.14th cent. Alexander Kingston passing to College of Heringsby, Norfolk
1528 Nicholas Hasburgh owns
1575 William Parker owns
1580 Richard Proctor owns (ultimately absorbed by main manor)

Rothenhall

Domesday vill of Rodenhala (part in Pakefield)

1066 Manor of 30 acres held by free men under patronage of Thored
1086 Manor of 30 acres belonging to Earl Hugh
1066 Manor of 40 acres held by Aslac a free man under patronage of Burghard
1086 Manor of 40 acres belonging to Hugh de Montford
1419 John de Rothenhall owns as of Honor of Chester
1441 Robert Clere owns
1582 George Gelyngham owns
1645 William Tasker conveys to Robert Proctor (absorbed by main manor)

14. Markets/Fairs

Grant of market and fair 1251 to Roger de Montalt

1844 Formerly held market on Tuesday and fair on November 20th, obsolete by 1891

15. Real property:

1844 £2,419 rental value
1891 £3,671 rateable value
1912 £5,341 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1844 Rev. D.G. Norris
1912 Rev. R.B. Forster BA

18. Occupations:

1500–1549 2 husbandmen, 1 tailor, 2 sailor/mariners, 1 merchant
1550–1599 3 husbandmen, 1 yeoman, 1 seaman/mariner
1600–1649 3 husbandmen, 13 yeomen, 1 weaver, 1 tailor, 1
sailor/mariner, 1 fisherman, 2 carpenters, 1 miller
1650–1699 2 husbandmen, 8 yeomen, 1 felt maker, 1 sailor/mariner,
1 farmer
1831 115 in agriculture, 29 in retail trade, 3 professionals, 11 in
labouring, 20 in domestic service, 17 others
1844 beerhouse keeper, post office, butcher/victualler,
wheelwright/victualler, cattle dealer, solicitor,
grocer/draper, machine maker, butcher, joiner/beerhouse
keeper, shopkeeper, schoolmaster/beerhouse keeper,
saddler, blacksmith, tailor, shoemaker, cooper,
auctioneer, glover/hairdresser, 11 farmers, 6 fish curers
1912 2 sub-postmistresses, coast guard, 2 school mistresses,
boarding house owner, banker, 2 bakers, painter, 8
shopkeepers, hairdresser, market gardener,
shopkeeper/carpenter, carpenter, 27 boat owners, 3
publicans, 3 butchers, cycle maker, 3 builders, 10
farmers, 5 apartment owners, draper, corn Chandler,
saddler, refreshment room owners, fancy draper, 2
carters, fruiterer, fish merchant, net maker, mason,
insurance agent, fancy repository, 2 fishermen, bricklayer,
salvage boat owner, chemist, 2 carpenters, cycle agent,
grocer, boot repairer, solicitor, surgeon, plumber,
fishmonger, draper, boot maker, general stores,
blacksmith

19. Education:

1818 1 Sunday school (60 attend)
1833 2 daily schools (60 attend), 1 Sunday school (30 attend)
1844 National school (120 attend)
National school built 1869 for 220 children, enlarged 1882
Wooden building on beach for children living in the vicinity
1891
Day school run by Miss Anna White 1891
Public Elementary schools built 1869, enlarged 1910,
average attendance in 1912 of 250

Girls and Infants school, average attendance in 1912 of 135

20. Poor relief:

1776	£55. 5s. 4d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£79. 6s. 11½d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£165. 16s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£172	spent on poor relief
1832	£192. 1s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£307. 10s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

Town Estate

1598 by will of John Buckman: House, 14 acres 1R 28P land let at £34. 18s. p.a. applied to church repairs and poor relief

Poors Allotment

1840 Allotment of 35 acres let at £35 p.a. applied to purchase of coals for poor at Christmas

22. Other institutions:

1803 2 Friendly Societies (82 members)
Coast Guard station built 1823, compliment of 10 men.
New housing erected 1871
Reading room situated within former shop 1891

1891 Police officer listed

1912 Shipwrecked fishermen and Mariners Royal Benevolent Society

23. Recreation:

1844 3 beerhouses, The Queens Head and The Kings Head public houses

1891/1912 The Queens Head, The Sailors Home and The Kings Head public houses

1912 Refreshment room
Kessingland Festival Week (June) 1968

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Old Vicarage house: called 'the Nunnery' burned down 1833

Parish suffered from coastal erosion. Section known as 'Sea Row' washed

away 1834. Since 1912 the erosion appears to have ceased and the area of beached has been reported as actually increasing.

'Kessingland and Walberswick Church Towers' by Rev. C. Chitty. PSIA Vol. XXV, p.164.

This section of coast has developed as holiday centre 19th/20th cent. and is considered by some to be an area of outstanding natural history.

Reputedly the wealthiest place of its size in Suffolk in 1876 although it is not known on what criteria this assumption was based. 'Lowestoft East Coast Port' by Robert Malster (1982).

'Stapleton': manor house standing west of churchyard, demolished 1823.

Signal station established 1798, later linked with other such stations by telegraph system.

Cliff Grange was home of Rider Haggard, author 1908.