

# 1. Parish: Middleton (with Fordley)

**Meaning:** Village of Metti's people (Ekwall)

2. **Hundred:** Wangford

**Deanery:** Wangford (early in South Elmham) (–1972), Beccles and South Elmham (1972–)

**Union:** Wangford

**RDC/UDC:** (E.Suffolk) Wangford RD (1894–1934), Wainford RD (1934–1974), Waveney DC (1974–)

## Other administrative details:

Bungay Petty Sessional Division  
Beccles and Bungay County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,380 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

**Mixed:**

- a. Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk of water erosion.
- b. Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay.
- c. Deep peat soils associated with clay over sandy soils in part very acid, high groundwater levels, risk of flooding near river.

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.
1818	Marshall:	Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products.
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, beans. 1 Shire horse stud farm.
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

6. **Enclosure:**

1817 245 acres in Mettingham and Holy Trinity Bungay enclosed under Private Act of Lands 1814.

**7. Settlement:**

1961 Very diverse development. Main concentration around church and along main Beccles–Bungay road. Expansion probably influenced by River Waveney and marshland to north and the main road. Secondary settlement around castle which is detached from the main village.

Scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 30, 1801 – 28, 1851 – 81,  
1871 – 82, 1901 – 73, 1951 – 77,  
1981 – 70.

**8. Communications:**

**Roads:** Main A1116 Beccles–Bungay road.  
Roads unsafe for traveling and practically impassable for several months of the year 18<sup>th</sup> cent.

Daily postal service to/from Bungay 1874.

Eastern Counties daily bus service 1937.

**Rail:** 1891 1 mile Ellingham station: 2 miles Bungay station:  
Tivetshall–Lowestoft line, opened 1860, closed 1964.

**Water:** River Waveney.

**9. Population:**

1086 — 20 recorded

1327 — 31 taxpayers paid £1. 18s. 6d.

1524 — 42 taxpayers paid £3. 11s. 5d.

1603 — 80 adults

1674 — 32 households

1676 — Not recorded

1801 — 270 inhabitants

1831 — 406 inhabitants

1851 — 382 inhabitants

1871 — 348 inhabitants

1901 — 318 inhabitants

1931 — 233 inhabitants

1951 — 252 inhabitants

1971 — 195 inhabitants

1981 — 209 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Vicarage**

1254 Valued £10.

1291 Valued £4 6s. 8d.

Appropriated by Bungay Nunnery.

Advowson given on dissolution to Thomas Duke of

Norfolk.  
 1535 Valued £6. 17s. 3½d.  
 1831 Glebe house unfit for occupation. Gross income £140 p.a.  
 Discharge vicarage valued £200 1855.  
 1912 Nett value £180. 51 acres glebe.

**Patrons:**

Prioress/Convent of Bungay 1319–1520, Duke of Norfolk 1539–1563, Bacon family 1570–1663, Hunt family 1681–1758, Kitty Safford 1805–1824, J.C. Safford 1831, Mrs. C.F.H. Collisson 1912.

**11. Church**

**All Saints**

(Chancel, nave, S. aisle, porch, round W. tower)

1086 Church + 20 acres land, valued 3s.  
 Lower portion N. wall: suspected Saxon.  
 Norman N. door (above door is height of original structure, still visible)  
 14<sup>th</sup> cent. S. porch extended and restored.  
 W. wall has chimney and fireplace.  
 1898 General restoration.

**Seats:** 220 (1915)

**11a. Other religious institutions:**

**College**

**Blessed Virgin Mary**

For Secular Cannons:

1394 Founded and richly endowed  
 1534/35 Held Master and 11 chaplains, 14 clerks and choristers, etc.  
 14 boys maintained and educated,  
 Valued £238 3s. 10½d.  
 1542 Dissolved  
 Old prints exist 1738. PSIA Vol. IV, p.77.  
 20<sup>th</sup> cent. Remains mixed with those of the castle.

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

2 persons not receiving communion 1597

**13. Manorial:**

**Mettingham Castle cum Bungay Soca**

1086 Manor of 60 acres belonging to Earl Hugh in hands of Aelfric under patronage of Wulfsi.  
 13<sup>th</sup> cent. Sir John de Norwich owns (linked to Ilketshall main manor and Dalham).

- 1563 Sir Nicholas Bacon owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)  
 1675 John Hunt of Cambridge owns (linked to Walsham le Willows)

**14. Markets/Fairs**

**15. Real property:**

- 1844 £2,367 rental value  
 1891 £2,173 rateable value  
 1912 £2,127 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

- 1844–1891 Land sub-divided

**17. Resident gentry:**

- 1680 2 gents recorded  
 1686 William Gooch  
 Cooke Freeston, High Sheriff of Suffolk 1755

**18. Occupations:**

- 1449 Master of College of Blessed Mary  
 1500–1549 1 husbandman  
 1550–1599 1 husbandman, 1 yeoman  
 1600–1649 12 yeomen, 1 husbandman, 1 labourer, 2 linen weavers  
 1650–1699 4 yeoman, 1 husbandman, 1 labourer, 1 blacksmith  
 1831 57 in agriculture, 12 in retail trade, 2 professionals, 4 in labouring, 28 in domestic service, 3 others  
 1844 1 shoemaker, 1 wheelwright, 1 blacksmith, 15 farmers  
 1912 1 sub-postmistress, 1 maltster, 9 farmers, 1 publican, 1 farm bailiff, 1 blacksmith, 1 market gardener, 1 cowkeeper

**19. Education:**

- William Mills accused of teaching a school without a licence 1597.  
 1912 Children attend school in Bungay.

**20. Poor relief:**

- |      |                |                      |
|------|----------------|----------------------|
| 1776 | £91. 2s. 2d.   | spent on poor relief |
| 1803 | £135. 9s. 10d. | spent on poor relief |
| 1818 | £336. 7s.      | spent on poor relief |
| 1830 | £295. 5s.      | spent on poor relief |
| 1832 | £381. 6s.      | spent on poor relief |
| 1834 | £329           | spent on poor relief |

**21. Charities:**

**Town Estate:**

1828 Ancient trust situated in Mettingham and Shipmeadow (cottage, blacksmiths shop, 36 acres and 2 cattle gates on Stow Fen) let at £82 14s. p.a. £10 used for purchase of coal for the poor, residue used for church repairs.

**22. Other institutions:**

**Mettingham Castle:**

Built by Sir John de Norwich 1326  
Began to fall into disrepair 1738  
Photographs in Suffolk Archaeology Unit, Bury St Edmunds.

1776 Workhouse (12 inmates)

**23. Recreation:**

1874 1 beerhouse.  
1912 The Tally Hoo public house.

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

Mettingham College Seal: illustration – PSIA, Vol. IV, p.88.

Mettingham castle plan. PSIA, Vol. IV, p.78.

'Mettingham Castle and College', by C.R. Manning. PSIA, Vol. IV, p.77.

'Mettingham College and Castle 1562'. PSIA, Vol. XI., p.315.