

1. Parish: Monks Eleigh

Meaning: Illa's Meadow (belonged to St. Paul's in London pre 1254)

2. **Hundred:** Babergh

Deanery: Peculiar jurisdiction of Archbishop of Canturbury (–1847) Sudbury (1847–1864), Sudbury (Eastern) (1864–1884), Lavenham (1884–)

Union: Cosford

RDC/UDC: (W. Suffolk) Cosford RD (–1974), Babergh DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Civil parish boundary change 1935
Melford Petty Sessional Division
Hadleigh County Court District

3. **Area:** 2,099 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed:

- a. Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous Soils, slight risk water erosion
- b. Small amount deep well drained fine loam, course loam and sandy soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel.

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.

1804 Young:

1818 Marshall: Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products.

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, beans, clover, turnip, Mangolds.

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

6. **Enclosure:**

7. **Settlement:** 1974 Line of brook from River Brett has Influenced development to right and left of water meadow (which runs parallel with brook). Compact development. Church centrally situated. Scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 53, 1801 – 79, 1851 – 156, 1871 – 58, 1901 – 135, 1951 – 149, 1981 – 174

8. **Communications:**

Road: To Preston, Brent Eleigh, Chelsworth, Milden and Lindsey.

1891 Carriers to Lavenham on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday to Long Melford on Tuesday and Friday.

Rail: 1891 4 ½ miles Lavenham station: Bury St. Edmunds–Long Melford line opened 1865, closed for passengers 1961, closed for goods 1965.

9. **Population:**

1086 – 61 recorded (includes Brent Eleigh)

1327 – 20 taxpayers paid £2 2s. 8d.

1524 – 53 taxpayers paid £4 4s. 2d.

1603 – adults (not listed)

1674 – 67 households

1676 – Not recorded

1801 – 542 inhabitants

1831 – 733 inhabitants

1851 – 722 inhabitants

1871 – 720 inhabitants

1901 – 553 inhabitants

1931 – 433 inhabitants

1951 – 409 inhabitants

1971 – 403 inhabitants

1981 – 461 inhabitants

10. **Benefice: Rectory**

1254 Valued £10

1291 Valued £20

1535 Valued £13 18s. 11 ½d.

1831 Valuation not given

Valued £422. 16 acres glebe, good residence 1835

Modus of £570 p.a. 1837

1912 Nett value £310. 17 acres glebe and residence.

Patrons: Archbishop of Canterbury (1831–)

11. Church: St. Peter

(Chancel, nave of 4 bays, clerestory, aisles, S. porch
W. tower)

1086	Eleigh: 1 church & 22½ acres
12 th /13 th cent.	
14 th cent.	Pier arcade to S. aisle (remains)
15/16 th cent.	Main structure and tower.
1643	
1845	Chancel rebuilt
1867	Restoration

Seats: 45 appropriated, 136 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1 house set aside for worship 1820
Congregational chapel 1908

13. Manorial:

Eleigh:

1066	Manor of 2 carucates held by Holy Trinity with full jurisdiction
1086	Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Archbishop Lanfranc for the monks supplies
1066	Manor of 3 carucates held by Wulfward a free man under Stigand
1086	Manor of 3 carucates belonging to Tihel of Hellean

Monks Eleigh Manor

1534	Sir William Waldegrave held probably as lessee of Prior of Holy Trinity, Canterbury At the dissolution Dean and Canons of Canterbury Cathedral and the Dean and Chapter are Lords
1650	Purchased by the King

Sub-Manors:

Boyton al Buyden Hall

1304	William de Boyton (or Baldrey) owns and appears to follow this family line to 17 th cent.
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14. Markets/Fairs:

Grant of market and fair 1259/60

15. Real property:

1844	£2,500 rental value
1891	£2,773 rateable value
1912	£1,914 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844/1912	Land sub-divided
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17. Resident gentry:

1680	2 gents recorded
1844	Rev. H. Carrington MA
1912	Hon. A.F. Northcote MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1599	1 clothmaker, 1 dyer, 1 fuller ('The Springs of Lavenham' by B. McCleneghan)
1600–1649	
1650–1699	
1831	133 in agriculture, 57 in retail trade, 7 professionals, 18 in domestic service, 7 others
1844	2 corn mill (river powered) Vet, tanner, blacksmith, 3 teachers, 2 millers, castrator, 2 beerhouse keepers, butcher/cattle dealer, publican, Ironmonger, animal painter, 8 farmers, 3 grocer/drapers, 2 joiners, 2 shoemakers, 2 tailors, 2 wheelwrights
1912	Sub-postmaster, teacher, publican, grocer/draper, 12 farmers, butcher, shopkeeper, vet, 2 beer retailers, 2 pork butchers, 2 thatchers, boot repairer, tailor, pig dealer, cycle agent, surgeon, 2 blacksmiths, grocer, miller

19. Education:

1818	4 schools (83 attend), 1 Sunday school (30/40 attend)
1833	1 infants school (12 attend), 2 daily schools (61 attend) 1 Established church Sunday school (98 attend), 1 Wesleyan Sunday school (23 attend) National school built 1834 and has use of part of old Workhouse, demolished 1869 School built on site of old workhouse 1872 (130 attend), average attendance 1912 119, demolished 1985

20. Poor relief:

1776	£235 1s. 10d.
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1803	£477 16s. 3½d.
1818	£897 2s.
1830	£699 3s.
1832	£751 11s.
1834	£563 17s.

21. Charities:

Causton's and Baker's Gifts:

1717 Given by Frances Causton and Rev. William Moore: 2 cottages and 2½ acres in Lavenham called Butt Field let at £4 10s. p.a. for distribution in bread on Ash Wednesday and Christmas Day
2 cottages erected by parish occupied rent free by poor Persons

Church Land:

1840 2½ acres (anciently appropriated to repairs of Church clock) let at £6. 15s. p.a. to churchwardens accounts

22. Other institutions:

Guildhall 15th cent.
1776 Workhouse (15 inmates)
1803 Friendly Society (35 members)
1874 Association for the Prosecution of Felons (9 members)
Workhouse divided into 3 tenements 1838 part used by school 1844, demolished c.1869

23. Recreation:

1844 The Red Lion public house, 2 beerhouses
1891 The Red Lion public house, 3 beerhouses
1912 The Red Lion public house, 2 beer retailers

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Old Guildhall: believed to date from 15th cent., known as 'Meadow Bank' 1974.

Map of village exists (by John Miller 1724).

Incendiarism provoked by agrarian riots 1844.

Fire engine bought 1846, sold 1874 by order of the Vestry.

Some persons accused and fined for an 'affray' in the public street on a Sunday evening' 1828.

Godford Bridge built 1750, repaired 1804, rebuilt 1825.

Causeway bridge built c.1846/56.

Footbridge built at the 'Wagger' 1848.

Skipps bridge built 1858, previously known as Pole bridge.

Bazaar held in Rectory Garden to aid funds for the new heating apparatus for church 1906.

Best Kept Village award 1959.

'Notes on the History of Monks Eleigh', by Rev. A.F. Northcote 1936.

'The former timber spire of Monks Eleigh Church', PSIA Vol. 31, p.202.

'Monks Eleigh in Words and Pictures', Suffolk Fair, Vol.3 No.10, p.23.

'The Maid who gave a meadow', by S.P. Andrews. Suffolk Fair Vol.12 No.4, p.35.

'Murderer from Monks Eleigh', by R.C. Blackwell.