

## 1. Parish: South Elmham St. James

**Meaning:** Village where elms grew (Ekwall)

### 2. Hundred: Wangford

**Deanery:** 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  
Harleston County Court District

### 3. Area: 1,315 acres (1912)

### 4. Soils: Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay.

### 5. Types of farming:

1086	South Elmham:	Wood for 80 pigs, 30 pigs, 1 mill. A community of individualists who depend hardly at all on their neighbours in their day to day farming activities.
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, barley, beans
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

### 6. Enclosure:

1855        196 acres Greshaw Green in Sandcroft and St. James enclosed under General Acts (1853).  
Greshaw Green had formerly provided common pasture for all of the South Elmhams.

## **7. Settlement:**

1961        Ribbon type development scattered along Metfield to South Elmham All Saints roads. Some concentration of habitation around church. Airfield intrudes into parish to the SW. Scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 26, 1801 – 34, 1851 – 60, 1871 – 56, 1901 – 47, 1951 – 58, 1981 – 55

## **8. Communications:**

Road:        Roads to Metfield, South Elmham All Saints and St. Cross. Roads unsafe for traveling and practically impassable for several months of the year (18<sup>th</sup> cent.).

Rail:        1891    4½ miles Homersfield station: Tivetshall – Lowestoft line, opened (1860), closed (1964).

Air:        Metfield air base No.366 built (1943) for USAF.  
1200 tons of high explosive detonated sending shock waves across surrounding district, 5 men killed, 5 aircraft extensively damaged (15<sup>th</sup> July 1944).  
Home base for 353<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group and 491<sup>st</sup> Group.  
European Division of air Transport used base to house secret unit.  
Abandoned (1945), sold (1964/65), returned to agricultural use.

## **9. Population:**

1086 — South Elmham: 119 recorded  
1327 — South Elmham: 133 taxpayers paid £12. 15s. 9d.  
1524 — 25 taxpayers paid £5. 14s. 9d.  
1603 — 120 adults  
1674 — 31 households  
1676 — Not recorded  
1801 — 243 inhabitants  
1831 — 263 inhabitants  
1851 — 269 inhabitants  
1871 — 268 inhabitants  
1901 — 187 inhabitants  
1931 — 215 inhabitants  
1951 — 181 inhabitants  
1971 — 150 inhabitants  
1981 — 146 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Rectory (1831), Discharged Rectory (1855)**

1254 Not recorded  
1291 Valued £8  
1535 Valued £8  
1831 No glebe house. Gross income £300 p.a. Incumbent also holds rectory of Homersfield with Sancroft.  
Rectory House enlarged (1835)  
Yearly rent charge of £384. 10s. in lieu of tithes (1855)  
1912 Nett value £190. 10 acres glebe and residence

Patrons: Bishop of Norwich (1334/1523), Lord North (1557-66), Sir J. Tasburgh (1617), Thomas Knapp (1622), John Gooch (1665), Thomas Baxter (1684), J. Tasburgh (1705), Baldwin Conyers (1706), Anthony Ellis (1737), Alexander Adair (1790/1828), Sir F.E.S. Adair (1912).

**11. Church St. James**

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

12<sup>th</sup> cent. North door  
13<sup>th</sup> cent. Chancel  
13/14<sup>th</sup> cent. S. arcade  
1874 Substantial restoration including new roof for chancel, nave and aisle. Aisle and porch partially rebuilt.

**Seats:** 220 (1915)

**11a. Other religious information:**

‘South Elmham Deanery’ by V.B. Redstone. PSIA Vol. XIV p.323.  
Secular College: Theory is that the group of churches within the South Elmhams may have formed a religious centre.

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

**13. Manorial:**

**South Elmham:** (Manor extended over 9 parishes called the liberty, manor or township of South Elmham)

Circa 680AD Granted to Felix the Burgundian by Sigebert, King of the East Angles.

1086 Manor of 40 acres belonging to Godric the Steward under patronage of Ralph the Constable.

1086 Manor of 40 acres belonging to the Bishop of Thetford.

1086 Manor of 40 acres belonging to the Bishop of Thetford in the hands of Alwin.

1086	Manor of 60 acres belonging to the Bishop of Thetford in the hands of Bondi.
1086	Manor of 30 acres belonging to the Bishop of Thetford, in the hands of a freeman under patronage of Stigand.
1086	Manor of 30 acres belonging to the Bishop of Thetford in the hands of Alwy under patronage of Edric of Laxfield.
1101	See of Norwich owns.
1535	Seized by the Crown and granted to Sir Edward North.
1613	Tasburgh family owns (linked to Flixton).
1787	Adair family owns (linked to Cratfield).

### **Sub-manors:**

#### **Rawlings**

15 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Bishop of Norwich owns.
1631	John Berney owns.
1807	Adair family owns (absorbed by main manor).

#### **New Hall**

15 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Robert Bateman of Flixton owns.
1583	Tasburgh family owns (absorbed by main manor).

#### **Kings Hall**

1558	Alice Wentworth owns.
1599	Berdwell family owns.

### **14. Markets/Fairs**

### **15. Real property:**

1844	£1,721 rental value
1891	£1,618 rateable value
1912	£930 rateable value

### **16. Land ownership:**

1844/1891	Land sub-divided
1912	Adair family, principle owners.

### **17. Resident gentry:**

### **18. Occupations:**

<b>South Elmham Manor:</b>	350,000 Breketylls (bricks) were being made and sent to Hoxne (1464/65), 'Suffolk Landscape' by N. Scarfe p.182.
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1550–1599	South Elmham: 4 yeomen, 6 husbandmen, 1 weaver, 1 wheelwright, 2 labourers.
1600–1699	16 yeomen, 1 clerk, 1 husbandman, 1 tailor, 1 linen weaver, 1 labourer South Elmham: 22 yeomen, 1 tailor, 2 husbandmen, 1 wheelwright, 1 butcher, 1 linen weaver, 1 clerk.
1831	64 in agriculture, 8 in retail trade, 8 in domestic service
1844	1 tailor/shopkeeper, 1 blacksmith, 1 victualler, 1 boot/shoemaker, 1 wheelwright, 12 farmers, 1 farrier.
1912	1 sub-postmistress, 1 schoolteacher, 10 farmers, 2 shopkeepers, 1 blacksmith, 1 painter, 1 miller, 1 publican, 1 vet.

## 19. Education:

1818	Unendowed day school taught by mistress
1833	No school recorded Public Elementary School built (1860), average attendance (1912) 36.

## 20. Poor relief:

1776	£46. 11s 11d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£107. 0s. 8d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£284.	spent on poor relief
1830	£300. 11s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£286. 17s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£337. 11s.	spent on poor relief

## 21. Charities:

<u>Town Estate:</u>	1828	Yearly sum from rents - £2. 8s.
<u>Town Land:</u>	1828	Original deed (179) of Catherine Skarffe for church repairs (annual rent of £20). Transferred to Town Lands Trustees (1791). After church repairs, residue used in payments to the poor and to the overseers general account.
<u>Town House:</u>	1828	(formerly poor house) let at £2. 10s. p.a. Rents used as with Town Land.

## 22. Other institutions:

## 23. Recreation:

1844-1912	The White Horse public house.
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## 24. Personal:

'The Tasburghs of South Elmham: The Rise and Fall of a Suffolk Gentry Family' by N. Evans. PSIA Vol.34 p.269.

**25. Other information:**

SW side of parish: medieval deer park belonging to Bishop of Norwich (1316). Sold to local yeomen and disparked (circa 1566).

'Present State of Elmham Controversy' by F.S Stevenson. PSIA Vol. III p.110.

'On the site of the Bishopric of Elmham'. PSIA Vol. IV p.7.

Bishop of Norwich had palace in the area, suggested that moated ruins in St. Margarets parish could be remains of this. Elmham Hall much decayed (1651).

**Archaeological Sites**

Med. moated sites (CRN 864, 865, 866, 868)

Post med. farmstead (CRN 7509)

Med. pottery production site (CRN 867)

PMed pottery production site (CRN 1231)

Med. green (CRN 5080)

Stray finds: I.A. Pottery (CRN 7500)

Neo. Axe (CRN 4600, 8454, 876)

B.A. Palstave (CRN 877)

Scatter finds: Burnt flint patch (CRN 869, 873, 875, 1234, 1235, 1240)

Rom. Pottery (CRN 262, 1233, 1245)

Med. Pottery (CRN 870, 871, 874, 1229, 1230, 7537, 1232, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1241-1244)

Neo. Worked flint (CRN 1228)

Pmed.Pottery (CRN 7526)