

1. Parish: Stoke By Clare

Meaning: Monastery cell/ place near Clare

2. Hundred: Risbridge

Deanery: Clare

Union: Risbridge

RDC/UDC: (W. Suffolk) Clare RD (–1974); St Edmundsbury DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change 1885
Risbridge Petty Sessional Division
Haverhill County Court District

3. Area: 2,430 acres

4. Soils: Mixed:

- a. Slowly permeable calcareous/ non-calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion
- b. Deep well drained fine loam, coarse loam and sand soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel, slight risk water erosion
- c. Stoneless mainly calcareous clay soils affected by groundwater, risk of flooding close to 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. Also has similarities with sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilizing agent, bred for fattening, barley main cash crop.

1818 Marshall: Wide variations of crops and management techniques including summer fallow in preparation for corn and rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands.

1937 Main crops: Oats, wheat, barley, beans, peas, roots

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1958 Well spaced development to north of Stoke College (which stands on southern boundary). Church centrally situated with Green area to north of settled area. Secondary settlement at Boyton End. River Stour forms southern boundary. Railway crosses parish W–E. Scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 70, 1801 – 91, 1851 – 174, 1871 – 184,
1901 – 149, 1951 – 139, 1981 – 164

8. Communications:

Roads: Roads to Wixoe, Clare, Kedington and Ridgewell

Rail: Clare station: Cambridge–Sudbury line opened 1865, closed for goods 1966 became unmanned halt, closed for passengers 1967

Water: River Stour: made navigable by Act of Parliament of 1705. Last barge travelled as far as Dedham 1928

9. Population:

1086 – 29 recorded (includes Domesday vill of Boyton)
1327 – 23 taxpayers paid £3 7s. 2d. (includes Chiltone)
1524 – 102 taxpayers paid £6 3s. 0d.
1603 – 405 adults
1674 – 94 households
1676 – 315 adults
1801 – 687 inhabitants
1831 – 792 inhabitants
1851 – 911 inhabitants
1871 – 867 inhabitants
1901 – 602 inhabitants
1931 – 433 inhabitants
1951 – 394 inhabitants
1971 – 499 inhabitants
1981 – 440 inhabitants

10. Benefice:

1254 Valued £13 6s. 8d.
1291/1535 Not recorded
1603 Curate, stipend £10 p.a.
Parish priest said to have enjoyed a house called 'the priest's chamber' adjoining Stoke College. Also said to be in receipt of tithes and profits belonging to the church (corn tithe excepting) until dissolution of College.
1831 1 curate, stipend £105 p.a. No glebe house. Gross income £130 p.a.
Modus of £117 1s. 6d. awarded + 59 acres glebe 1841

1912 Parsonage House built 1843
Valued £80 1873
Net value £195.

Patrons: The King (1603), Sir W.B. Rush (1831), Mrs Rush (1873), D. Gurteen (1891), Maj. Lord Loch (1912)

11. Church St. John The Baptist

(Chancel, nave, aisles, C. chapel, N. & S. porches, W. tower)

1086 Church + 60 acres, value 10s.
1124 Priory church known to have occupied site
14th cent. Tower (belongs to earlier church without aisles) (lower portion possibly 13th cent.)
c.1415 Chancel, N. chantry, S. porch and S. chapel believed to be part of old collegiate church
15th cent. Church rebuilt slightly to N. of tower therefore creating irregular junction with same.
c.1535 Nave restored
1871 Restoration
Note: Believed previously known as St. Augustine – date of change not known

Seats: 360 free (1873)

Site of unrecorded church: Only record is from aerial photograph held in Suffolk Archaeology Unit 1988 (Cambridge University Collection BYC 77)

11a. Other religious institutions:

Benedictine Priory: St John Baptist (Now Grenville College)

Founded at Clare Castle by Earl Alfric 1045
Cell of Bec Abbey, Normandy 1090
Installed at Stoke by Clare 1124 by Richard de Clare
Richly endowed, owning property in many parts of the country.
Released from subjection to Bec Abbey by Richard II 1395
Became college of secular priests. Patron: Edward Mortimer 1415
Consisted of Dean, 6–10 prebendaries/ canons. 8 vicars. 4 clerks, 6 choristers + officers and servants.
Dependency: St. Sepulchre's Hospital, Sudbury.
c.1548 At dissolution, gross value £367 15s. 7 3/4d.
Last dean was Matthew Parker (later Archbishop of Canterbury)
List of Household (see PSIA Vo. XII, p.41)
Remains consist of E. part of Norman nave (made two-storeyed by College), transepts (converted to domestic use) and the cloister

12. Nonconformity etc:

1603 5 men do not receive communion
1627 1 person negligent in receiving communion at Easter

1676	20 nonconformists
1711–1827	6 houses set aside for worship
1844	Small chapel used by Baptists and Independents
1912	Baptists held service in Stoke College chapel

13. Manorial:

Stoke House

1124	de Clare family owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
1124	Priory of Stoke by Clare endowed with this manor
1548	Dissolved and granted to Sir John Cheke and Walter Mildmay
1556	Annexed to Duchy of Lancaster
1604	James Fullerton and James Maxwell own
c.1706	Sir Gervase Elwes owns (linked to Clare and Wixoe)

Sub-manors:

Elbury/Erbury

1553	in the de Clare family and their descendants
1553	Sir John Cheke (annexed to main manor)
1556	Annexed to Duchy of Lancaster and main manor
1625	Robert Dixon and William Walley own
1627	William Trigg owns

14. Markets/Fairs:

c.1618	Fair on Whit Monday (pedlary)
1844	Fair for pedlary on Whit Monday (described as nearly disused)
1891	

15. Real property:

1844	£3,166 rental value
1891	£ 3,054 rateable value
1912	£ 2,508 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

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

1679	Sir Gervas Elwes
1826	John Payne Elwes, High Sheriff of Suffolk
1844	C. Gonne, and John P. Elwes
1891	R.H.M. Elwes JP, and Col. Herbert
1912	Rev. F. Barnes BA, Maj. W. Gurdon RA and Maj. Lord Loch
	MVO, DSO.

18. Occupations:

1500–1549	1 yeoman, 1 tailor, 2 husbandmen, 1 butcher, 12 fuller, 1 cordwainer/shoemaker
1550–1599	1 labourer, 3 yeomen, 3 husbandmen, 1 priest, 1 haberdasher, 1 precentor, 1 free mason
1600–1649	1 knacker, 5 yeomen, 3 tailors, 11 husbandmen, 1 tanner, 1 brick maker, 1 inn holder, 1 maltster, 1 blacksmith, 1 glover, 1 cordwainer/shoemaker
1650–1699	1 labourer, 1 knacker, 12 yeomen, 3 tailors, 2 millers, 1 butcher, 1 clerk, 2 bakers
1831	144 in agriculture, 6 in manufacturing, 22 in retail trade, 4 professionals, 2 in labouring, 25 in domestic service, 12 others
1844	Wheelwright, miller/schoolmaster, 2 tailors, surgeon, shoemaker, joiner/victualler, baker/beerhouse keeper, corn miller, bricklayer, shopkeeper, solicitor, butcher, baker/shopkeeper, 2 blacksmiths, lime burner, beerhouse/ shopkeeper, gardener, joiner/victualler, 9 farmers, brickmaker
1912	Sub-postmistress, school mistress, station master, farm bailiff, general dealer, gamekeeper, 7 farmers, shopkeeper, cycle agent, shoemaker, carpenter, quarry owner, 3 beer retailers, gardener, butcher/grocer, 2 publicans, boot repairer, butcher, blacksmith, coal merchant, surgeon

19. Education:

1818	1 endowed Sunday school on Madras system, sponsored by Sir Gervase Elwes 1678 (82 attend), 86 attend 1833
1546	schoolmaster in the College and schoolmaster of free school recorded School house pulled down c.1780
1844	Schoolmaster listed National school built 1855 (120 attend), average attendance 1912 80, school closed 1986 Bequest by Mary Barnes provided finance for education and apprenticing poor children of the parish 1681
1912	Some children attend school at Wixoe

20. Poor relief:

1776	£246 9s. 9d.
1803	£519 10s. 6d.
1818	£913 5s.
1830	£1,058 14s.
1832	£917 13s.
1834	£645 7s.

21. Charities:

Barnes Charity:

1681 by will of Mary Barnes. £450 for purchase of land.
10 acres 2R 22P let with 1R 34P glebe land at £33 p.a. and applied to
apprenticing

Brown's Almshouse, Hancock's Meadow, Bendlow's Charity:

1526 by will of Richard Brown. Built almshouse (3 cottages) occupied
by six poor persons who receive 6s. 8d. p.a. each payable from
tenement called 'Stowers' in Ashen, Essex.
16/17th cent. enclosed meadow called 'Hancock's, Wixoe anciently
provided for poor of Stoke. (1 acre 1R 17P let at £4. 10s. in 1840)
1576 by deed of William Bendlow: rent-charge of 20s, applied to
repair of almshouse residue divided among residents

Edward's Gift:

1653 by deed of Thomas Edwards. Annuity of £1. p.a. from Tainter's
Croft, distributed among poor

Town Close Charity:

1840 40s. p.a. paid by custom and distributed among poor in church
on Plough Monday (origin unknown)
20s. formerly paid from field called Fisherfield Croft for the poor (long
discontinued and origins unknown)

Turners Charity:

1599 by will of Ralph Turner. Cottage and land – 2 aged persons
occupy.

Sir Gervase Elwes's Charity:

1678 by will of Sir Gervase Elwes. £10
from Crown revenues to upkeep of schoolmaster and school. Appears
to have lapsed in 18th cent.

22. Other institutions:

Guilds of Holy Trinity and Jesus c.1521
1776 Workhouse (23 inmates)
1803 Friendly Societies (53 members)
Almshouse for six persons built 1526 by will of Richard Brown,
demolished 1959
Working Mens Club established c.1911
Red Cross detachment 1949 (26 members)
Lusitano Stud and Equitation Centre established 1979

23. Recreation:

- 1625 Inn holder recorded
- 1844 The Red Lion and The George public houses, 3 beerhouses
- 1891 The Red Lion, The George Inn and The Railway Arms public houses, 1 beer retailer and 1 beer house
- 1912 The George Inn (closed 1918), The Lion and The Railway Tavern (closed 1976) public houses
2 beer retailers
The Six Bells Inn (no dates) at Upper Green converted to dwelling house (early 20th cent.)

24. Personal:

Elwes family: Records of Elwes family 1462–1852 in RO (Sir Hervey Elwes was distinguished miser)

Dr. Parker: last Dean of Stoke College, later Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury 1559, attended as chaplain to Anne Boleyn at her execution.

25. Other information:

'A History of Stoke by Clare from 1548', by R. Douglas Brown 1985.
Stoke College (dwelling house on site of secular college) built 1674 by the Elwes family.

Deeds contain references to 'Moore Mill; the last dated 1693.

Fulling Mill Green recorded 1660.

Map of ancient field names, farms and highways in 'A History of Stoke by Clare' above.

Parish House: believed to be Stoke workhouse was claimed by John Timms Hervey Elwes as his 19th cent. The parish then paid £41 for house on Upper Green, known as 'Smiths', for use as new workhouse.

Outbreak of smallpox 1834/5, high mortality rate.

1st council houses built in Chapel Street 1932–6.

Old barn donated for use as community centre 1948.

Mains sewerage connected 1963–4.

Mains water supply connected 1970.

Moor Hall: earliest parts date from 1140, additions c.1240, alterations 18th cent.

Deeds refer to 'hop grounds' called Moores (1710)

Inventories of College of Stoke by Clare taken in 1534 and 1547/8, PSIA vol. 17, p.21.

Seal of a prior. PSIA vol. 20, p.265.

Seals of the prior. PSIA vol. 21, p.166.

Stoke by Clare Cartulary – See Suffolk Charters Vols. IV, V, VI.

Stoke and Wixoe Record 1984–, in RO.

1 case of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest 1844.

Stoke College: gave accommodation and asylum to many leading reformers as Bacon, Bilney, Cecil, Bradford and Ridley. Dr. Parker is said to have hidden them within the thick walls and in chimney places during the reign of Mary I. Such cavities are said still to exist.