

# 1. Parish : Thelnetham

**Meaning:** Homestead frequented by swans

2. **Hundred:** Blackbourn

**Deanery:** Blackburne (-1972), Ixworth (1972-)

**Union:** Thetford

**RDC/UDC:** (W. Suffolk) Brandon RD (1894-1935), Thingoe RD (1935-1974), St. Edmundsbury DC (1974-)

## Other administrative details:

Gains area known as Weston Hindle from Market Weston 1886

Blackbourn Petty Sessional Division  
Thetford County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,919 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

**Mixed:**

- a. Deep fine loam soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Some fine/coarse loams over clay. Some deep well drained coarse loam over clay, fine loam and sandy soils
- b. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid, especially under heath or woodland. Risk wind erosion
- c. Deep permeable sand and peat soils affected by groundwater. Risk of winter flooding and wind erosion

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		8 acres meadow, wood for 60 pigs, 1 mill, 1 cob, 3 cattle, 25 pigs, 35 sheep, 3 beehives
1283		412 quarters to crops (3,296 bushels), 60 head horse, 202 cattle 132 pigs, 213 sheep*
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 fertilising agent, bred for fattening, barley main cash crop
1818	Marshall:	Wide variations of crop and management techniques including summer fallow in

		preparation for corn and rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, beans, peas, clover
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

\* 'A Suffolk Hundred in 1283', by E. Powell 1910. Concentrates on Blackbourn Hundred. Gives land usage, livestock and the taxes paid.

**6. Enclosure:**

1821            283 acres enclosed under Private Act of Lands 1818

**7. Settlement:**

1958            Small settlement, no obvious centre. Church appears isolated near to eastern border with Hinderclay. Scattered farms

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 53, 1801 – 65, 1851 – 101, 1871 – 99, 1901 – 76, 1951 – 76, 1981 – 89

**8. Communications:**

**Roads:**            To Blo Norton, Hinderclay, Hepworth, Hopton, Market Weston and Wattisfield  
 1891 Carriers to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday to Diss on Friday  
 1912 Carrier to Diss on Friday

**Water:**            Little Ouse River: Tributary of Great Ouse River made navigable by Acts designed to improve navigation 1670 although there is some evidence to suggest that the river was used for trade purposes earlier than this. Declined due to rail transport and general silting of the river c.1850's

**9. Population:**

1086 – 42 recorded  
 1327 – 21 taxpayers paid £1 12s. 4¼d.  
 1524 – 39 taxpayers paid £2 9s. 11d.  
 1603 – 80 adults  
 1662 – 48 householders paid £6 9s.\*  
 1674 – 82 households  
 1676 – 136 adults  
 1801 – 444 inhabitants  
 1831 – 553 inhabitants  
 1851 – 552 inhabitants  
 1871 – 421 inhabitants

1901 – 326 inhabitants  
 1931 – 281 inhabitants  
 1951 – 261 inhabitants  
 1971 – 246 inhabitants  
 1981 – 253 inhabitants

\* 'The Hearth Tax Return for the Hundred of Blackbourn 1662',  
 transcribed by S. Colman. PSIA Vol. XXXII part 2, p.168

**10. Benefice: Rectory (1831), Discharged Rectory (1844)**

1254 Valued £12.  
 1291 Valued £16.  
 1341 Valued £16 9s. 8d.  
 1535 Valued £16 18s. 1½d.  
 1603 Incumbent also holds Rectory of Rollesvye  
 1831 1 curate, stipend £70 p.a. Glebe house unfit for  
 residence. Gross income £518 p.a. Incumbent also  
 holds Rectory of Lt. Ellingham and Vicarage of Great  
 Ellingham  
 1835 Valued £508  
 1841 23 acres glebe and residence built  
 1891 Rent charge of £528 p.a.  
 1912 Nett value £252 p.a. 23 acres glebe and residence  
 Churchyard enlarged

**Patrons:** Edmund Buckenham (1603), S. Colby (1831), Rev. E.H.  
 Sawbridge (1873), Incumbent (1891)

**11. Church St. Nicholas**  
 (Chancel, side chapel, nave, S. aisle, porch, W. tower)

1086 Church plus 20 acres  
 c.1300 Main structure with 15<sup>th</sup> cent. Additions  
 1871/1895–98 Restorations

**Seats:** 86 appropriated, 222 free (1873)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1748–1835 5 houses set aside for worship

**13. Manorial:**

1066 Manor of 2 carucates held by Acwulf, a thane  
 1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Frodo, the Abbot's brother  
 –13<sup>th</sup> cent. Peter de Brettenham owns  
 13<sup>th</sup> cent. William de Thelnetham owns  
 c.1373 Hugh de Bokenham owns  
 c.1560 Thomas Carryll owns

1590	Edmund Buckenham/Bokenham owns (linked to Stoke Ash, Thornham, Thornham Parva, Gt. Cornard, Gt. Livermere)
1715	Thomas Tyrrell owns
1764	Dr. Thurston owns (linked to Market Weston)
1847	Sir Edward Kerrison owns
1905	Lady Bateman owns

### **Sub-Manors:**

#### **Cressy**

1251	Hugh de Cressy owns
14 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Peter de Thelnetham owns (absorbed by main manor)

#### **Eye Thelnetham**

	Described as parcel of the Manor of Eye c.1650, appears annexed to the Priory of Eye
1805	Charles, Marquis of Cornwallis owns (linked to Ingham, Braiseworth, Brome, Palgrave, Thrandeston, Cavenham, Culford, West Stow and Wordwell)
1825	Matthias Kerrison owns (absorbed by main manor) (linked to Braiseworth, Brome, Eye and Yaxley)

#### **Rectory of Thelnetham**

	Custom of manor to the younger son
1697	Rental £2 4s. 7¼d.
1748	Edmund Tyrrel owns
1905	Rev. John Sikes Sawbridge owns

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

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

1844	£1,999 rental value
1891	£2,432 rateable value
1912	£1,636 rateable value

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

1844–1912 Land sub-divided

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

1680	1 gent
1912	Rev. Canon J.S. Sawbridge MA

**18. Occupations:**

1550–1599	6 husbandmen, 4 yeoman, 1 glover, 1 labourer, 1 weaver
1600–1649	8 husbandmen, 14 yeomen, 2 glovers, 2 cordwainer/ shoemakers, 6 linen weavers, 2 labourers, 1 weaver, 1 carpenter, 1 clerk
1650–1699	1 tailor, 11 yeomen, 5 husbandman, 8 linen weavers, 1 labourer, 1 weaver, 1 bricklayer, 1 wheelwright
1831	90 in agriculture, 16 in retail trade, 1 professional, 6 in labouring, 14 in domestic service, 4 others
1844	3 shoemakers, victualler, millwright/engineer, corn miller, butcher, shopkeeper/tailor, wheelwright, surgeon, schoolmistress, tailor, blacksmith, 15 farmers
1912	Sub-postmaster, schoolmaster, 9 farmers, miller, asst. overseer, currier, poultry dealer, beer retailer, land steward, farm bailiff, expert water finder/artesian well engineer, publican, bootmaker

**19. Education:**

1818	1 Sunday school (40 attend)
1832	1 daily school established (15 boys attend)
1833	2 Infant schools established (12 attend)
1844	School mistress listed Old school built 1842 converted into teachers accommodation
1872	National school built, known as St. Helens, average attendance 1912 52

**20. Poor relief:**

1776	£136 15s. 9d.
1803	£336 0s. 3½d.
1818	£677 8s.
1830	£837 1s.
1832	£678 8s.
1834	£732 17s.

**21. Charities:**

**Town Estate:**

1840	Allotment of 28 acres 1R 34P awarded at enclosure let at £32. 12s. p.a. applied to church repairs, churchwardens expenses, residue applied to general support of the poor
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**Firmage's Charity:**

1611	by will of William Firmage: 1 acre 2R 31P called Little Seal, Rattlesden, let at £1 12s. p.a. for distribution among poor persons
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### **Poors Allotment:**

1840            circa 40 acres set aside for provision of turf etc. for fuel

### **Town House:**

1891            Purchased by Rev. E.H. Sawbridge and money invested,  
interest of which is distributed among poor

### **22. Other institutions:**

1464            Guild of St. John Baptist  
1519            Guild of St. Peter  
15/16<sup>th</sup> cent.    Guild of St. Nicholas  
1643–1879    Town house in existence  
1803            Friendly Society (36 members)

### **23. Recreation:**

1844            The White Horse public house  
1891            1 beerhouse, The White Horse public house  
1912            1 beer retailer, The White Horse public house  
1934            The Evergreen Oak public house

### **24. Personal:**

Edmund Gonville, rector of Thelnetham 1340, founder of Gonville Hall later  
Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge.  
Diary of Thomas King (carpenter) of Thelnetham 1766–1838. Diaries cover  
years 1804–1838. Suffolk Review Vol. 4 (No. 5), p.215.  
'Community Farm' by J. Middleton Murry, literary critic and philosopher,  
resident of Thelnetham 1952.

### **25. Other information:**

Near Cross Green Farm: remains of plinth and shaft of village cross known as  
'Trappetes' cross. Probably relates to following.

Evergreen Oak Inn: base and portion of cross shaft situated in orchard  
Believed built in accordance with will of John Cole 1527.

Derelict tower mill

Thelnetham Mill: post mill has stood on site since at least 1780. Present mill  
built 1819 for William Button, ceased working 1924 (situated on Thelnetham  
Fen). Restoration c.1979–1986.

'Thelnetham Windmill, history and guide', by P. Dolman 1983.  
100 persons emigrated to America from Thelnetham 1830.

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