

1. Parish: Thorington

Meaning: Homestead/village where thorn bushes grew

2. **Hundred:** Blything

Deanery: Dunwich (1868), Dunwich (South) (1868–1914), S Dunwich (1914–1936), N Dunwich (1936–1972), Halesworth (1972–)

Union: Blything

RDC/UDC: (E Suffolk) Blything RD (1894–1934), Blyth RD (1934–1874), Suffolk Coastal DC (1984–)

Other administrative details:

Blything Petty Sessional Division
Halesworth County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,448 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed: a. Deep well drained sandy soils,
some very acid, risk of wind erosion
b. Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay soils
c. Some deep peat soils associated with clay over sandy soils, high groundwater levels, risk of flooding by river

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		17 acres meadow, wood for 42 pigs, 2 mills, 6 idle cattle, 54 pigs, 92 sheep, 8 beehives, 2 cobs, 15 goats
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilising agent, bred for fattening. Barley main cash crop. Also has similarities with wood-pasture region with pasture, meadow, dairying and some pig keeping.
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, roots
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1984 River Blyth forms natural boundary to North.
Dispersed settlement. Church situated in isolated position close to northern boundary. Scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 16, 1801 – 16, 1851 – 25, 1871 – 28, 1901 – 27, 1951 – 31, 1981 – 18

8. Communications:

Road: To Bramfield, Blythburgh and Darsham

Rail: 1891 4 miles Halesworth station: Southwold–Halesworth line, opened 1879, closed 1919.
East Suffolk line, opened 1854, closed for goods 1964.
Halesworth–Beccles–Haddiscoe line, opened 1854, closed 1959.

Water: River Blyth: navigable to Halesworth 1761, silted up.

9. Population:

1086 – 59 recorded
1327 – 25 taxpayers paid £1 14s. 1d.
1524 – 9 taxpayers paid £1 3s. 6d.
1603 – 46 adults
1674 – 20 households
1676 – Not recorded
1801 – 125 inhabitants
1831 – 159 inhabitants
1851 – 157 inhabitants
1871 – 133 inhabitants
1901 – 98 inhabitants
1931 – 118 inhabitants
1951 – 136 inhabitants
1971 – 54 inhabitants
1981 – 53 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £5 6s. 8d.
1291 Valued £5 6s. 8d.
1535 Valued £7
1650 Valued £40
1674 Parsonage has 3 hearths
1831 Curate, stipend £60 pa. Glebe house unfit for occupation.
Gross income £240 pa. Incumbant also holds Rectory of Kelsale cum Carlton and Saxmundham.

1844 11 acres 2R 17P glebe. Modus of £283 17s. pa in lieu of tithes
 1891 11 acres OR 17P glebe and neat residence
 1912 Nett value £175. 15 acres and glebe and residence. Incumbent also holds Wenhaston

Patrons: Sir Edward Coke (1603), John Brooke (1650), Col. Bruce (1831), Lt. Col. Bence (1944)

11. Church

St Peter

Chancel, nave, N porch, S vestry, round W tower.

1086 Church + 10 acres free land and ½ acre meadow.
 Church + 8 acres
 Norman Tower (possibly Anglo Saxon), nave walls, N doorway.
 13th cent. Chancel rebuilt
 14th/15th cent. N porch
 c.1500 Battlements to tower
 1862 Chancel almost completely rebuilt

Note: Internal tower arch is restoration, externally however an original ornamented arch (12th cent.) is visible above S porch roof.

Seats: 80 (1915)

12. Nonconformity etc:

13. Manorial:

1066 Manor of 2 carucates held by Aelfric, a free man
 1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to William of Warenne and held by Godfrey of Pierreport

Thorington/Thorington Wimples with Wenhaston, Wimples Ufford, Westons

1247 Geoffrey de Wymples owns
 1323 John de Cove owns (linked to South Cove and Covehithe)
 c.1357 Sir John de Norwich owns (linked to Wenhaston and Yoxford)
 1382 William de Ufford owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
 c.1549 Sir Philip Calthorp owns (linked to Wattisham)
 1570/71 Henry Norris owns (linked to Benacre and Burgh)
 1583 Leonard Spence owns
 1584 Anthony Wingfield owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
 1593 Sir Edward Coke owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)

c.1691 John Bence owns (linked to Cookley, Heveningham, Carlton, Kelsale and Blaxhall)

Sub-manors

Thorington Hall at Sowers

1066 Manor of 3 carucates held by Haldane
1086 Manor of 3 carucates belonging to Geoffrey de Manderville and held by William of Bouville
15th cent. Robert Sampson owns
1428 John Hopton owns (linked to Yoxford, Blythburgh, Easton Bavents and Wissett)
1611 Sir Edward Clere owns
c.1611 Sir Edward Coke owns (absorbed by main manor)
1800 John Dresser owns (linked to Wenhaston and Blythford)
1822 Rev Jeremiah Day owns

14. Markets/Fairs

15. Real property:

1844 £1,340 rental value
1891 £1,600 rateable value
1912 £1,221 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844 Lt. Col. H.B. Bence, principal owner
1891 Mrs Bence-Trower, Miss Bence and Mrs Bence-Lambert, principal owners
1912 Representatives of the late H.A. Starkie-Bence principal owners

17. Resident gentry:

1674 Richard Cooke has house with 18 hearths
1679 Robert Coke and Roger Coke
George Golding, High Sheriff of Suffolk 1765
1891 Major G.L. Bence-Lambert and Rev. T.S. Hill BCL, MA
1912 Col. G.L. Bence-Lambert CMG, DL, JP and Rev. W.N. Matthews MA

18. Occupations:

1500–1549 1 yeoman
1550–1599 2 yeomen
1600–1649 3 yeomen, 2 husbandmen, 1 carpenter, 1 linen weaver, 1 weaver
1650–1699 5 yeomen, 2 clerks, 1 husbandman, 1 spinster
1831 37 in agriculture, 3 in retail trade, 24 in domestic service

1844 8 farmers, gamekeeper
1912 Farm bailiff, florist, 4 farmers, blacksmith, land agent/farmer

19. Education:

1818/1833 Sunday School (20 attend)
1912 Children attend school at Wenhaston or Bramfield

20. Poor relief:

1776 £23 14s. 6d.
1803 £44 9s. 6³/₄d.
1818 £112 15s.
1830 £192 4s.
1832 £189 8s.
1834 £178 6s.

21. Charities:

Church Lands

1844 let at £2 pa

22. Other institutions:

23. Recreation:

24. Personal:

Bence family: pedigree of the family can be found in the published parish register.

25. Other information:

Thorington Hall

1818/20 rebuilt for Col. H.B. Bence, replacing former building.
1844 stands in park of 200 acres.
1849 demolished.
Photograph in 'Guide to Country Houses', Vol III by Burke and Savill. Lodge remains (thatched roof).

No-where-house is extra-parochial hamlet within the parish; consists of 1 cottage 1844, united with Thorington and loses its ex-parochial status c.1862.

Roman remains. Victoria County History, Vol I, p.318.

Published registers of Thorington 1561–1881.

Brick kilns referred to in 1591.