

# 1. Parish: Thornham Magna

**Meaning:** Meadow where thorn bushes grew (Ekwall)

2. **Hundred:** Hartismere

**Deanery:** Hartismere (-1897), Hartismere (South)(1897-1931), S. Hartismere (1931-1972), Hartismere (1972-)

**Union:** Hartismere

**RDC/UDC:** (E. Suffolk) Hartismere R.D. (-1974), Mid Suffolk D.C. (1974-)

## Other administrative details:

Hartismere Petty Sessional Division  
Eye County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,368 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

**Mixed:** a) Deep well drained fine loam over clay, some with clay subsoil  
b) Fine loam over clay soil, subject to seasonal water-logging, some brickearth

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
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:**

7. **Settlement:**

1958 To the north the parish is covered by Thornham Park, the church being situated within the Park. Development of the diverse settlement to the south of the park was probably

influenced by its growth. Roman road clips eastern parish boundary.  
Scattered farms

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 27, 1801 – 43, 1851 – 60, 1871 – 59,  
1901 – 48, 1951 – 46, 1981 – 48

**8. Communications:**

**Road:** Roads to Gislingham, Thornham Parva and Wickham Skeith  
**Rail:** 1891 2 ½ miles Mellis station: Mellis-Eye line, opened (1867),  
closed for passengers (1931), closed for goods (1964)  
Ipswich – Norwich line, opened (1849), station closed (1966)  
**Air:** Eye Airfield: constructed for USAP as heavy bomber base  
Transferred to RAF Bomber Command (1945), sold for  
Industrial development (1962/63)

**9. Population:**

1086 — 52 recorded  
1327 — 26 taxpayers paid £2. 4s. 9d  
1524 — 27 taxpayers paid £2. 11s. 10d.  
1603 — 100 adults  
1674 — 37 households  
1676 — 65 adults  
1801 — 295 inhabitants  
1831 — 380 inhabitants  
1851 — 322 inhabitants  
1871 — 273 inhabitants  
1901 — 198 inhabitants  
1931 — 156 inhabitants  
1951 — 158 inhabitants  
1971 — 119 inhabitants  
1981 — 129 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Rectory (with Thornham Parva)  
(also known as Pilecock/Thornham Pilcock)**

1254 Valued £12.  
1291 Valued £13. 6s. 8d.  
Pension to Prior of Eye 4s. £13. 11s. 8d.  
1535 Valued £7. 11s. 3d.  
1831 Glebe house. Gross income £497 p.a  
Valued £497 (includes Thornham Parva) (1835) 63 acres  
1R 32P glebe, good residence. Tithes commuted for  
£283. 17s. 8d. (1845)  
1912 Joint net value £275. 59 acres glebe and residence

**Patrons:** Mr. H. Buckenham (1603), Lord Henniker (1831-1912)

**11. Church**      **St Mary (In Thornham Hall Park)**  
(Chancel, nave, S. porches, W. tower)

1086      4<sup>th</sup> part church + 3 ½ acres land  
14<sup>th</sup> cent.      Tower, parts of chancel  
15<sup>th</sup> cent.      S. porch  
1851      Restoration

**Seats:**      200

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1676      1 papist, 4 nonconformists

**13. Manorial:**

**Thornham Hall al Briseworth's**

1066      Manor of 1 carucate held by Leofric under patronage of  
Brictric  
1086      Manor of 1 carucate belonging to Issac  
14<sup>th</sup> cent.      William de Briseworth owns passing to the Wiseman  
family  
1669      Bokenham family owns (linked to Thelnetham)  
18<sup>th</sup> cent.      Sir John Major owns (linked to Worlingworth) passing to  
the Henniker family

**Sub Manors:**

**Thornham**

1275      Conferred on Priory of Eye by Robert Malet  
1536      Charles Brandon owns (linked to numerous manors  
throughout Suffolk)  
1592      Sir Nicholas Bacon owns (linked to numerous manors  
throughout Suffolk)  
1597      John Attiowe and Henry Becke own after which nothing is  
known

**Hemenhall/Hemenhales**

14<sup>th</sup> cent.      Sir Ralph de Hemenhale owns

**14. Markets/Fairs**

**15. Real property:**

1844      £2,287 rental value

1891 £1,790 rateable value  
1912 £1,263 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844-1912 Closed parish almost entirely within Thornham Hall estate

**17. Resident gentry:**

1673 Wiseman Bokenham  
1680 1 gentlemen  
1844 Lord Henniker and Rev. T. Preston MA  
1912 Lord Henniker JP, Capt. M. Hughes and Rev. E.F. Bingley MA

**18. Occupations:**

1550-1599 3 husbandmen, 1 parson, 1 carpenter, 1 knacker  
1600-1649 3 husbandmen, 4 yeomen, 1 labourer, 2 millers, 1 wheelwright  
1650-1699 2 husbandmen, 7 yeoman, 1 clerk  
1831 71 in agriculture, 16 in retail trade, 8 professionals, 20 in domestic service, 4 others  
1844 Bricklayers, victualler, miller, relieving officer, blacksmith, wheelwright, grocer, draper, 8 farmers  
1912 Sub-postmaster, police officer, grocer/draper, publican, 4 farmers, head gamekeeper, land agent, district nurse, miller

**19. Education:**

1818 1 day school (12 attend)  
1833 1 school held Tuesday and Friday (Children from Thornham Parva also attend)  
1855 2 Sunday Schools (33 attend) also serves Thornham Parva, 1 schoolmistress listed  
Parochial school improved and enlarged (1874) 65 attend. Improved 1904, average attendance 63 (1912)

**20. Poor relief:**

1776	£96. 13s. 11d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£161. 2s. 9 ½ d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£474	spent on poor relief
1830	£387. 9s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£503.	spent on poor relief
1834	£326. 1s.	spent on poor relief

**21. Charities:**

**Town Estate:** 1434 4 acres, tenement let at £9 p.a. originally for superstitious use and payment of tenths and fifteenths.  
1840 Used for church repairs

**22. Other institutions:**

No dates: Fraternity of St. Mary  
1912 Police officer

**23. Recreation:**

1844-1912 The Horseshoes public house  
1912 Reading room

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

Thornham Hall: Portraits from the hall contained in book in RO

Thornham Hall: (15/16<sup>th</sup> cent.) mansion. Park 300/400 acres, gardens of 25 acres

Centre for rural crafts open on Thornham Estate (1982/83)

**Archaeological Sites:**

Stray finds: Rom. coin (CRN 4120)  
Pal. axe (CRN 4124)  
B.A. ingot (CRN 4125)  
Sax. spindle whorl (CRN 4126)

Scatter finds: Rom pottery (CRN 4121, 4123)  
axe (CRN 1900)  
B.A. arrowhead (CRN 4122)  
Med. pottery (CRN 4127)