

# 1. Parish: Assington

**Meaning:** Homestead of Assa (suggested)

**2. Hundred:** Babergh

**Deanery:** Sudbury (–1864), Sudbury (Western)(1864–1884),  
Sudbury (1884–)

**Union:** Sudbury

**RDC/UDC:** (W Suffolk) Melford RD (–1974), Babergh DC (1974–)

## Other administrative details:

Boxford Petty Sessional Division  
Sudbury County Court District

**3. Area:** 3,041 acres (1912)

**4. Soils:** Deep fine loam over clay, coarse loam over clay, fine loam and clay soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Calcareous subsoils in places.

## 5. Types of farming:

1086: Wood for 30 pigs, 1 mill, 5 horses at hall, 23 cattle, 60 pigs, 90 sheep, 6 beehives, 12 goats

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  
'Co-operative farms at Assington'. Journal of Royal Agricultural Society of England, Vol 24, Part 1 (1863)

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, beans, oats

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

## 6. Enclosure:

1817 408 acres in Assington, Stoke by Nayland, Polstead, Nayland  
Wissington enclosed under Private Act of Lands 1815

## 7. Settlement:

1977 Long well spaced ribbon type development mainly along Newton–Bures road. Church and Hall situated at northern extremity of development. Secondary centre at Further Street. Scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 68, 1801 – 79, 1851 – 154,

1871 – 172, 1901 – 130, 1951 – 129,  
1981 – 128

**8. Communications:**

**Road:** To Bures, Newton, Leavenheath and Little Cornard

**Rail:** 1891 4 miles Bures station: Sudbury–Marks Tey line, opened  
1849, closed for goods 1964, closed for passengers 1967

**9. Population:**

1086 – 79 recorded  
1327 – 22 taxpayers paid £2. 7s. 8d.  
1524 – 38 taxpayers paid £5. 13s. 10d.  
1603 – 180 adults  
1674 – 70 households  
1676 – not recorded  
1801 – 471 inhabitants  
1831 – 641 inhabitants  
1851 – 776 inhabitants  
1871 – 746 inhabitants  
1901 – 518 inhabitants  
1931 – 429 inhabitants  
1951 – 381 inhabitants  
1971 – 408 inhabitants  
1981 – 383 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Vicarage 1831, Discharged Vicarage 1844**

1254 Portion of the Rector £16. 13s. 4d.  
Portion of Hatfield £10 £26. 13s. 4d.  
1291 Valued £12. 13s. 4d.  
To the Vicar of the same £8 £20. 13s. 4d.  
1535 Valued £10  
1831 Curate, stipend £125 p.a. Glebe house. Gross income £390 p.a.  
Incumbent also holds Rectory of East Thorpe, Essex  
Tithes commuted for £447. 17s. 10d to the vicar and £361. 15s. 3d  
To the impropiator. 15 acres glebe (1837)  
1912 Nett value £300. 50 acres glebe and residence

**Patrons:** Gurdon family 1603–1912, Lord Cranworth 1912

**11. Church: St. Edmund (stands in centre of Assington Hall Park)  
(Chancel, nave, aisles, N & S porches, W tower)**

1086 Church + 30 acres free land  
15<sup>th</sup> cent. S porch and what remains of main structure  
1643 Puritanical Vandals (William Dowsing) ordered removal of cross  
from steeple and chancel to be levelled. 40 pictures also said to  
have been destroyed.  
1827 Chancel fell down  
1830 Some restoration (chancel rebuilt)

1863 Major restoration

**Seats:** 200 appropriated, 150 free (1873)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

Barn set aside for worship 1820

**13. Manorial:**

**Assington Manor**

1066 Manor of 8 carucates held by Siward of Malden, a thane  
Manor of 8 carucates belonging to Ranulf Peverel  
Held by the Peverells in Honor of Peverel  
12<sup>th</sup> cent. King gave manor to William Lungespeye  
13<sup>th</sup> cent. Andrew de BelloCamp owns  
1353 Held in Honor of Hatfield Peverel by Sir Robert Corbet  
(linked to Preston, Lt. Cornard, Bures, Boxford)  
16<sup>th</sup> cent. Gurdon family owns (linked to Little Cornard)

**Sub-Manors:**

**Levenya Strattons**

1293 Godfrey de Bellomonte owns (linked to Groton and Boxford)  
1343 William de Criketot owns passing subsequently to the  
Waldegrave family (linked to Boxford, Acton, Stoke by Nayland,  
Preston, Monks Eleigh, Edwardstone and Bures)  
1546 Robert Gurdon owns (absorbed by main manor)

**Shimplingford**

1376 Ralph Shimplingford died seised  
1518 Wiseman family owns  
1524 Corbet family owns (absorbed by main manor)

**Aveley/Alvingley**

11<sup>th</sup> cent. Manor of 1 carucate with soc. held by Brungar  
13<sup>th</sup> cent. Godfrey de Bellomonte owns (annexed to Levenya Strattons  
Manor)  
15/16<sup>th</sup> cent. Elizabeth, wife of Sir William Chaworth owns followed by Sir  
John Dunham  
1570 John Winterflod owns

**14. Market/Fair:**

**15. Real Property:**

1844 – £3,829 rental value  
1891 – £3,562 rateable value  
1912 – £3,868 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844 John Gurdon, principal owner  
1891 Philip Gurdon, principal owner  
1912 Lord Cranworth, principal owner

**17. Resident gentry:**

1584 John Gurdon, High Sheriff of Suffolk (1584)  
Robert Gurdon, High Sheriff of Suffolk (16<sup>th</sup> cent.)  
Brampton Gurdon, High Sheriff of Suffolk (1628)  
John Gurdon (1686)  
1844 J. Gurdon and T.L. Coulson (1844)  
1912 Major C. and the Hon. Mrs T. Moore, Rev. H.F. Banham, MA  
and W.C. Aldham

**18. Occupations:**

1599–1549 2 husbandmen, 1 shoemaker  
1550–1599 7 husbandmen, 4 yeomen  
1600–1649 10 husbandmen, 9 yeomen, 1 labourer, 1 blacksmith, 1 tailor,  
1 carpenter  
1650–1699 5 husbandmen, 8 yeomen, 1 tailor, 1 spinster, 1 carpenter,  
138 in agriculture, 13 in retail trade, 2 professionals,  
36 in domestic service, 5 others  
1844 12 farmers, tailor, broom maker, wheelwright, 3 blacksmiths,  
Grocer, draper, 2 carpenters, corn miller, teacher, 2 beerhouse  
Keepers, 2 grocer/drapers, butcher/victuallers,  
5 boot/shoemakers  
1912 Sub-postmaster, 2 teachers, 2 farm managers, 10 farmers,  
Carpenter, beer retailer, butcher, grocer, overseer, blacksmith,  
Publican, 2 gamekeepers, asst overseer, farm bailiff,  
shopkeeper, head gardener

**19. Education:**

1818 Day schools (30-40 attend), 1 Sunday school (70 attend)  
1 evening school for young people  
1833 2 daily schools (54 attend), 1 Sunday school (80 attend)  
1844 National school recorded  
2 boys attend Boxford Grammar school under bequest of  
John Gurdon 1777  
Public Elementary school built 1844, enlarged 1862, 1873  
and 1899, average attendance 1912 of 85  
Assington Primary school finally closed 1984 after fighting  
off two previous attempts at closure

**20. Poor relief:**

1776 £73. 1s. 10d.  
1803 £506. 11s.  
1818 £859.

1830            £857. 11s.  
1832            £800. 13s.  
1834            £802. 14s.

**21. Charities:**

**Winterflood's Dole:**

1593            by will of John Winterflood: Distribution of bread at Christmas and Easter + 4 bushels of wheat.

**Charity Land:**

1840            2 acres of half year land at Aldfleet Meadow – let at £3 p.a. to supply Linen for shirts and shifts.

**Alston's Gift:**

1690            by will of Thomas Alston: 26s. p.a. Distributed in 6d loaves of meslin monthly among 6 poor widows.

**Gurdon's Dole:**

1752            by will of John Gurdon: £2. 15s. p.a. applied to purchase of yearly stuff for Children's clothing.

**John Gurdon's Gift**

1777            by will of John Gurdon: Education of 2 poor children at Boxford Grammar School.

**22. Other institutions:**

1776            Workhouse (20 inmates)  
Agricultural Association Ltd founded 1853 (36 members and 213 acres 1891)  
Agricultural Co-operative Society founded 1830 (21 members) and 130 acres 1891  
Branch of Stoke and Melford Club for relief of sickness and old age 1912

**23. Recreation:**

1844            2 beerhouses  
Shoulder of Mutton public house (publican also butcher)  
1891/1912      1 beer retailer and The Shoulder of Mutton public house  
Ridley Reading Room and Institute opened 190)  
Young Women's Christian Union founded 1902  
Quoits Club and Gardening lectures 1903  
1912/13        Sparrow Club. Responsible for the destruction of 1,499 old Sparrows and 4,580 eggs at a rate of 3d per doz. birds and 3d per score eggs  
Assington Arts Week and Flower Festival 1970

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

**Assington Hall:** 14<sup>th</sup> cent. Present fragment believed to be rear portion of former quadrangle based structure. Supposedly site of monastery till 1310 (unsubstantiated. Purchased by Gurdon family, totally gutted by fire 1957. Photograph of print of Hall in RO. Oliver Cromwell said to have stayed as the guest of Sir Brampton Gurdon 1640 (date disputed, alternative given as 1648). Hall and park landscaped 1750. Village reputedly moved to its present position at this time to give more privacy to the Hall. Alterations to Hall 18<sup>th</sup> cent. Porch, minarets and turret added 1820/30 at which time the timber frame was faced with brick. 'Assington Church and Hall', PSIA, Vol XI, p.225

Village originally situated south of church. Earthworks mark the site.

Reputed site of battleground of Ashendon

Experiments in co-operative farming were undertaken in parish 1830–1914  
Plague of rats occurred 1910

Old Forge: 16/17<sup>th</sup> cent. building. Evidence to suggest a forge had occupied the site for much longer

Incendiary riots against the Gurdons by agricultural labourers 1943/44

Assington Thicks: a piece of woodland believed to be remnants of large ancient wood

'Short History of Assington from 1066' by D.E. Smith 1970.