

1. Parish: Combs

Meaning: Crest of a hill (Ekwall)

2. **Hundred:** Stow

Deanery: Stow (-1972), Stowmarket (1972-)

Union: Stow

RDC/UDC: E. Stow (1894-1934), Gipping RD (1934-1974), Mid Suffolk DC (1974-)

Other administrative details:

1884 Civil boundary change

1934 Ecclesiastical boundary change

Part of civil parish transferred to Stowmarket U.D.

Stowmarket Petty Sessional Division and County Court District

3. **Area:** 2,814 acres, 8 acres of water (1912)

4. **Soils:**

- Mixed:**
- a) Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils. Slight risk water erosion
 - b) Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged (degree varies), fine loam over clay, some calcareous clay soils on steeper slopes

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		2/3 mills, woodland for pigs, 12 acres meadow, 2 horses, 24 cattle, 16 pigs, 121 sheep, 60 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 heat, rye, oats, peas, vetches, hops and occasionally hemp
1804	Young:	Large acreages of hops grown
1818	Marshall:	Course of crops varies usually including summer fallow as preparation for corn products
1937	Main crops:	Wheat, barley, oats
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1958 Moderately sized development in 'U' shape. Church isolated with Hall in NE corner of parish. Secondary centres at (a) Moats Tye and (b) Ebb's Farm. Scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 84, 1801 – 96, 1851 – 247, 1871 – 272, 1901 – 274, 1951 – 159, 1981 – 169

8. Communications:

Road: Roads to Gt. Finborough, Stowmarket and Battisford.
1844 Carrier to Ipswich daily

Rail: 1891 2 miles Stowmarket station. Ipswich – Norwich line opened (1846), line electrified (1985)

Water: River Gipping: Bridge crosses, widened and repaired (1842) Gipping Navigation Act 1790. navigable to Ipswich. Decline began with advent of railways (circa 1846)

9. Population:

1086 — 92 recorded

1327 — 34 taxpayers paid £5. 7s. 3d.

1524 — 54 taxpayers paid £5. 3s. 3d. (includes Lt. Finborough)

1603 — 250 adults

1674 — 103 households

1676 — 315 recorded

1801 — 662 inhabitants

1831 — 950 inhabitants

1851 — 1,148 inhabitants

1871 — 1,278 inhabitants

1901 — 1,212 inhabitants

1931 — 1,899 inhabitants

1951 — 501 inhabitants

1971 — 424 inhabitants

1981 — 459 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £23. 6s. 8d.

Portion to Abbot of Gristein (Benedictine Abbey in Normandy) £1. 10s. £24. 16s. 8d.

1291 Valued £26. 13s. 4d.

Portion to Abbot of Greysteyn £1. 13s. 4d. £28. 6s. 8d.

1535 Valued £25. 17s. 8½d.

1831 1 curate, stipend £120 p.a. Glebe house. Gross income £534 p.a. Incumbent also holds Rectory of Barking and Perpetual Curacy of Badley

1844 Valued £880 p.a. Neat residence
1912 Valued £400 p.a. 28 acres glebe

Patrons: Thomas Dandye (1603), Earl of Ashburnham (1831)

11. Church **St. Mary**
(Chancel, nave with clerestory, aisles, porches, W. tower)

14th cent. Chancel, nave, tower, wooden porch, N. doorway
15th cent. Aisles, clerestory, Parclose screens to N. and S. chapels
1867 Restoration
Stoup at western door to nave
Parish room at the Ford built (1887) – weekly services held and Church Sunday school

Seats: 450 (379 free)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1611 3 persons not attending church
1627 1 person not receiving communion
1676 11 nonconformists
1703-1839 7 houses set aside for worship
1719 Mansion house of Samuel Denny used for worship
1912 Congregational chapel listed

13. Manorial:

Combs

1066 Manor of 2 carucates held by Wulfnoth under King Edward
1086 Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Robert, Count of Mortain
1206 Links with Aldringham, and Gt. Finborough (Bartholomew de Glanville)
1316 Links with numerous manors throughout Suffolk (Sir Robert de Ufford, Earls of Suffolk). Passing to Willoughby family (14th cent.)
1570 Links with numerous manors throughout Suffolk (Sir Nicholas Bacon)
1667 William Bridgeman owns
1731 Ambrose Crowley owns
1910 Links with Stowmarket (Earl of Ashburnham)

Sub-Manor:

Bavents

13 th cent.	Bavent family owns (links with Blythford and Chediston)
1344	Granted to the Crown
1543	Sir Richard Gresham owns
1609	Links with Falkenham, Kirton, Trimley St. Marti and St. Mary (Robert Barker)
1702	Sir George Wenyeyeve owns
19120	Links with Creeting St. Peter (Thomas Daniels)

14. Markets/Fairs

15. Real property:

1844	£3,653 rental value
1891	£4,339 rateable value
1912	£3,784 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844-1912 Land always sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1679	Edmund Dandy
1844	Rev. R. Daniel MA FSA
1891	Hon. Rev. A.C.B. Hamilton JP
1912	Rev. F. Child BA, Rev. C.E. Lowe MA

18. Occupations:

1500-1549	5 husbandmen
1550-1599	5 yeomen, 4 husbandmen, 1 wheelwright, 1 labouring man, 1 labourer, 1 parson
1600-1649	20 yeomen, 1 blacksmith, 7 husbandmen, 2 shoemakers, 1 wheelwright, 2 carpenters, 1 collar maker, 1 miller, 1 weaver, 1 pail maker
1650-1699	21 yeomen, 1 baker, 3 spinsters, 1 husbandman, 2 wheelwrights, 1 thatcher, 1 carpenter, 1 farmer, 1 tailor, 1 clerk
1844	J.A. Webb & Sons (tanners, fellmongers and woolstaplers) employed approx. 150 (1891). Baker, carpenter, 2 boot/shoemakers, blacksmith, 2 corn millers, 2 victuallers, book-keeper, wheelwright, farrier, beerhouse/shopkeeper/baker, carrier, gardener, 2 shopkeepers, parish clerk, maltster/corn and coal merchant, 20 farmers

1912 Mssrs. Webb & Son give employment in tanning, currying, fellmongering, glove and gaiter leather dressing and manufacture of leather belting, fire buckets and hose. Sub-postmaster, schoolmistress and master, solicitor, 10 farmers, 4 beer retailers, general smith, 2 shopkeepers, 2 millers (wind), 2 publicans, general dealer, builders, insurance agent, painter, 2 grocers, blacksmith, farm bailiff, butcher.

19. Education:

1818 1 Sunday school (37 attend)
 1833 1 daily school, est. (1829) 22 attend, 1 Sunday school (established church), 41 attend.
 1 Sunday school (independent with lending library), 69 attend.
 1873 Sunday school built (Congregational school chapel) by Mr. Lankester Webb (1873)
 1874 School board formed and school built, average attendance (1891) – 140
 Actually opened (1876), average attendance (1912) – 150
 1971 Combs Middle school established (256 pupils) (1971)

20. Poor relief:

1776	£214. 18s. 5d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£517. 13s. 2½d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£723	spent on poor relief
1830	£717. 16s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£769. 3s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£556. 16s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

Church Lands

1840 Lands let at £3. 0s. 8d. p.a. applied to church repairs

22. Other institutions:

1776 Workhouse containing 36 inmates
 1887 Parish rooms built at the Ford (1887), served as Sunday school

23. Recreation:

1844-1912 THE MAGPIE and THE PUNCH BOWL public houses
 1844 1 beerhouse
 1891/1912 4 beerhouses/retailers
 1912 Boys Brigade

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Combs Hall: rebuilt (17th cent.) by Orlando Bridgman, pulled down (1730)

Row of 'model' cottages built by Rev. Richard Daniel so as to 'improve' a bleak hill between the Ford and the Tannery (circa 1891)

Artesian well sunk to depth of 895 feet (circa 1891), geological specimens extracted during work are lodged at Ipswich Museum

The Manor of Combs: Renders 16li but can scarce yield that rent... 50 freemen were worth 16li, but now 31li. But they cannot suffer it without ruin. (Victoria County History Vol. II p.430)

Combs Wood: earliest record is in Domesday book. Earliest map dated (1710), Under management of Suffolk Trust for Nature Conservation (1983)

Gardeners Arms refurbished, restaurant added (1982)

Car lodge (built 1830) dismantled and moved to Museum of East Anglian Life at Stowmarket (1980)

3 cases of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest (1844)

Archaeological Sites

Med. fishponds (CRN 756)

Med. moated sites (CRN 5426, 5427, 5428, 5429)

Mill mound (CRN 5430)

Stray finds: Med. silver penny (CRN 1494)
 Rom. Quern, pottery (CRN 5425, 5432)
 Neo. Dagger (CRN 5431)