

1. Parish: Fakenham Magna (known as Little Fakenham to avoid confusion with Fakenham, Norfolk)

Meaning: Facca's homestead

2. **Hundred:** Blackbourn

Deanery: Blackbourn (–1972), Ixworth (1972–)

Union: Thetford

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

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change 1885 gains Rymer
Ecclesiastical boundary change 1931 gains ex-parochial parish of Rymer
Blackbourn Petty Sessional Division
Thetford County Court District

Rymer: separate ex-parochial parish –1858
Abolished as civil parish 1885 and also ecclesiastically.
Consolidated with Fakenham Magna 1931

3. **Area:** 1,846 acres of land, 8 acres water (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed: a. Deep well drained sand and coarse loam, some with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. Risk wind erosion
b. Deep permeable sand and peat soils affected by groundwater. Risk of winter flooding and wind erosion near river.

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		Fakenham: 23 acres meadow, wood for 12 pigs, 1 mill, 3 cobs, 16 wild mares, 12 cattle, 20 pigs, 300 sheep
1283		86 quarters to crops (688 bushels), 18 head horse, 62 cattle, 20 pigs, 932 sheep*
1500–1640	Thirsk:	Sheep-corn region, sheep main fertilising agent, bred for fattening. Barley main cash crop.
1818	Marshall:	Management varies with condition of sandy soils. Rotation usually turnip, barley, clover, wheat or turnips as preparation for corn and grass.

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, oats, turnips
1969 Trist: Barley and sugar beet are the main crops with some rye grown on poorer lands and a little wheat, herbage seeds and carrots

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

6. Enclosure:

1671 Licence to impark 2,000 acres in Euston, Great Fakenham, Sapiston and Coney Weston

7. Settlement:

1958/1980 Small compact development clustered on eastern parish boundary with Euston, situated west of river. Church centrally situated. Honington airfield intrudes into parish in western sector. This and the formation of Euston Park probably influenced settlement. Blackbourn river crosses parish N–S.

Rymer Point:

9 parish boundaries converge at site of shrunken mere at this point creating a radial effect.
(Western tip of Fakenham Magna parish)

Few scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 18, 1801 – 25, 1851 – 36, 1871 – 42,
1901 – 44, 1951 – 43, 1981 – 52
Rymer: 1851 – 2, 1871 – 5

8. Communications:

Roads: Roads to Honington, Sapiston and Euston
1891:Carrier to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday
1912:Carrier to Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday to Thetford on Saturday

Rail: 1891 2½ miles Barnham station: Thetford–Bury St Edmunds line opened 1876 closed for passengers 1953, closed for goods 1960.

Air: Honington airfield: built 1935 under RAF expansion scheme, opened 1937. Handed over to USAAF 1942 reverted to RAF c.1946, remains active RAF airbase.

Water: Blackbourn river.
Little Ouse river: Tributary of Great Ouse, 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 – 68 recorded
1327 – 12 taxpayers paid £2 0s. 4d.
1524 – 15 taxpayers paid £0 14s.
1603 – 50 adults
1662 – 17 householders paid £4 14s.*
1674 – 20 households
1676 – 65 adults
1801 – 157 inhabitants
1831 – 204 inhabitants
1851 – 229 inhabitants
1871 – 208 inhabitants
1901 – 168 inhabitants
1931 – 130 inhabitants
1951 – 145 inhabitants
1971 – 187 inhabitants
1981 – 135 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), Rectory (1912)

1254	Valued £9 6s. 8d.	
1291	Valued £12	
1341	Valued £12	
	Portion of Rector of same in Barningham	£1
		<u>£13.</u>
1535	Valued £11 2s. 4½d.	
1603	Incumbent also holds parsonage of East Harling, Norfolk	
1831	Glebe house. Gross income £251 p.a.	
1837	Modus of £271. 15s 9d. p.a. in lieu of tithes	
	44½ acres glebe	
1857	Rectory house altered and enlarged	
1887	Rent charge of £271 15s. 9d. in lieu of tithes	
	39 acres 2R 10P glebe, gross income £35 12s.	
1912	Net income £172 p.a. 44 acres glebe and residence	

Patrons: Sir Thomas Cordell (1603), Duke of Grafton (1831–)

11. Church St. Peter
(Chancel, nave, S. porch, vestry, W. tower)

1086	2 churches plus 40 acres, 1 plough, ½ acre meadow
Norman/ possibly Saxon	2 windows over N. door and S. porch
13 th cent.	Lancet window in chancel

14th cent. Main structure, including tower
1859 Restoration
1987 Suffering damage by aircraft vibration and threatened with redundancy

Note: Saxon – quoins at SE and NE angles of nave.
Blocked slit windows both N. and S. of nave

Seats: 150 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

13. Manorial:

1066 Manor of 5 carucates held by Alstan, a thane
1086 Manor of 5 carucates held by Peter of Valognes
1243 Beatrice, Countess of Provence owns
Late 13th cent. William Comyn owns
1302 Roger le Bigod owns but by 1314 had returned to the Comyn family and the manor appears divided (linked to numerous other manors throughout Suffolk under the Bigod family)
c.1381 Sir Andrew Cavendish owns
1451 Granted to Reginald de West (Lord de la Ware)
1468 Sir Thomas Cobham owns
1564 Sir William Cordell owns (linked to Shimpling and Long Melford)
1614 William Rushbrook owns
Mid 17th cent. Thomas Taylor owns
1692 Charles, Duke of Grafton owns in which family it remains (linked to Euston, Honington and Sapiston)

Sub-Manors:

Ringmere/Grange or Manor

1528 Charles Brandon owned (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk) but alienated in same year to John Wiseman
c.1592 Sir William Cordell owns (absorbed by main manor)

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

1844 £1,137 rental value
1891 £1,321 rateable value
1912 £1,138 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912 Duke of Grafton sole owner

17. Resident gentry:

1674 Thomas Rushbrooke owns property with 34 hearths
1662 Sir Lionel Tollemach owns property with 40 hearths
1679 Thomas Frost and Thomas Rushbrook
1891/1912 Rev. R.B. Caton MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1599 2 husbandmen, 2 parsons. 1 labourer, 1 yeoman
1600–1649 3 husbandmen, 3 shepherds, 1 labourer, 1 yeoman, 1
spinster
1650–1699 1 husbandman, 2 yeomen, 1 maltster, 1 clerk, 2
blacksmiths
1831 43 in agriculture, 2 in retail trade, 1 professional, 4 in
domestic service
1844 Shoemaker, pork butcher, schoolmistress, thatcher, 2
farmers
1912 Sub-postmaster, schoolmistress, shopkeeper, carrier,
farmer

19. Education:

1818 2 small day schools (16 attend), 1 evening school (20
attend) – supported by Duke of Grafton
1833 2 day and Sunday schools (27 attend), 1 Sunday school
held in evening (16 boys attend)
1827 National. School built, supported by Duke of Grafton
1874 Parochial school built by Duke of Grafton to replace the
former school, closed by 1980
1885/6 Night school in existence

20. Poor relief:

1776 £21 12s. 6d.
1803 £142 17s. 3d.
1818 £163 14s.
1830 £159 18s.
1832 £187 17s.
1834 £113 12s.

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

1887 Reading Room established with library attached (books
etc. supplied by Duke of Grafton)

1836–48 Lending library held at school
Clothing Club

23. Recreation:

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Earthwork: circular ditch and bank, possible med. ring motte

Roman settlement area

The poem 'The Fakenham Ghost,' by R. Bloomfield is set around the parish.

The poet's mother was born in cottage opposite the church.

Parish became known as Little Fakenham during World War II to prevent confusion with Fakenham in Norfolk.

1 case of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest 1843.

Rymer: corruption of med. name Ringmere.

Ringmere Grange – anciently belonged to Tilty Priory, Essex. See East Anglian Studies by Lionel Munby, p.25.