

# 1. Parish: Great Cornard

Meaning: Corn lands

2. **Hundred:** Babergh

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

**Union:** Sudbury

**RDC/UDC:** (W. Suffolk) Melford R.D. (–1974), Babergh D.C. (1974–)

## Other administrative details:

Melford Petty Sessional Division  
Sudbury County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,622 acres land, 11 acres water (1912)

4. **Soils:** Chalk, clay on bed of limestone.  
Deep fine loam over clay, coarse loam over clay, fine  
loam and clay soils with slowly permeable subsoil and  
slight seasonal waterlogging. Some slowly permeable  
seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay soils.  
Calcareous subsoils in places.

**Mixed:** a. Deep well drained fine loam, coarse loam and sandy  
soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel. Slight risk  
water erosion.  
b. Deep often stoneless coarse loam. Some slowly  
permeable seasonally waterlogged coarse and fine loam  
over clay.

## 5. Types of farming:

1086 1 mill, wood for 44 pigs, 4 horses at hall, 27  
cattle, 130 pigs, 539 sheep (includes Lt.  
Cornard)

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. Cramphorns Nurseries  
1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar  
beet

## 6. Enclosure:

1813 478 acres in Gt. Cornard, Chilton and Gt. Waldingfield  
Enclosed under Private Acts of Lands 1811 (includes  
Gt. Cornard common)

## 7. Settlement:

1953/1977 Large expanding community becoming suburb of  
Sudbury. Church centrally situated. River Stour and  
railway form western boundary and act as restraint on  
development. Scattered farms.

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – ,42, 1801 – 82, 1851 – 192,  
1871 – 199, 1901 – 234, 1951 – 513,  
1981 – 2,551

## 8. Communications:

**Road:** To Sudbury and Lt. Cornard  
1912 Carriers to Bures and Sudbury pass through Monday  
and Thursday

**Rail:** 1891 1 mile Sudbury station: opened 1849, line to Shelford  
opened 1854, line to Haverhill opened 1865, closed  
for goods 1966, closed for passengers 1967

**Water:** River Stour: navigable c.1724. Toll-table for 1741 and  
1750 lists cargo. Declined around 1860. Navigation Company  
went into voluntary liquidation 1913. Lock and weir.

## 9. Population:

1086 – 79 recorded (includes Lt. Cornard)  
1327 – 37 taxpayers paid £3 9s. 11¼d (includes Lt. Cornard)  
1524 – 35 taxpayers paid £2 15s.  
1603 – 100 adults  
1674 – 53 households  
1676 – 180 adults  
1801 – 535 inhabitants  
1831 – 819 inhabitants  
1851 – 857 inhabitants  
1871 – 877 inhabitants  
1901 – 932 inhabitants  
1931 – 1,072 inhabitants  
1951 – 1,621 inhabitants  
1971 – 6,915 inhabitants

1981 – 7,684 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Vicarage**

1254	Portion of parson £10	
	Portion of vicar £1 6s. 8d.	<u>£11 6s. 8d</u>
1291	Valued £16	
	To Vicar of the same £6	<u>£22 0s. 0d.</u>
1535	Valued £9	
1831	1 curate, stipend £80 p.a. Glebe house. Joint gross income £155 (with Lt. Cornard)	
	Valued £155 1835	
	Tithes commuted for £505 15s. 6d. p.a. 1839	
1912	Nett value £91. Residence.	

**Patrons:** Sir Richard de Cornard (1304), de Grey family (1342–1383), Abbess and Convent of West Malling (1412–1484, 1503–1525), Sir Thomas Jermyn (1537), William Golding (1578), Thomas Lynneson (1590), Thomas Hayes (1603), John Brand (1630), Eldred family (1644–1761), Sparrow family (1803–1882), Rev. B.J.H. Beridge (1912)

**11. Church St. Andrew**

(Chancel, nave, aisles, S. porch, W. tower/wooden spire)

1086	1 church without land, 1 church + 15 acres free land
14 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Tower
1853	Encased in flint
1862/1887	Restoration
1887	S. aisle
1908	Further restoration

**Seats:** 300 free (1873)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1797–1824	2 houses set aside for worship
	Congregational Mission chapel built 1848

**13. Manorial:**

1066	Manor of 3 carucates (named Cornard) held by Earl Morcar's mother
1086	manor of 3 carucates belonging to the King

**Cornard Magna/Abbas Hall**

c.12 <sup>th</sup> cent.	Serlic de Cornerthe owns
1317	Disputed. Said to have been sold to Convent of Malling

in Kent. Also said to belong to Roger de Grey. However, at date unknown Cornard of Blessed Virgin West Malling owned.

1539/40 Thomas Danyell owns (linked to Aston)  
1624 John Brand owns (linked to Polstead, Edwardstone, Bures and Boxford)  
1643 John Eldred owns (linked to Saxham)  
1770 James Sparrow owns (linked to Gt. Waldingfield and Lt. Cornard)

**Sub-manors:**

**Greys**

1316 Domina de Cornard owns (linked to main manor)  
14<sup>th</sup> cent. Thomas de Grey owns (linked to Lt. Cornard and Cavendish)  
1508 105 acres land, 90 acres pasture, 30 acres wood and 10 acres marsh held by the King as of the Honor of Clare. Valued £23 6s. p.a.  
1547 Absorbed by main manor

**14. Markets/Fairs:**

**15. Real property:**

1844 £2,191 rental value  
1891 £4,097 rateable value  
1912 £4,726 rateable value

**16. Land ownership:**

1844/1912 Land sub-divided

**17. Resident gentry:**

12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> cent. John de Cornerthe (High Sheriff)  
1844 W. King, J.L. Tiffen and Rev. W. Wilkinson MA

**18. Occupations:**

1550–1549 1 husbandman, 1 weaver, 1 clothmaker (additional information for this group from 'The Springs of Lavenham' by B. McClenaghan)  
1550–1599 10 husbandmen, 1 weaver, 4 yeomen, 2 servants, 1 vicar, 1 labourer  
1600–1649 4 husbandmen, 1 weaver, 10 yeomen, 1 clothier, 1 pinner (person who makes pins or a pointmaker), 1 brickmaker,

	1 fanwright (occupation not defined but known to work in riven wood), 1 miller
1650–1699	4 husbandmen 3 weavers, 9 yeomen, 1 sponster, 1 clothier, 1 say weaver, 1 webster (female weaver)
1831	144 in agriculture, 26 in retail trade, 5 professionals, 23 in labouring, 32 in domestic service, 5 others
1844	8 farmers, maltster, corn miller, 2 blacksmiths, wheelwright, jeweller, brickmaker, shopkeeper, cattle dealer, 2 shoemakers, brickmaker/coarse earthenware manufacturer, teacher, 2 publicans, beerhouse keeper, carpenter
1912	Sub-postmaster, 2 teachers, police constable, market gardener, newsagent, manufacturer of coconut fibre mats, millers/maltster, 4 publicans, photographer, insurance agent, 3 grocers, 9 farmers, nurseryman, bricklayer, butcher, jobbing gardener, maltster, baker, beer retailer, insurance agent, 2 blacksmiths, catcut manufacturer.

Gainsborough Fabrics employs 500 1975  
 HQ of warp knitting division of Carrington Viyella Textile Manufacture on same site since 1928

## 19. Education:

1833	3 daily schools (55 attend), 1 Sunday school (78 attend)
1844	1 schoolmaster listed
	School Board established and school built 1878 to accommodate 140 pupils
	Education Committee formed 1912 under Education Act 1902
	Public Elementary school, average attendance 1912 150
	Infants school opened 1908
	Head Lane school closed 1963
1963	School building includes Wells Hall and the Middle and Upper schools
	Pot Kiln primary school opened 1965
	'The History of Education in Gt. Cornard', by B. Cocker 1981
	'Gt. Cornard Middle School', by B. Cocker 1986

## 20. Poor relief:

1776	£124 6s. 9d.
1803	£352 4s. 11½d.
1818	£487 7s.
1830	£633 10s.
1832	£616 16s.
1834	£465 6s.

**21. Charities:**

**Town Lands:**

1840 3 acres let at 40s. p.a. applied to money and bread at Christmas

**22. Other institutions:**

1776 Workhouse (20 inmates)  
1803 1 Friendly Society (17 members)  
1891 Police Officer listed  
1912 Police station  
1968 Hampton House hostel for maladjusted boys

**23. Recreation:**

1844 2 public houses, 1 beerhouse  
1891 4 public houses, 1 brewer, 1 beerhouse  
1912 3 public houses, 1 beer retailer  
Co-op Women's Guild, Friendship Club 1975)  
Prospect Theatre created at Upper school 1981 seats 250  
New Community library opened 1983

**24. Personal:**

Betty Cocker 1981: author of The History of Education in Gt. Cornard and Historical Trail.

Turkentine family: has unbroken line of association with blacksmith trade in Gt. Cornard for 360 years 1952.

Graham Naylor: (6<sup>th</sup> form pupil at Upper School) designs Parish Council Chairman's chain of office 1982.

Reg. Chaplin: author of 'A History of St. Andrew, Gt. Cornard', 1980.

V. Oliver: typescript on Gt. Cornard.

Marriage of parents of Thomas Gainsborough registered in parish 1704.  
'The family of de Cornerth/Greys Hall, Gt. Cornard', PSIA Vol. VI, p.16/17.

**25. Other information:**

Suggested area of battles with Danes 830, 866/69 at field called 'Dane's Hole' at Wrongs Farm.

War Memorial dedicated 1919.

Council Estate built at Prospect Hill 1930s.

Council Estate built at Cats Lane 1946.

Essex River Board began work to clean river thus limiting threat of flooding 1955.

Agreement with GLC to build 750 'overspill' houses and 250 ordinary council Houses 1960s. Boosted population figures and relegated original village to one corner of the parish.

Private estate built at Cats Lane 1960.

Maldon Court estate built 1974. Subsidence due to chalk workings 1977.

Cavities filled in 1979. Area designated 'safe' 1949.

Community Centre built 1970.

Drainage of school swimming pool (Pot Kiln school) exposed old chalk tunnels and cave directly under playground causing school's temporary closure 1980. Cavities filled 1981.

David Bellamy opened Gt. Cornard Country Park 1986.

Oriel Lodge: opened as home for 14 mentally handicapped persons 1982.

Abbas Hall: Oldest parts said to date from 1290 but main structure is 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> cent. Grade I listed building.

'Maldon Grey Inn': derives its name from a tradition of a grey mare which habitually bolted from Maldon, Essex not stopping until she reached this spot. Boundary of two parishes runs through middle of house.

'Gt. Cornard Historical Trail', by B. Cocker 1987.