

1. Parish: Great Whelnetham

Meaning: Water meadow frequented by swans

2. **Hundred:** Thedwastre

Deanery: Thedwastre (–1884), Horningsheath (1884–1930)
Horringer (1914–1972) Lavenham (1972–)

Union: Thingoe (1836–1907), Bury St. Edmunds (1907–1930)

RDC/UDC: Thingoe R.D. (–1974) St. Edmundsbury D.C. (1974–)

Other administrative details:

1884 Civil boundary change
Thingoe and Thedwastre Petty Sessional Division
Bury St. Edmunds County Court District

3. **Area:** 1495 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed:

- a. Deep well drained fine loam over clay, coarse loam over clay and fine loams, some with calcareous clay subsoils.
- b. Small section of deep permeable sand and peat affected by groundwater. Risk winter flooding and wind erosion.

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, oats, barley

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet.

6. **Enclosure:**

7. **Settlement:**

1958 Small compact development on main Bury St. Edmunds to Sudbury road (part of which also acts as a boundary with Little Whelnetham).
Secondary development near to church.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 22, 1801 – 33, 1851 – 119, 1871 – 113, 1901 – 94, 1951 – 129, 1981 – 312

8. Communications:

Road: Main Bury St. Edmunds to Sudbury road. Road also to Bradfield Combust. This road was also a Turnpike Road.
1891: Carrier to Bury St. Edmunds on Wednesday and Saturday

Rail: 1891: 1½ miles Little Whelnetham station. Bury St. Edmunds to Long Melford line opened 1876, closed for passengers 1961, closed for goods 1965. Whelnetham station used for refuse infill.

Water: River Lark.

9. Population:

1086 – 55 recorded (includes Lt. Whelnetham)
1327 – 22 taxpayers paid £2 (includes Lt. Whelnetham)
1524 – 9 taxpayers paid 7s. 8d.
1603 – 80 adults
1674 – 31 households
1676 – 79 adults
1801 – 222 inhabitants
1831 – 422 inhabitants
1851 – 552 inhabitants
1871 – 523 inhabitants
1901 – 357 inhabitants
1931 – 315 inhabitants
1951 – 442 inhabitants
1971 – 818 inhabitants
1981 – 867 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Rectory

1254 Valued £8.
1291 Valued £8 13s. 4d.
1535 Valued £9 15s. 7½d.
1831 Glebe house. Gross income £352 p.a. Incumbent also holds vicarage of Mildenhall.
£405 p.a. awarded in lieu of tithes 1843
1891 Good residence, 55 acres glebe.
1912 Net income £263. 17 acres glebe and residence.

Patrons: Sir Robert Jermyn (1603), Marquis of Bristol (1831), F. Wing (1844), Rev. J. J. Badeley (1891)

11. Church St Thomas A Becket

(Chancel, N. vestry, transept, nave, porch, turret with cupola)

1086 2 churches + 40 acres free land in alms.
1453 Will bequeaths money to building of tower.
14/15th cent. Construction.
1749 Bell turret built at cost of James Merest.

Seats: 66 appropriated, 203 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1676	2 papists
1815–1837	3 houses set aside for worship
1910	Baptist chapel built as gift of Cropley family, converted to village hall 1955

13. Manorial:

Whelnetham Magna.

13 th cent.	Edmund de Welnetham holds.
1371	Estates divided between 3 daughters, this manor becoming vested in Sir John Brokesbourne and thence to Sir William Raynforth.
1567	Linked to Hawstead, Acton, Gt. Waldingfield, Lawshall, Bradfield, Onehouse, and Rougham (Drury family).
1590	Linked to Gt. Waldingfield, Preston, Bradfield St. George, Rushbrooke and Lt. Whelnetham (Sir Robert Jermyn)
c.1757	John Symonds owns.
1885	Linked with Lt. Whelnetham (J. H. P. Oakes of Nowton)

Sub-Manors:

Sicklesmere/Sygelsmer.

1499	Sir John Raynford owns. Absorbed by main manor.
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Copdock's/Cobdoes/Copdoes.

1280	Linked to Lt. Cornard, Onehouse and Lt. Whelnetham (Thomas de Weyland)
c.1375	Linked to Lt. Whelnetham (Thomas le Despencer)
1544	Robert Garneys owns.

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

Includes Hamlet of Sicklesmere:

1844	£1851 rental value
1891	£1776 rateable value
1912	£1368 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912	Land sub-divided.
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17. Resident gentry:

1844 Rev. H.G. Phillips, MA
1912 Rev. T.A.J. Ridpath, MA

18. Occupations:

1500–1549 1 husbandman, 1 parson
1550–1599 2 husbandmen, 1 yeoman, 1 parson
1600–1649 3 husbandmen, 6 yeoman, 1 spinster
1650–1699 1 husbandman, 4 yeoman
1831 81 in agriculture, 12 in retail trade, 2 professionals, 7 labourers, 7 in domestic service, 3 others.
1844 Baker/beerhouse keeper, 2 corn millers, cattle dealer, bricklayer, auctioneer/maltster, land agent, 8 farmers.
Sicklesmere: 2 blacksmiths, 2 butchers, cowkeeper, 2 grocers, 2 wheelwrights, victualler, schoolmistress, farmer bailiff, glover/breeches maker, bricklayer, drawing master, 4 shoemakers.
1912 Schoolmistress, beer retailer, 2 millers (wind), 7 farmers.
Sicklesmere: Sub-postmaster, baker, builder/brickmaker, blacksmith, 2 carpenters, beer retailer, shopkeeper.

19. Education:

1818 Day school for 12 girls, 1 Sunday school on Madras system (40 attend)
1833 1 daily school (50 attend), 1 Sunday school (40 attend)
1844 Schoolmistress listed in Sicklesmere.

National school built 1849, enlarged 1871 and 1904. Average attendance 1891 – 29, average attendance 1912 – 65.

20. Poor relief:

1776 £123 6s. 6d.
1803 £290 12s. 2d.
1818 £391 1s.
1830 £406 16s.
1832 £482 13s.
1834 £353

21. Charities:

Green's Charity:

1814 By will of Mary Green: Dividends on investment of £8 13s. 8d. p.a. applied to purchase of coals for distribution amongst poor.
1874 Interest on £150 bequeathed by Samuel Fenton and Miss Cook distributed in coal and bread.
1884 £100 consoles bequeathed by Mrs. Barrett of Hardwick.

22. Other institutions:

Great Workhouse Field: shown on tithe map of 1843, suggests possible workhouse existed. Has been suggested that Church Cottages are a possible site. Deeds of 1837 exist referring to messuages or tenements believed to refer to the Workhouse 1970.

Village Hall (originally an army hut) erected 1926.

Church Hall converted from Baptist Chapel (built 1910) 1955.

New Village Hall built 1978.

23. Recreation:

1844 Beerhouse.

1891 The Eagle public house.

Sicklesmere: The Rushbrooke Arms public house, built 1746 previously a Trusthouse of the Rushbrooke Hall estate. Known as The Waggon in 18th cent. Beerhouse, possibly known as The Victoria which closed 1939.

1912 Beer retailer.

Sicklesmere: Beer retailer.

Adam and Eve public house, Cocktail Street (no dates)

Sicklesmere: Football team c.1930.

24. Personal:

25. Other information:

Tower Mill: dated 1865, disused 1984), Grade II listed.

Sicklesmere: the name now refers to the hamlet. Originally referred to a mere/lake near to the houses.

'Guide to the Documents of the Whelnetham and Sicklesmere', by J.F.J. Collett-White.

Toll-houses: Octagonal building beside the A134 Bury St. Edmunds to Sudbury road.

'Great Whelnetham: A brief account of the fortunes of a Suffolk village from Roman Times to the present day', by Robin Hambrook 1970.

Post Mill: on Stanningfield road in existence 1955.

Sicklesmere: First council houses built 1929 and 1935.

Brickfields: 2 brickfields and kilns are known to have existed (no dates)

Raynsford Estate built 1964/69 doubling village population.

Sheltered homes for the elderly opened at Erskine Lodge 1977.

Fire damages Old rectory a week prior to completion of restoration work 1974.

Won Suffolk Community Council Best Kept Village award 1984/85.