

1. Parish: Kersey

Meaning: Cress island or stream ditch

2. Hundred: Cosford

Deanery: Sudbury (-1864), Sudbury (Eastern) (1864-1884),
Hadleigh (1884-)

Union: Cosford

RDC/UDC: (W. Suffolk) Cosford RD (-1974), Babergh DC (1974-)

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change (1935). Gained parts of Hadleigh Hamlet and Polstead.

Part transferred to Semer (1935)

Cosford Petty Sessional Division

Hadleigh County Court District

3. Area: 1,511 acres (1912)

4. Soils:

a) Slowly permeable calcareous/non calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion.

b) Deep well drained fine loam, coarse loam and sandy soils, locally flinty and in places over gravel. Slight risk water erosion

c) Deep fine loam over clay and clay soils with slowly permeable sub soils and slight seasonal waterlogging/
Calcareous subsoils in places

5. Types of farming:

1086 4 acres meadow, wood for 60 pigs, 1 mill, 1 cob, 10 cattle, 36 pigs, 140 sheep, 3 beehives

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, beans

1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1973/78 Small compact development sandwiched between the church to the south and the site of the priory to the north. The main street is bisected by water splash. Secondary settlement at Kersey Tye, Kersey Uplands, Williams Green and Wicker Street Green.
Scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 57, 1801 – 81, 1851 – 151, 1871 – 135,
1901 – 112, 1951 – 143, 1981 – 147

8. Communications:

Road: Road to Lindsey, Semer, Hadleigh, Boxford and Polstead
1891 Carrier to Ipswich on Tuesday and Saturday

Rail: 1891 – 2 ½ miles Hadleigh station: Colne valley line opened
1847, closed for passengers 1932, closed for goods 1965

Water: River Brett

9. Population:

1086 — 29 recorded
1327 — 31 taxpayers paid £2. 7s. 8 d.
1524 — 56 taxpayers paid £6. 4s. 6d.
1603 — 240 adults
1674 — 72 households
1676 — not recorded
1801 — 513 inhabitants
1831 — 700 inhabitants
1851 — 714 inhabitants
1871 — 570 inhabitants
1901 — 482 inhabitants
1931 — 360 inhabitants
1951 — 401 inhabitants
1971 — 392 inhabitants
1981 — 354 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Perpetual Curacy (united with Lindsey) (1831)
Vicarage (1983)**

1254 Valued £3. 6s. 8d.

1291 Valued £8

1535 Not recorded

1831 No glebe house. Joint gross income £112 p.a. Tithes commuted for £420 p.a.(1840)

1912 Nett value £200 p.a. 1 acre glebe and residence

Patrons: Provost and Fellows of Kings College, Cambridge (1603-)

11. Church **St Mary**
(Chancel, Nave, N. aisle, N. & S. porches W. tower)

1086 Church + 3 acres land, 1 freeman and 2 acres
14th cent. N. wall removed and arcade inserted
1335/1348 N. aisle
14/15th cent. Main structure
1445 To repair of belfry 20s.
1481 Tower
1862/87/88 Chancel rebuilt, rearranged (1958), restorations

Seats: 140 appropriated, 260 free (1873)

Priory Church:

Fragment of chancel chapel remains. Formerly consisted of N. chancel chapel, N. transept, a central tower, nave and S. aisles

Free Chapel:

value Known as 'The Good Rode of Rest'. Founder unknown.
¼ mile from church (in existence 1513)
Stipendiary priest to sing in chapel of Kersey. Yearly
£6 from Kings College, Cambridge (1546)
Former free chapel remains contained within a stable
(1891)

11a. Other Religious Institutions:

Priory: Dedicated to God, St. Mary and Blessed St. Anthony

circa 1218 Founded as Hospital by Thomas de Burgh
Converted by his widow (Nesta de Cokefield) into Priory
for Augustinian Canons and endowed with tithes of
Kersey and Lindsey
1291 Valued £24. 14s. 10d.
1347 Priory impoverished
1381 9 canons recorded
1443 Dissolved
Remains visible in grounds of private house called 'The
priory'
1444 Granted to St. Mary and Nicholas, Cambridge (Afterwards
Kings college)
'The priory, Kersey'. PSIA Vol. XI p.216
Plan of church discovered during excavation (1958)

Also discovered W. range of Early 13th cent. Wooden hospital (converted into Priors house) and foundations of central tower to church. Priory chapel restored and used as stable (grade II listed building)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1627 8 persons negligent in attending church and receiving communion.
 1749-1840 7 houses set aside for worship
 1891 Independent chapel

13. Manorial:

1066 Implied manor of 3 ½ acres held by St Marys
 1086 Implied manor of 3 ½ acres belonging to Abbey of Chatteris
 13th cent. Hubert de Roylli owns
 1243 Philip Basset owns (linked to Euston)
 1272 Devised to Bigot family (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
 1327 Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent owns (linked to Layham)
 1328 Crown property
 circa 1426 Sir Henry Grey owns (linked to Layham)
 circa 1556 Sir Giles Capel owns
 1596 Robert Wingfield owns (linked to Martlesham and Wadringfield)
 1609 Clipsey Gaudy owns
 circa 1614 Robert Rolfe owns
 1764 Paragrine D'Oyley owns
 1804 Abraham Reeve owns (linked to Elmsett)
 1909 Charles James Grimwade owns (linked to Brettenham, Hadleigh and Whatfield, Capel St. Mary and Wenham Parva)

Sub Manors:

Sampson's Hall

16th cent. Simon Sampson owns (linked to Lindsey)
 circa 1734 John Thorrowgood owns
 circa 1816 Dr. T.W. Jones owns

Priory Manor

1603 Appears attached to Kersey Priory
 Leased to William Kellett

14. Markets/Fairs

1252/53	Grant of market to Phillip Basset
1616	Fair held on Wednesday before mid-Lent Sunday (March)
1759	Fair for toys held on Easter Monday
1844	Pleasure fair held on Easter Monday
1891	Fair on Easter Monday

15. Real property:

1844	£2,339 rental value
1891	£2,319 rateable value
1912	£1,715 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844-1912	Land sub divided
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17. Resident gentry:

1844	R. Newman
1912	Rev. F.B. Philips MA

18. Occupations:

1500-1549	1 yeoman, 1 butcher
1550-1599	5 husbandmen, 2 yeomen, 1 gelder, 1 clerk, 1 surgeon
1600-1649	3 husbandman, 8 yeomen, 1 joiner, clothiers, 1 butcher, 1 labourer, 1 carpenter, 1 blacksmith, 2 shearmen (man who cuts woollen cloth), 1 glover
1650-1699	1 husbandman, 7 yeomen, 1 fellmonger, 1 butcher, 2 carpenters, 1 cordwainer, 2 grocers, 1 smith, 1 tanner, 1 maltster
1831	129 in agriculture, 29 in retail trade, 22 in labouring, 13 domestic service
1844	Saddler, baker, schoolmaster, wheelwright, farrier/victualler, bricklayer, maltster/land surveyor, victualler, 2 blacksmiths, 2 corn millers, 14 farmers, 2 grocer/drapers, 3 joiners, beerhouse keeper, 3 shoemakers, 2 tailors.
1912	Sub postmaster, schoolmistress, police officer, grocer/baker, 8 farmers, 3 maltsters, saddler, 2 publicans, apartment owner, shopkeeper, farrier, millers, thrashing machine owner, grocer/licenced hawker, shoemaker, blacksmith

Note: 14/15th cent. Kersey cloth manufactured in parish: a strong, durable fabric used for mens clothing. Weavers cottage line the main street

19. Education:

1580	Endowment for schooling 6 poor children
1818	1 endowed school (4 attend), 2 day schools (60 attend), 2 Sunday schools (65 attend)
1833	2 daily schools (60 attend, 6 places endowed), 1 Sunday School (120 attend)
1844	Schoolmaster listed
	National school built (1873) 95 attend (1891)
1912	Public Elementary school, average attendance 93

20. Poor relief:

1776	£239. 8s. 11d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£177. 2s. 8d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£796. 16s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£1,016. 3s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£892. 10s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£597. 4s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

Nightingale's Charity:

1580	by will of Robert Nightingale: Cottage for occupation of the poor. 2 acres 2R let at 5. 10s. p.a. for distribution among poor plus 40s to education
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22. Other institutions:

1445	Guilds of Holy Ghost, Our Lady and St. Peter
1776	Workhouse (30 inmates)
1803	Friendly Society (24 members) Cottage occupied by four aged poor persons (1580), building taken down due to dilapidation and insufficient funds for repairs (1854)
1891	Police officer listed

23. Recreation:

1844/1912	The Bell and White Horse public houses
1844	1 beerhouse

24. Personal:

Sir. T. Thorrowgood, High Sheriff of Suffolk (1760)

Hammond Innes (20th cent.): world famous author/novelist, resident in parish

25. Other information:

Parish gave its name to type of cloth (Kersey cloth) first manufactured in parish. Parish mentioned in Act of Parliament of Edward VI which fixed standard for Kersey cloth

War memorial erected (circa 1947)

Numerous removal orders (19th cent.

Kersey Watermill: 17th/18th cent. Mill complex, reported as being in bad state of repair (1960s)

Kedges End (17th cent.) former wool merchants home and later occupied by horse doctor (indicated horses tail hanging from the eaves – still in position (1970))

Parish has become most well known for the water splash that occurs on the main street

Sampson Hall: demolished 1824

Parish contains 3 commemorative oaks: a) Churchyard to Winston Churchill, b) on Green to commemorate coronation of Edward VII, c) at Williams Green

'Pocket Portrait of Kersey' by Hedy J. Stapel-Valk. East Anglian Monthly Vol.11 No.4 p.45

'Kersey Considered by outsiders'. East Anglian Monthly (Dec. 1982) p.50

'Kersey Tower'. East Anglian Magazine Vol. 29 p.180

Case of incendiarism due to agrarian unrest (1844)

Archaeological Sites:

Med. priory/hospital (CRN 5225)

Ring ditches (CRN 5226, 5229, 5230, 5231, 5232, 5233)

Causewayed ring ditch (CRN 5228)

Church of St. Mary (CRN 2635)

Med. Hall house (CRN 5235)

Cropmark/enclosure (CRN 1821)

Stray finds:

- Sax. iron sword (CRN 5227)
- B.A. pottery CRN (5236)
- Rom. puddingstone quern (CRN 5237)
- Un. lava quern (CRN 5238)
- Un. bronze spur (CRN 5239)