

1. Parish : Knettishall

Meaning: Knats corner/hall

2. **Hundred:** Blackbourn

Deanery: Blackburne (–1932), Rockland (1932–1970), Thetford and Rockland (1970–)

Union: Thetford

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

Other administrative details:

Abolished ecclesiastically to create Riddlesworth with Gasthorpe and Knettishall 1932
Blackbourn Petty Sessional Division
Thetford County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,059 acres (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed: a. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland. 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		2 mills, 3 acres meadow
1283		194 quarters to crops (1,552 bushels), 35 head horse, 151 cattle, 40 pigs, 345 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 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:**

7. Settlement:

1958 Extremely small and diverse settlement. Church appears isolated. Knettishall Heath occupies large proportion of western sector. Line of Roman road crosses (N–S) from E. Harling–Coney Weston). Airfield occupies large portion of southern sector of parish. Few scattered farms.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 17, 1801 – 5, 1851 – 14, 1871 – 18,
1901 – 15, 1951 – 16, 1981 – 11

8. Communications:

Roads: To Hopton, Euston and Gasthorpe.
Line of Roman Road from E. Harling–Coney Weston

Rail: 1891 4½ miles E. Harling station: Birmingham–Norwich line, opened 1845, still operational

Water: Little Ouse River, made navigable by Acts designed to improve navigation 1670 although there is some evidence to suggest the river was used for trade purposes earlier than this. Declined due to rail transport and general silting of the river c.1850's

Air: Knettishall airfield built 1942–43, designed as Class 'A' heavy bomber station for USAF. Reverted to RAF 1945, closed 1957

9. Population:

1086 – 15 recorded
1327 – 21 taxpayers paid £1 18s. 9d.
1524 – 10 taxpayers paid 13s. 4d
1603 – 44 adults
1662 – 15 householders paid £2 1s.*
1674 – 20 households
1676 – 43 adults
1801 – 49 inhabitants
1831 – 67 inhabitants
1851 – 80 inhabitants
1871 – 83 inhabitants
1901 – 59 inhabitants
1931 – 67 inhabitants
1951 – 50 inhabitants

1971 – 33 inhabitants
1981 – 52 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 (consolidated with Riddlesworth and Gasthorpe) 1831 Discharged Rectory 1844

1254 Valued £3 6s. 8d.
1291 Valued £6 13s. 4d.
1341 Valued £6 19s. 11d.
1535 Valued £6 7s. 11d.
1831 Glebe house unfit for residence. Gross income £218 p.a.
Incumbent also holds Rectories of Rooklands St. Peter
and Riddlesworth with Gasthorpe, Norfolk
1840 27 acres 6P glebe. Modus of £120 p.a. in lieu of tithes
1887 Rent charge of £124 4s. in lieu of tithes. 18 acres 3R 36P
glebe
1912 Joint nett value £220 p.a. 60 acres glebe

Patrons: Mr Charles Croft (1603), Sir T. Thornhill (1831), W.N.L.
Champion (1912)

11. Church All Saints
(Chancel, nave, W. tower)

1086 Church plus 12 acres land
Norman Window visible in S. wall
1453/57 Wills mention tower.
14/15th cent. Main structure
1933 Described as being disused and decaying being smothered
with ivy and the thatched roof in bad state of disrepair. Many
of fittings being transferred to Riddlesworth, Norfolk.
1935 Photograph of church in Yeoman pocket histories in parish
folder

No dates for redundancy found
Former seating capacity not recorded

12. Nonconformity etc:

1676 4 nonconformists

13. Manorial:

1248 Hugh de Shardilow said to have unfeoffed Nicholas de St.
Edmunds
1316 Eleanor de Gnateshall owns
c.1348 John de Herling owns

1367	Settled in Thomas Heyward, Master of Rushworth College and other feoffees
15 th cent.	Sir Thomas Bedingfield owns (linked to Kedington)
c.1453	Sir Thomas Lovell owns (linked to Great Waldingfield, Acton and Coney Weston)
17 th cent.	Sir Drue Drury owns
1764	Cavendish family owns
1804	Silvannus Bevan owns
c.1811	Thomas Thornhill owns (linked to Hepworth and Hopton)
1905	William Needham Longdon Champion owns (linked to Hopton)

Sub-Manors:

Stanton

1428	Geoffrey de Stanton owns
c.1495	John Cocket owns (linked to Hopton and Little Livermere)
c.1541	Nicholas Rookwood owns
1577	Thomas Lovell owns (absorbed by main manor)

Salthouse

c.1524	Thomas Sallhouse/Salthouse owns
c.1632	Sir Druce Drury owns (absorbed by main manor)

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

1844	£1,086 rental value
1891	£559 rateable value
1912	£576 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844	T. Thornhill principal owner
1891	Sir T. Thornhill principal owner
1912	W.N.L. Champion principal owner

17. Resident gentry:

1679	Robert Jenney
1891	Rev. J.R. Wells MA

18. Occupations:

1500–1549	1 husbandman, 2 parsons/priests
1550–1599	5 husbandmen, 2 yeomen
1600–1649	1 husbandman, 1 yeoman, 1 tailor
1650–1699	3 husbandmen, 1 yeoman, 1 victualler, 1 shepherd

1831	17 in agriculture, 2 in retail trade, 2 in domestic service, 1 other
1844	Brick yard
1891	Brick and tile manufacturer
1912	2 gamekeepers, farm bailiff

19. Education:

1912	Children attend school at Riddlesworth
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20. Poor relief:

1776	£5 2s.
1803	—
1818	£60
1830	£24 3s.
1832	£30
1834	No poor

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

23. Recreation:

1696	1 victualler recorded
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24. Personal:

William Hall (d.1777) Alderman of Thetford. Farmed at Knettishall and is buried in the church

25. Other information:

Very sparsely populated parish.