

## 1. Parish: Mellis

**Meaning:** The mills (Ekwall)

**2. Hundred:** Hartismere

**Deanery:** Hartismere (-1897), Hartismere (North)(1897-1931), N. Hartismere (1931-1972), Hartismere (1972-)

**Union:** Hartismere

**RDC/UDC:** (E. Suffolk) Hartismere R.D. (-1974), Mid Suffolk D.C. (1974-)

### Other administrative details:

Hartismere Petty Sessional Division  
Eye County Court District

**3. Area:** 1,365 acres (Including 180 acres 2R 19P of common right (1912))

**4. Soils:**

Fine loam over clay soil. Subject to seasonal waterlogging

**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:	4 course system: wheat, barley, clover, roots
1969	Trist:	More intensive cereal growing and sugar beet

**6. Enclosure:**

**7. Settlement:**

1958 Small compact development with concentration of occupation at northern end of Mellis Green. Railway crosses parish SW- NE and could influence development. Scattered farms

**Inhabited houses:** 1674 – 39, 1801 – 52, 1851 – 125, 1871 – 114,  
1901 – 105, 1951 – 112, 1981 – 96

**8. Communications:**

**Road:** Roads to Thornham Parva and Gislingham  
1891/1912 Carriers from Botesdale to Mellis station daily

**Rail:** 1891 Mellis station in village: Mellis-Eye line, opened (1867),  
Ipswich – Norwich line, opened (1849), station closed  
(1966)  
closed for passengers (1931), closed for goods (1964)

**9. Population:**

1086 — 12 recorded  
1327 — 21 taxpayers paid £1. 13s. 4d  
1524 — 33 taxpayers paid £9. 4s. 10d.  
1603 — 135 adults  
1674 — 49 households  
1676 — 149 adults  
1801 — 371 inhabitants  
1831 — 513 inhabitants  
1851 — 610 inhabitants  
1871 — 490 inhabitants  
1901 — 451 inhabitants  
1931 — 378 inhabitants  
1951 — 347 inhabitants  
1971 — 240 inhabitants  
1981 — 260 inhabitants

**10. Benefice: Rectory**

1254 Valued £1. 6s. 8d.  
Of which Prior of Eye has 4s.

1291 Valued £10  
Portion to Prior of Eye 4s. £10. 4s.

1535 Valued £9. 15s.  
Adbowson anciently belonged to Prior and Convent of  
Eye and afterwards to Earls of Suffolk till (1511) when  
seized by Henry VIII

1831 Curate, stipend £50 p.a. Glebe house unfit for occupation.  
Gross income £234 p.a.  
Incumbent also holds Prebend in Cathedral of Salsbury  
and Rectory of St Edmunds, Salsbury, Wilts.  
9 ½ acres glebe. Rent-charge of £348 in lieu of tithes  
(1839)

1912 Nett value £200. 10 acres glebe and residence

**Patrons:** The King (1603), the Crown (1831), Lord Chancellor (1912)

**11. Church      St Mary The Virgin**  
(Chancel, nave, S. porches, ruined tower)

1086            Church + 8 acres land  
14<sup>th</sup> cent.      S. porch and nave  
                  Easter sepulcher exists in N. Wall of sanctuary  
                  Arms of Charles I dated (1634) hang at west end of  
                  church (one of 5 sets remaining)  
1739            Tower collapsed  
1859-1900     Restorations

Note: Church once noted for its image of St. Michael

**Seats:**            234 (1855)

**12. Nonconformity etc:**

1603            2 recusants, 11 nonconformists  
1676            4 nonconformists, 4 papists  
No dates      United Methodist chapel

**13. Manorial:**

**Mellis Manor**

1066            Manor of 60 acres held by Leofric  
1086            Manor of 60 acres belonging to Robert Malet  
12<sup>th</sup> cent.      Sir Robert de Sacville owns (linked to Rishangles)  
1323            Sir John de Thorpe died seised  
1764            Rowland Holt owns (linked to Redgrave and Hinderclay)

**Sub Manors:**

**St Johns**

13 cent.        Master and Brethern of the Temple hold  
13/14 cent.    Master of the Templars claimed view of frankpledge  
1764            Rowland Holt owns (absorbed by main manor)  
                  Custom: Borough English

**Lancaster al Wests/Poutneys**

16<sup>th</sup> cent.      Anthony Yaxley owns (linked to Yaxley)  
16<sup>th</sup> cent.      Clarke family owns passing to the Jermyn family and then  
                  to Lord Henniker  
                  Custom: Borough English

## Heigham Hall/Barringtons

1318 Brian de Hikeline owns (linked to Rishangles)  
16<sup>th</sup> cent. Hobart family owns (linked to Gislingham, Bacton, Oulton and Trimley St. Mary)  
1558/59 Anthony Yaxley owns (absorbed by Lancasters)

### **14. Markets/Fairs**

### **15. Real property:**

1844 £442 rental value  
1891 £2,762 rateable value  
1912 £2,528 rateable value

### **16. Land ownership:**

1844-1912 Land sub-divided

### **17. Resident gentry:**

1680 2 gentlemen  
1912 Rev. W.C. Leeper MA

### **18. Occupations:**

1500-1549 1 shoemaker  
1550-1599 5 husbandmen, 4 yeomen, 1 parson  
1600-1649 1 feltmaker, 1 husbandman, 6 yeoman, 1 spinster, 1 linen weaver, 2 thatcher's, 1 cooper  
1650-1699 1 comber, 6 yeomen, 1 petty chapman (retail dealer), 1 tailor, 1 cordwainer, 1 minister, 1 wheelwright  
1831 85 in agriculture, 4 in manufacturing, 15 in retail trade, 16 in domestic service, 1- others  
1844 Victualler, wheelwright, carpenter, cooper, 14 farmers, 1 miller  
1912 Sub-postmaster, station master, police officer, carpenter, wheelwright, 2 boot/shoemakers, 9 farmers, 2 hotel owners, baker, 2 farm bailiffs, laundress/apartment house owner, blacksmith, grocer, nurse, corn merchants, pork butcher, florist, publican.

### **19. Education:**

1818 Sunday school (31 attend)  
1833 2 daily schools (70 attend)  
Sunday school supported by Rector (21 attend)  
Wesleyan Methodist Sunday school (50 attend)  
Public Elementary school (1856), enlarged (1901),  
average attendance (1912) 94

**20. Poor relief:**

1776	£109. 14s. 4d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£221. 4s. 1d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£726. 18s	spent on poor relief
1830	£601. 15s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£648. 17s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£531. 11s.	spent on poor relief

**21. Charities:**

**22. Other institutions:**

Knights Templars have property in the parish (13<sup>th</sup> cent. ) – nothing further known.

Town House recorded (1614)

Police officer recorded (1912)

**23. Recreation:**

1844	The Falcon public house
1891	The Railway hotel and The Lion public house
1912	The Railway Hotel, The Station Hotel and The Falcon public house

**24. Personal:**

**25. Other information:**

Mellis Hall: small farmhouse west of green is a remnant of Poutney Hall, former mansion in large park. Seat of Clarke family.

Mellis Green administered by Court Leet in Middle Ages.

Administered by the Hundred Court (19<sup>th</sup> cent.)

'Extracts from the Accounts of the Churchwardens of Mellis (1611-1645)'. PSIA Vol.I p.79

'Extract from Registers of Mellis'. PSIA Vol.I p.286

**Archaeological Sites:**

Med. moated sites (CRN 5578, 5579,5580,5581,5582)

Med. mill mound (CRN 5583)

Neo. excavation/pottery (CRN 8339)

Stray finds:            B.A. arrowhead (CRN 5584)  
                              Neo. axe (CRN 5589)  
                              Rom. quern (CRN 5590)

Scatter finds: I.A. settlement/pottery (CRN 5585)  
Med. pottery (CRN 5586, 5588)  
Rom. pottery (CRN 5587)