

1. Parish: MENDHAM

Meaning: Mynda's meadow/enclosure

2. **Hundred:** Hoxne (part)/Earsham, Norfolk (part) (–1885), Hoxne (1885–)

Deanery: Hoxne

Union: Hoxne (1835–1907), Hartismere (1907–1930)

RDC/UDC: (E. Suffolk) Hoxne RD (1894–1934), Hartismere RD (1934–1974), Mid Suffolk DC (1974–)

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change 1885, loses part of Rendlesham and Harleston, Norfolk
Gains part of Withersdale
Hoxne Petty Sessional Division
Harleston County Court District

3. **Area:** 2,894 acres land, 11 acres water (1912)

4. **Soils:** **Mixed:**
a. Slowly permeable calcareous/non-calcareous clay soils, slight risk water erosion.
b. Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged fine loam over clay.
c. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland, risk wind erosion.

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		46½ acres meadow, wood for 623 pigs, 3 mills, 2 oxen, 1 cob, 10 cattle, 41 pigs, 40 sheep, 36 goats
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. Also has similarities with sheep-corn region where sheep are main fertilizing agent, bred for fattening, barley main cash crop.
1818	Marshall:	Wide variations of crop and management techniques including summer fallow in preparation for corn and rotation of turnip, barley, clover, wheat on lighter lands.

1937 Main crops: Wheat, barley, beans, peas.
1969 Trist: More intensive cereal growing and sugar
beet.

6. Enclosure:

7. Settlement:

1980 River Waveney forms natural boundary to NW.
Marshland restricts development in western sector.
Small compact development around church and river
crossing. Small secondary settlement at Withersdale
Street (former separate parish).
Scattered farms.

Inhabited houses:

1674 – 53, 1801 – 64, 1851 – 131 in Suffolk, 59 in
Norfolk, 1871 – 115 in Suffolk, 51 in Norfolk, 1901 – 126,
1951 – 129, 1981 – 122

8. Communications:

Road: To Harleston, S. Elmham St Cross, Fressingfield, Metfield,
Weybread and Homersfield

Rail: 1891 2 miles Harleston station: Waveney Valley line opened
1855/60, closed to passengers 1953, closed for goods 1966

Water: River Waveney: Act passed to make Waveney navigable
1670, decline marked by beginning of rail travel 1852

9. Population:

1086 – 93 recorded
1327 – 68 taxpayers paid £4 18s. 8d. (includes Metfield)
1524 – 39 taxpayers paid £3 15s. 4d.
1603 – 240 adults
1674 – 62 households
1676 – Not recorded
1801 – 541 inhabitants in Suffolk, 196 in Norfolk
1831 – 551 inhabitants in Suffolk, 330 in Norfolk
1851 – 586 inhabitants in Suffolk, 291 in Norfolk
1871 – 544 inhabitants in Suffolk, 247 in Norfolk
1901 – 513 inhabitants (includes Withersdale)
1931 – 446 inhabitants (ditto)
1951 – 415 inhabitants (ditto)
1971 – 374 inhabitants (ditto)
1981 – 354 inhabitants (ditto)

10. Benefice: Donative (1570–), Vicarage (1831)

1254	Portion of the local Priory £16 Portion of Prior of St Trinity, Ipswich £30 13s. 4d. Portion of Witt, Derby of the same £1 <u>£57 13s.4d.</u>
1291	Portion of Prior of Mendham £11 Portion of Prior of St Trinity, Ipswich £26 13s. 4d. Vicar of the same £4 6s. 8d. Portion of See in Mendham £5 <u>£51 6s. 8d.</u>
1535	Value £5 5s. 2d.
1546	Priest of 'small learning'. Yearly value £6
1831	Curate, stipend £57. Glebe house unfit for occupation, gross income £123 p.a. Incumbent also holds Perpetual Curacy of Syleham. Valued £122 1835 Those Rectorial tithes unsold to landowners were commuted for £270 p.a. and the Vicarial tithes for £52. 8s. p.s. 1841 Vicarage house built 1851, 25 acres glebe
1912	Nett value £185 p.a. 25 acres glebe and residence
Patrons:	Mr Holland (1603), T. Whittaker (1831), Society for the Maintenance of the Faith (1912)

11. Church: All Saints

(Chancel, clerestoried nave, aisles, S. porch, square tower)

1086	5 entries: a. church + 8 acres b. church + 20 acres c. 8 th part of another church + 5 acres d. 8 th part of church + 40 acres, ½ plough e. 4 th part of church + 10 acres
14 th cent.	Tower and chancel. Note: chancel arch – Med. moulded wood
14/15 th cent.	Main structure
15 th cent.	Clerestorey, N. arcade
1868	Restoration
1880	Chancel rebuilt
	Seats: 350 (1915)

11a. Other religious institutions:

Stotford Chapel

Founded c.1347

Said to have occupied site in churchyard

Patron: Oliver de Ingham 1347

Mendham Priory: Blessed Virgin Mary

Cluniac Monks (Cell to Castle Acre Priory)

1140/56 Founded by William de Huntingfield for Prior and 2 monks

c.1204	Prior and 84 monks
1291	Valued £11 15s. 9½d.
1351–74	Dissolved as Alian [sic] Priory
1351–74	Reinstated as Priory
1535	Valued as part of possessions of Castle Acre
1537	Dissolved – housing 11 monks
1537–39	Granted to Bustlesham, Berks
	Remains preserved on new site in ground of private house.
	Foundations and archway remain on original site.

Site of Minster:

Mentioned in will of Bishop Theodred 945–951.
Suggested site has been given as the church.
Documentary evidence only.

12. Nonconformity etc:

1597	5 persons do not receive communion Independent congregation formed 1796 with a chapel Wesleyan chapel Neither are mentioned in 1912
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13. Manorial:

1066	Manor of 1 carucate 40 acres held by Wulfric, a thane
1086	Manor of 1 carucate 40 acres belonging to Roger of Poitou

Mendham Hall

c.1043	Given to the Abbey of St Edmunds by Alfric Modercoppe
1066/1086	Manor of 2 carucates belonging to Abbot of St Edmunds and held by Frodo
14 th cent.	Manor settled on Mendham Priory
1536	Charles Brandon owns (linked to numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
c.1559	Richard Smart owns (linked to Levington)
1655	Stephen Baxter owns
1737	Purchased by governors of Queen Anne's Bounty to augment the Vicarage
1909	John Sancroft Holmes owns

Sub-Manors:

Mendham Priory

c.1204	Roger de Huntingfield owns as of Honor of Lancaster (linked to Huntingfield, Alderton, Pettistree, Stowmarket, Cookley)
14 th cent.	Priory of Mendham owns (annexed to main manor)
1536	Charles Brandon owns
1537	Richard Freston owns (linked to Fressingfield)

c.1558 Michael Wentworth owns
 1598 Thomas Laurence owns (linked to Great Barton)
 1602 John Holland owns (linked to Carlton and Kelsale)
 late 17th cent. Francis Gardiner owns
 c.1729 Rev. Thomas Whitaker owns
 c.1796 John Ayton owns (linked to Knodishall)
 1803 Alexander Adair owns (linked to Fressingfield, Depden,
 Cratfield and Naughton)

Mendham Kingshall

13th cent. Queen Eleanor owns
 12th/13th cent. de Vere family owns, Earls of Oxford (linked to
 numerous manors throughout Suffolk)
 1314 John de Fressingfield owns
 1317 Sir Walter de Norwich owns (linked to Herringswell,
 Bredfield, Dallinghoo, Bramfield and Dalham)
 late 14th cent. Priory of Mendham owns (annexed to main manor)
 1540 Charles Brandon owns (absorbed by Mendham Priory
 Manor)

Walsham Hall

1632 Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford died seised
 c.1648 James Hobart owns (linked to numerous manors
 throughout Suffolk)
 1722 Thomas Bransby owns
 c.1736 Sarah Elizabeth Wogan owns

Oakinhill Hall (reputed manor)

1659 William Bateman died seised
 1783 William Reeve owns
 1847 John Hill owns. Subsequently divided into lots and sold.

Thorpe Hall

Anciently an estate of Erasmus de Heveningham
 1550 Nicholas Smythe owns (linked to Laxfield and Cookley)
 c.1651 John Hobart owns (linked to Weybread)
 1722 Thomas Bransby owns (linked to Walsham Hall)
 1842 Thomas Thornhill owns (linked to Hepworth, Hopton and
 Knettishall)

Shotford Hall

16th cent. Thomas Smythe owns (linked to Hinderclay)
 1678 Elizabeth Drury owns
 1756 Cooke Freston owns
 c.1803 Alexander Adair owns (absorbed by Mendham Priory)

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

1844 £4,471 rental value

1891 £3,834 rateable value
1912 £2,704 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844–1912 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1674 Sir William Godbold
1679 Mr Baxter, Thomas Freston, Mr Hobard, Mr Jacob and Mr Ward

18. Occupations:

1500–1549 1 husbandman, 1 cooper, 1 fuller, 1 labourer
1550–1599 3 yeomen, 1 butcher, 1 husbandman, 1 cooper, 1 wheelwright
1600–1649 13 yeomen, 1 tailor, 4 husbandmen, 1 innholder, 1 carpenter, 1 mercer, 1 cordwainer, 1 turner
1650–1699 6 yeomen, 1 tailor, 2 linen weavers, 1 butcher, 1 barber, 2 husbandmen, 1 bricklayer
1831 107 in agriculture, 18 in retail trade, 1 professional, 10 in labouring, 25 in domestic service, 7 others
1844 Blacksmith, grocer/draper, carpenter, victualler, musician, 21 farmers. Brick and tile maker recorded 1891
1912 Sub-postmaster, school teacher, 32 farmers, boot maker, flour dealer/shopkeeper, blacksmith, grocer, publican, miller, cabinet maker

19. Education:

1833 1 daily school established 1831 (32 attend)
1 Sunday school established 1823 (78 attend)
School Board formed 1876 and schools erected to accommodate 140, average attendance 1912 80

20. Poor relief:

1776 £176 14s. 11d.
1803 £543 15s. 9½d.
1818 £1,298 15s.
1830 £879 6s.
1832 £630 2s.
1834 £605 10s.

21. Charities:

Dennington's Gift:

1725 by will of William Dennington: 12s. p.a. applied distribution
of bread at Christmas
2s. to the Sexton

22. Other institutions:

1776 Workhouse (20 inmates)

23. Recreation:

1600–1649 1 innholder recorded
1844 The Red Lion public house
1891 The Red Lion and The Magpie Hotel
1912 The Red Lion public house

24. Personal:

Sir Alfred Munnings:
born 1879 at Mendham Mill, artist and author, celebrate
100th birthday with unveiling of village sign.

25. Other information:

Machinery breaking incidents recorded 1822.
Princess Mary lived at Mendham Hall 16th cent.
'Inventory of Furniture at Mendham Hall 1548', PSIA Vol. II, p.242.
Iron bridge built 1874 over River Waveney.
Village sign erected 1979.
At the time of the Domesday survey Mendham had the largest area of
timber which, it has been surmised, accounted for a probable two–
thirds of the total area of the parish. Victoria County History Vol. II,
p.403.
Published parish register. 'Suffolk Parish Registers: Marriages', Vol. III
p.75.
Priory of Mendham. Victoria County History Vol. II. p.87.
Fieldwalking. PSIA Vol.36, p.47.