

1. Parish: Wattisham

Meaning: Waecci's meadow/enclosure

2. **Hundred:** Cosford

Deanery: Sudbury (-1864), Sudbury (Eastern) (1864-1884), Lavenham (1884-1931)

Union: Cosford

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

Other administrative details:

Civil boundary change (1883, 1885, 1935), rationalization boundary with Hitchem (1935)
Hadleigh Petty Sessional Division and County Court District

3. **Area:** 1,272 (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, some calcareous clay soils on sloping ground

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		4 ½ meadow, 5 cobs, 11 cattle, 25 pigs, 80 sheep
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:

1958 Airfield occupies eastern sector of parish. Roman road clips southern sector of parish running NE-SW and forming southern boundary for part of its length. Small compact development close to church and hall
Scattered farms

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 26, 1801 – 25, 1851 – 50, 1871 – 48,
1901 – 37, 1951 – 39, 1981 – 39

8. Communications:

Road: Roads to Ringshall, Hitcham and Bildeston
1891 Carriers to Ipswich Tuesday and Saturday
to Stowmarket Thursday
1912 Carriers to Ipswich Tuesday and Saturday

Air: RAF Wattisham built (1938) for RAF (originally grass surfaced), became USAAF base (1942), made permanent RAF fighter station (1950's)

9. Population:

1086 — 9 recorded
1327 — 10 taxpayers paid £1. 5s. 4d.
1524 — 25 taxpayers paid £1. 14s. 2d.
1603 — 80 adults
1674 — 27 households
1676 — not recorded
1801 — 154 inhabitants
1831 — 202 inhabitants
1851 — 220 inhabitants
1871 — 210 inhabitants
1901 — 149 inhabitants
1931 — 149 inhabitants
1951 — 148 inhabitants
1971 — 114 inhabitants
1981 — 97 inhabitants

10. Benefice: Perpetual Curacy (1831), Vicarage (1873)

1254 Portion of the parson £4
Portion of the Monks of Castleacre (Norfolk) £1. 6s. 8d.
£5. 6s. 8d.

1291 Valued £5. 6s. 8d.
Portion of Castleacre £1. 13s. 4d. £7. 0s. 0d.
Appropriated to Bricett Priory (no dates)

1831 No glebe house. Gross income £100 p.a. Incumbent also holds Curacy of Great Bricett
Tithes comuted for £389. 5s. 6d. p.a. (1841)

1912 Nett value £140 p.a. Rectorial tithes of £389 p.a.
incumbent resides at Great Bricett

Patrons: Kings College, Cambridge (1831-)

11. Church **St Nicholas**
(Chancel, nave, modern S. porch, W. tower)

14th cent. Main structure
1977 Declared redundant

Seats: 4 appropriated, 146 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

1606 1 person negligent in attending church
1710-1825 3 houses set aside for worship
Baptist chapel built (1763), rebuilt (1825), seat 500

13. Manorial:

Wattisham Hall

13th cent. Osbert de Wachesham owns (linked to Stanstead)
1495 Valued 20 marks and held by the Bishop of Ely
1535 Sir Philip Calthorpe owns
17th cent. Thomas Dandy owns
1633 William Blomeville owns
1834 Richard Wilson owns
1855 Rev. Richard Daniel owns (linked to Layham and
Lindsey)

14. Markets/Fairs

15. Real property:

1844 £1,381 rental value
1891 £1,313 rateable value
1912 £925 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844-1912 Land sub-divided

17. Resident gentry:

1679 William Blomfield

18. Occupations:

1500-1549	2 carpenters
1550-1599	3 yeomen, 1 carpenter
1600-1649	5 yeomen
1650-1699	1 wheelwright, 6 yeomen, 1 tailor, 1 husbandman
1831	46 agriculture, 2 in retail trade, 5 in domestic service, 2 others
1844	Blacksmith, beerhouse keeper/shopkeeper, shoemaker, 6 farmers, Brick and tile manufacturer (1891)
1912	School mistress, 5 farmers, blacksmith, asst. overseer, brickmakers, shopkeepers

19. Education:

1818	1 Dissenters day school (30 attend)
1833	1 Sunday school (established church) (14 attend) 1 Sunday school (Baptist) (90 attend) Baptist Sunday school built (1869)
1891	National school (25 attend), average attendance (1912) 46

20. Poor relief:

1776	£95. 7s. 9d.	spent on poor relief
1803	£25. 10s. 1d.	spent on poor relief
1818	£193. 8s.	spent on poor relief
1830	£399. 2s.	spent on poor relief
1832	£450. 2s.	spent on poor relief
1834	£265. 4s.	spent on poor relief

21. Charities:

22. Other institutions:

23. Recreation:

1844	1 beerhouse
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24. Personal:

John Hitchcock (1732-1800): Pastor of Wattisham Particular Baptists. Suffolk Review (New Series) No.4 p.7

25. Other information:

Castle: Large Gothic farmhouse (circa 1770) on B.1078 Bildeston road

Church contains memorial to family of six persons who in 1762 lost their feet by 'mortification'. They contracted a fungal disease from rye known as Ergotism, which turns the feet black and results in amputation, and sometimes death. The farm in which they lived is known as 'Judgement Farm'

'The Singular Calamity of the Weathersets of Wattisham' by S.P. Andrews
Suffolk Fair vol.3 No.1 p.18

Well sunk to depth of 80' and connected to large pump (1887). Presented to
the parish by Rev. William Forbes-Leith

Wattisham Hall: surrounded by double moat

'Who remembers war-time Wattisham' Suffolk Fair (Oct. 1979), p.17

Queen Elizabeth II visits Wattisham (1985)

Post office closed (1982)

Archaeological Sites:

Med. moated site (CRN 5311)
Church of St. Nicholas (CRN 2690)

Stray finds: Rom. quern stone (CRN 5312)
 Neo. flint axe (CRN 5313)
 B.A. spearhead/burnt flint patch (CRN 5314)
 B.A. arrowhead
 Pal. flint axe (CRN 5315)

Scatter finds: Rom debris (CRN 5317)