

1. Parish : West Stow

Meaning: Wifa's/Wifa's stow or holy place

2. **Hundred:** Blackbourn

Deanery: Thedwastre (–1884), Thingoe (1884–)

Union: Thingoe (1836–1907), Bury St Edmunds (1907–1930)

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

Other administrative details:

Thingoe and Thedwastre Petty Sessional Division
Bury St Edmunds County Court District

3. **Area:** 2,937 acres of land, 4 acres water (1912)

4. **Soils:**

Mixed: a. Deep well drained sandy soils, some very acid especially under heath or woodland. Risk wind erosion
b. Deep peat soils. Risk wind erosion

5. **Types of farming:**

1086		2 acres meadow
1283		224 quarters to crops (1,792 bushels), 23 head horse, 76 cattle, 1,097 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 or turnips as preparation for corn and grass.
1937	Main crops:	Rye, barley, lupins and portion pasture land
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:

1959 Very small development on Culford to Lackford road.
Church situated separately to south. Majority of parish covered by plantation.

Inhabited houses: 1674 – 20, 1801 – 26, 1851 – 50, 1871 – 43,
1901 – 43, 1951 – 34, 1981 – 55

8. Communications:

Roads: To Culford, Flempton and Lackford
Icknield Way crosses parish N–S
Line of Roman Road crosses parish E–W
1891:Carrier to Bury St Edmunds on Saturdays

Rail: 1891 2½ miles Ingham station: Bury St Edmunds
–Thetford line opened 1876, closed for
passengers 1953, closed for goods 1960.

Water: River Lark: Lark Navigation Scheme 1889–1901

9. Population:

1086 – 23 recorded
1327 – 18 taxpayers paid £2 15s. 7d.
1524 – 22 taxpayers paid £5 0s. 6d.
1603 – 65 adults
1662 – 22 householders*
1674 – 26 households
1676 – 63 adults
1801 – 168 inhabitants
1831 – 266 inhabitants
1851 – 308 inhabitants
1871 – 217 inhabitants
1901 – 193 inhabitants
1931 – 163 inhabitants
1951 – 111 inhabitants
1971 – 151 inhabitants
1981 – 144 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 Wordwell 1831
Discharged Rectory 1844**

1254 Valued £6 13s. 4d.
1291 Valued £8
1341 Valued £8 1s. 6d.
1535 Valued £9 17s. 3d.
1831 1 curate, stipend £50 p.a. Glebe house. Joint gross
income £302 p.a.

1887 Rent charge of £195 10s. in lieu of tithes, 29 acres 3R
10P glebe
1891 Valued £378
1912 Joint nett value £175 p.a. 20 acres glebe and residence

Patrons: Sir John Croft (1603), R.B. de Beauvoir (1831), H.B. Beruns (1912)

11. Church **St. Mary**
(Chancel, nave, S. porch, vestry, W. tower)

1086 Church plus 12 acres free land in alms
Norman N. doorway into vestry
14th cent. Nave and chancel
15th cent. Tower

Note: 8 traceried and painted panels in lower part of rood screen in V&A Museum

Seats: 230 free (1873)

12. Nonconformity etc:

c.1640 John Croft ejected from living by Committee for Scandalous Ministers (also held Barnham with same result)
1824/29 2 houses set aside for worship

13. Manorial:

–1539 Abbot of St. Edmunds owns
1539 Sir John Croftes owns (linked to Wangford, Ampton, Bardwell, Barnham and Lt. Livermere)
1669 Edward Progers owns
1795 Charles, Marquis Cornwallis (linked to Ingham, Bruiseworth, Brome, Palgrave, Thrandeston, Cavenham, Culford, Thelnetham and Wordwell)
1824 Richard Benyon de Beauvoir owns (linked to Ingham, Timworth and Culford)

Sub-Manors:

11/12th cent. de Slakeham family owns
1333 Sir John de St. Philibert died seised
1350 Sir John de Aspal owns (linked to Lt. Bradley)
1465 Thomas Gedding owns
c.1529 Jaspar Lucas owns (Linked to Gt. Thurlow)
c.1530 Sir John Croftes owns (absorbed by main manor)

Jenney's/Ginney's

Appears to have been in the Crofts family from an early date becoming annexed/absorbed by main manor circa 1539

14. Markets/Fairs:

15. Real property:

1844	£1,156 rental value
1891	£1,300 rateable value
1912	£1,477 rateable value

16. Land ownership:

1844	Rev. E.H. Benyon, sole owner
1891/1912	Earl Cadogan, sole owner

17. Resident gentry:

1674/1679	Sir John Crofts
1891	Rev. A.H. Pemberton MA
1912	Rev. A.L. Woodard MA

18. Occupations:

1550–1549	1 shepherd
1550–1599	1 husbandman, 2 shepherds, 1 herdsman
1600–1649	1 servant, 7 yeomen, 2 husbandmen, 1 miller, 3 shepherds, 1 labourer, 1 smith, 1 clerk
1650–1699	3 yeomen, 3 husbandmen, 1 wheelwright, 2 millers, 1 bricklayer, 1 shepherd, 1 reed layer, 3 labourers, 1 soldier, 1 clerk
1831	59 in agriculture, 13 in retail trade, 1 in labouring, 10 in domestic service, 1 other
1844	Farmer, farm bailiff, blacksmith/beer seller, shoemaker
1912	Schoolmistress, market gardener, stud groom, pork butcher
1985	Larkwood Fishery established

19. Education:

1818	26 children attend school in Culford
1846	Public Elementary School built, average attendance 1912 42
1891	National school, 40 attend

20. Poor relief:

1776	£25 4s. 9d.
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1803	£76 7s. 1d.
1818	£171 11s.
1830	£148 13s.
1832	£149 2s.
1834	£126

21. Charities:

Firmage's Charity

1599	By will of William Firmage: 3 acres 3R let at £3 p.a. for distribution among poor at Christmas.
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Church Land

1840	2 acres in Culpho Field let at £1 10s. 1 acre in In-Field West Stow let at 5s. p.a. for church repairs
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22. Other institutions:

1886	Working Mens Reading Room with small library established
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23. Recreation:

1844	1 beer seller
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24. Personal:

Edward Progers 1621–1713 Page of Honour to King Charles I and Groom of the Bedchamber to King Charles II. See outline of his life and some of his letters in published registers of West Stow p.191
Sir John Croftes c.1490–1558 member of Mary Tudor's (Henry VIII's sister) household, builder of West Stow Hall. Crofts family history in published West Stow and Wordwell Parish Registers.

25. Other information:

Culford Hall estate: occupies large portion of parish.

West Stow Hall: Believed built by Sir John Crofts 15/16th cent., formerly moated and surrounded a quadrangular court. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk occasionally resided here.

Long Gatehouse: timber framed, originally crossed moat, built c.1520. Wall paintings depict stages in the life of man (photos in published registers).

Hall much reduced in size by 1844, stud farm for Earl Cadogan 1912.

'West Stow Hall', PSIA Vol. II, p.48.

'West Stow Hall', Country Life June 1911.

Published registers 1558–1850.

Saxon Village: reconstructed and open to public in West Stow Park.

Suggested site of ancient battle at Stow Heath.

Roman kilns.

'Roman British Pottery Kilns on West Stow Heath' by S.E. West, PSIA Vol. 26 p.35.

'Anglo Saxon Relics from West Stow Heath', PSIA Vol I, p.315.

'A Beaker Burial at West Stow', by A.R. Edwardson, PSIA Vol. 29, p.73.

'Life in a Saxon Village', Suffolk Fair Sept. 1979, p.23.

'The Anglo Saxon Village of West Stow: an Interim Report of the excavations', by S.E. West 1969.

'Pagan Saxon Pottery from West Stow', by S.E. West 1969

Plan of part of parish exists for 1708.

'West Stow Anglo Saxon Village', by S.E. West 1985.

Village sign unveiled 1977.

West Stow Country Park and Conservation area established 1981.

Live history lessons enacted at West Stow Anglo Saxon Village

Anglo Saxon village reconstructed 1978.

'Early Anglo Saxon Paleoeconomy: the evidence from West Stow', by P.J. Crabtree. Article in parish folder.

'West Stow: A Saxon Wool Village'. Current Archaeology March 1967, p.16. In parish folder.

'West Stow Anglo–Saxon Village Reconstruction Project: Progress Report', 1973.