

THE
BEAUTIES
OF
England and Wales.

SUFFOLK.

SITUATION AND EXTENT.

SUFFOLK is bounded on the north by Norfolk, on the east by the German Ocean, on the south by Essex, from which it is divided by the river Stour, and on the west by Cambridgeshire. On Mr. Hodkinson's map of this county may be measured an oblong of almost unindented form, forty-seven miles long by twenty-seven broad. The land stretching beyond it in the north-east and north-west parts will more than compensate the deficiency in other quarters. This form indicates a surface of 1269 square miles, or 812,160 acres. In Templeman's Survey, he makes it only 1236 square miles; but Mr. Arthur Young is of opinion that the superficial contents of Suffolk may be computed at about 800,000 acres.

DIVISION AND POPULATION.—Its two grand divisions are, the franchise or liberty of Bury St. Edmund's, and the body of the county, or guildable land, each of which furnishes a distinct grand jury for the county assizes. These are subdivided into twenty-one hundreds, comprehending 523 parishes. The hundreds, according to the return made in 1801, are as follow:

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form a very satisfactory table which afforded the following general results:

From 1776 to 1785	From 1786 to 1795.	
Births,	29,684	33,011
Deaths,	22,800	20,259
Excess of Births, 6,884	12,752	

From this comparison the natural inference is, that the population of the county must either have much increased, or that a considerable emigration from it is constantly going forward. Both these positions may, we think, safely be assumed as facts.

CLIMATE.—The climate of Suffolk is unquestionably one of the driest in the kingdom; but the frosts are severe, and the north-east winds in spring are sharp and prevalent. Upon the whole, however, the climate of this county must be reckoned favorable; and it cannot but be extremely salubrious, to judge from the mortality which, upon an average of ten years, appears to have been to the existing population as one to fifty-four, while the number of births was as one to thirty.

SOIL.—It may be asserted that not a county in the kingdom contains a greater diversity of soil, or more clearly discriminated than Suffolk. A strong loam on a clay-marl bottom, predominates through the greatest parts, extending from the south-western extremity at Wratting Park to North Cove near Beccles. Its northern boundary stretches from Dalham by Barrow, Little Saxham near Bury, Rougham, Pakenham, Ixworth, Honington, Knattishal, and then in a line near the Waveney to Beccles and North Cove; but every where leaving a slope and vale of rich friable loam of various breadths, along the side of the river. It then turns southward, to Wrentham, Wangford, Blithford, Holton, Bramfield, Yoxford, Saxmundham, Campsey Ash, Woodbridge, Culpho, Bramford, Hadleigh, and following the high lands on the west side of the Bret, to the Stour, is thence bounded by the latter river to its source, leaving all along it a very rich tract of slope and vale. It must not be supposed that in so large an extent

HUNDREDS.	HOUSES.		Persons Uninhabited.	Persons employed in Agriculture.	OCCUPATIONS.	
	Inhabited.	By how many families occupied.			Chiefly employed in Agriculture.	In trade, manufactures, or handicraft.
Baberg	3147	3944	71	18,685	3804	9588
Blackbourne...	1572	2198	28	10,773	3857	5391
Cosford	1250	1615	33	7,384	1715	4875
Hartismere	1795	2348	21	12,333	3557	6631
Hoxne	1756	2487	14	13,299	4121	6083
Lackford	1505	2347	31	8,384	1675	5190
Plomesgate	1145	1710	13	8,549	2525	4643
Risbridge	1680	2176	32	10,894	4872	842
Stow	860	1081	15	5,708	1486	3877
Thredwestry	1070	1506	17	7,259	2520	1933
Thredling	593	638	2	2,616	774	3959
Blything	2579	3432	25	18,483	7018	2008
Bosmere and } Claydon ... }	1590	1986	13	10,042	2760	8010
Carlford	665	855	4	4,300	1205	780
Colneis	399	619	2	2,946	1273	239
Loes	1661	1992	16	9,578	2209	1525
Mutford and } Lothlingland }	1670	1913	36	9,409	1666	5362
Samford	1089	1487	11	7,457	2462	703
Thingoe	716	973	11	4,982	1510	3841
Wangford	1668	1987	41	10,037	2045	3031
Wiltford	719	1048	10	5,298	2506	1810
Town of Bury	1366	1648	37	7,655	94	6190
Ipswich	2170	2738	51	11,277	448	771
Sudbury	594	735	18	3,283	39	3365
	30,253	43,481	552	210,431	55,744	1810
						8733
						2624
						34,064
						113,692

In order to obtain an accurate knowledge of the population of Suffolk, Mr. Arthur Young took the trouble, in 1796, to write to all the rectors and vicars in the county, requesting the births and burials from their registers for the twenty preceding years, with an enumeration of the houses and people. To above four hundred letters, he received two hundred and sixty answers. These enabled him to form

* The last ten hundred are incorporated.

† In the original here is an error; it is entered 1086, but by turning to the detail it appears to be 1986.

in it according to the will of the founders, this house was, by a bull, dated A. D. 1403, made conventual, and exempted from all subjection to that at Colchester. William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, in the time of Henry VI. designed to have new-founded this priory; which was given by King Henry VII. in his 24th year, to the monastery of Butley; but the prior and his canons relinquished all claim to it in 1509. It was suppressed in 1524, and given to Cardinal Wolsey for the endowment of his colleges; and after the Cardinal's attainder, the site of this edifice was granted to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk.

The church of Snape is dedicated to St. John Baptist, and contains a very ancient and highly ornamented stone font. The figures round the pillar by which it is supported are an assemblage of kings, prelates, and non-descript birds, standing on pedestals. The font is hexagonal, having a pillar at each angle; between the pillars are figures, the alternate ones of which are crowned; the others are in priest's habits, and all of them bear a scroll, the characters of which are illegible.*

HUNDRED OF BLITHING:

The hundred of Blithing is bounded on the east by the Ocean; on the west and south by the hundreds of Hoxne and Plomesgate; and on the north by Wangford and Mutford. It contains forty-eight parishes, and three market-towns, Dunwich, Halesworth, and Southwold.

DUNWICH, once an important, opulent, and commercial city, now a mean village, stands on a cliff of considerable height, commanding an extensive view of the German Ocean, about four miles south of Southwold. This place still retains its market, which is held on Mondays, but is so scantily supplied, as scarcely to deserve the name; and has sent two members to parliament

* A view of this curious font is given in the *Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet*, No. 50.

title is now vested in Priscilla Barbara Elizabeth Lindsay, wife of Lord Gwydir, daughter and co-heir of Peregrine, Duke of Ancaster, and joint hereditary great Chamberlain of England.

In 1734, the bones of a man, an urn, and the head of a spear, were found in a gravel pit in a field called Fryer's Close, in this parish.

This place seems to have had its Christmas-flowering thorn like that at Glastonbury. It is mentioned by Kirby, in the first edition of his *Suffolk Traveller*; and the *Ipswich Journal* of January 13, 1753, contains a letter, affirming that it budded eleven days earlier than usual, in order to accommodate itself to the new style. The publisher of that paper, however, observes, notwithstanding the positive manner of the writer, that he had received a very different account of the Parham thorn.

As Parham was born in 1717 JOSHUA KIRBY, F. R. S. A. S. designer in perspective to their Majesties. He was the son of John Kirby, author of the *Suffolk Traveller*; and himself published in 1768, *Dr. Brook Taylor's Perspective Made Easy*, a work of distinguished merit. Mr. Kirby died in 1774, and was interred in Kew church-yard, where the remains of his friend, Thomas Gainsborough, were afterwards, by his express desire, placed beside him. He married Miss Sarah Bull, of Framlingham, by whom he had two children; William, who died in 1771, and the late Mrs. Trimmer.

SHAPE is of note only for a monastery of Black Friars, founded there in 1099, by William Martell, Albreda, his wife, and Jeffrey, their son and heir, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Being possessed of the manor of Snape, including the benefit of wrecks of the sea from Thorp to Hereford Ness, they gave it to the abbey of Colchester, for the purpose of founding at this place a priory, which should be a cell to that abbey. A prior and some Benedictine monks from that house were accordingly settled here in 1155; but upon complaint made by Isabel, Countess of Suffolk, and patroness of this priory, to Pope Boniface IX. that the said abbey and convent did not maintain a sufficient number of religious

which its inhabitants were empowered among other things, to marry their sons and daughters as they pleased, and also to give, sell, or otherwise dispose of their possessions in this town as they should think fit. This charter, dated at Gold Cliff, 29th June, 1 John, cost them three hundred marks, besides ten falcons, and five ger-falcons.

In the reign of King Edward I. after this town had considerably declined, it had eleven ships of war, sixteen fair ships, twenty barks, or vessels, trading to the North Seas, Iceland, &c. and twenty-four small boats for the home fishery. In the 24th year of the same reign, the men of Dunwich, built at their own cost, and equipped for the defence of the realm, eleven ships of war, most of which carried 72 men each. Four of these vessels with their artillery, valued at 200*l.* were taken and destroyed by the enemy, while on service off the coast of France. In 1347, this port sent six ships with 102 mariners, to assist in the siege of Calais; but during the war with France, most of the ships belonging to it were lost, together with the lives of about 500 townsmen, and goods, and merchandize to the value of 1000*l.*

A still greater loss however, was sustained by this town in the removal of its port; a new one being opened within the limits of Blithburgh, not far from Walberswick Key, and two miles nearer to Southwold than the former port. This circumstance, while it greatly increased the trade of those places, caused that of Dunwich to decline in the same proportion; and, combined with the ravages of the ocean, gradually reduced this town to poverty; in consideration of which, the fee-farm rent paid to the crown was abated at various times, till Charles II. fixed the amount of it at one hundred shillings per annum.

The present ruinous state of this once flourishing place, is owing chiefly to the repeated encroachments of the ocean. Seated upon a hill composed of loam and sand of a loose texture, on a coast destitute of rocks, it is not surprising that its buildings should have successively yielded to the impetuosity of the bil-

lows,

liament ever since the Commons of England first acquired the right of representation. The corporation consists of two bailiffs, and twelve capital burgesses; and the right of election lies in the freemen residing within the borough, and not receiving alms. According to the returns of 1801, the town contained forty-two houses, and 184 inhabitants.

Though many of the traditional accounts relative to this town are probably fabulous, it is nevertheless certain that it is a place of very high antiquity. It is conjectured by some to have been a station of the Romans, from the number of their coins discovered here. So much is certain, that in the reign of Sigebert, king of the East-Angles, Felix, the Burgundian bishop, whom that monarch invited hither to promote the conversion of his subjects to Christianity, fixed his episcopal see at Dunwich in the year 1033; and here his successors continued, as is related under the ecclesiastical history of the county, for about two hundred years.

When an estimate was taken of all the lands in the kingdom by Edward the Confessor, there were two carves of land at Dunwich, but one of these had been swallowed up by the sea before the Conqueror's survey was made. It was then the manor of Robert Malet, and contained eleven Bordarii, twenty-four free-men, each holding forty acres of land, 136 burgesses, 178 poor, and three churches. It became the demesne of the crown about the beginning of the reign of Henry II. at which time, as we are informed by William of Newbury, it had a mint, and was a town of good note, abounding with much riches, and sundry kinds of merchandizes. The annual fee-farm rent then paid by it was 120*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* and twenty-four thousand herrings. This was probably the period of its highest prosperity.

Under Richard I. Dunwich was fined 1060 marks, Orford 15, Ipswich 200, and Yarmouth 200, for unlawfully supplying the king's camices with corn. These sums may afford some idea of the relative importance of those towns at that time. King John, in the first year of his reign, granted a charter to Dunwich, by which

leaves, breaking against, and easily undermining the foot of the precipices. The following general view of their principal ravages is extracted from Gardner's Historical Account :—

We have already seen that out of two carves of land, taxed under King Edward the Confessor, one had been washed away, at the time of the Conqueror's survey. The sea, agitated by violent east, or south-east winds, continued its conquests quite to the town, for whose preservation, Henry III. in the 6th year of his reign, not only required assistance of others, but himself granted 200*l.* towards making a fence to check its inroads. Dunwich suffered considerable damage on the night of January 1st, 1286, from the violence of the winds and sea, by which several churches were overthrown, and destroyed in different places. In the first year of Edward III. the old port was rendered entirely useless, and before the twenty-third of the same king, great part of the town, containing upwards of four hundred houses which paid rent to the fee-farm, with certain shops and windmills, had fallen a prey to the waves. After this, the church of St. Leonard was overthrown, and in the course of the same century, the churches of St. Martin, and St. Nicholas, were also destroyed. In 1540, the church of St. John Baptist was demolished, and before 1600, the chapels of St. Anthony, St. Francis, and St. Katherine, together with the South Gate, and Gilden Gate, were swallowed up, so that not one quarter of the town was then left standing. In the reign of Charles I. the Temple buildings yielded to the irresistible force of the surges, and the sea reached to the market-place in 1677, when the townsmen sold the materials of the cross. In 1680, all the buildings north of Maison Dieu Lane were demolished; and in 1702, the sea reached St. Peter's church, which was dismantled and soon undermined. The town-hall shared the same fate. In 1715, the jail was absorbed, and in 1729, the farthest bounds of St. Peter's church-yard were washed away. In December 1740, the wind blowing very hard from the north-east, and continuing for several days, occasioned terrible devastations. Great part of the cliff was carried away by the sea.

the violence of the waves, which destroyed the last remains of the church-yard of St. Nicholas, together with the great road formerly leading from the Key to the town, leaving several naked wells, the locus of ancient buildings. King's Holm, otherwise called Leonard's Marsh, then worth 100*l.* per annum, was laid under water, and covered with such quantities of shingle and sand, as to be ever since of very little value. The Cock and Hen hills, which, the preceding summer, were forty feet high, had their heads levelled with their bases, and the ground about them was so rent and torn, that the foundation of the chapel of St. Francis, situated between them, was exposed to view. The remains of the dead were washed from their repositories, and several skeletons appeared scattered upon the beach. A stone coffin containing human bodies covered with tiles, was also seen, but before it could be removed, the violence of the surges broke it in two pieces. Near the chapel, were found at the same time, the pipes of an aqueduct, some of which were of lead, and others of grey earth. The following year, in digging a trench for the purpose of draining the marshes overflowed the preceding winter, were discovered several old coins, and other curiosities, of which Gardner has given a representation in his History.*

Dunwich had but one church in the time of Edward the Confessor, but in the reign of the Conqueror two more had been added. The erection of the former is ascribed to Felix, the first bishop of Dunwich, to whom it was dedicated. It is farther reported that this saint was buried here in 647, but that his remains were afterwards removed to Soham, in Cambridge-shire.

In the sequel this town contained six, if not eight parish churches :—

St. John's church, a rectory, was a large edifice, and stood near the great market-place, in the centre of the town. In a will dated 1499, and proved in 1501, there is a legacy of ten marks for some ornaments for this church, with the following clause: "If it fortune the church to decay by adventure of the sea,

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* See p. 96.

sea, the ten marks to be disposed of by my attorneys, (or executors) where they think best." About 1510 two legacies were given towards building a pier against St. John's church. The last institution to it was in 1537. The inhabitants, to prevent its being washed away by the sea, took it down about the year 1540. In the chancel was a large grave stone, under which was discovered a stone coffin containing the corpse of a man, that fell to dust when stirred. On his legs, we are told, "were a pair of boots, picked like Crnkows,"* and on his breast stood two chalices of coarse metal. He was conjectured to have been one of the Bishops of Dunwich.†

St. Martin's, likewise a rectory, is thought to have stood on the east side of the town. The last institution to it, was in 1327.

St. Leonard's was an impropriation. It probably stood eastward of St. John's, and was early swallowed up by the sea, for in a will dated 1459, the testator devised his house in the parish *anciently* called St. Leonard's.

St. Nicholas, a cross church, the tower, or steeple, standing in the midst of it, distant twenty rods south-east of the Black Friars. The last institution to this rectory was in 1352. The utmost bounds of its cemetery were washed away in 1740.

St. Peter's, also a rectory, stood about sixty rods north-east of All Saints, and had a chapel on the north side of it called St. Nicholas's. This edifice, on account of the proximity of the sea, which daily threatened its overthrow, was by agreement of the parishioners in 1702, stripped of the lead, timber, bells, and other materials. The walls which alone were left standing, being soon afterwards undermined by the waves, tumbled over the cliff. The church-yard was swallowed up by the devouring element, not more than twenty years before Gardner published his History.

All Saints is the only church of which any portion is now standing. It was built of flint and free-stone. The square tower is

* Shoes with long pointed toes bent upwards.

† *Tanner's Cell.*

is still pretty entire, but of the body of the church nothing but a portion of the exterior walls remains, and cattle graze within its area. It appears from Gardner, that about the year 1735, part of this edifice was demolished, and its dimensions considerably reduced. In the south aisle, which was then pulled down, were magisterial seats, decorated with curious carved work, and the windows were adorned with painted glass, which, through the carelessness of the glazier was broken in pieces. Most of the grave-stones had brass-plates with inscriptions, all of which were embzzled by the persons employed in the work. We find that in 1754, divine service was performed here once a fortnight, from Lady Day to Michaelmas, and monthly during the rest of the year: but when it was discontinued we are not informed. Recent inscriptions in the church-yard, shew that it is still used as a place of interment for the parishioners.

In the time of the Conqueror, all the churches then erected, or to be erected in Dunwich, were given by Robert Malet, to his priory at Eye, in his charter of endowment. The prior and convent accordingly presented to all instituted churches, and had tithes out of most of them, together with all the revenues of such as were impropriated, finding a secular priest to serve the cures.

According to the *Register of Eye*, Dunwich had two other churches dedicated to St. Michael and St. Bartholomew, which are there recorded to have been swallowed up by the sea before 1331; when the prior and convent of Eye, petitioned the Bishop of Norwich to impropriate the church of Laxfield to them, alledging, among other reasons, that they had lost a considerable part of their revenues at Dunwich, by the irruptions of the ocean.

Besides these churches, Weever mentions three chapels, dedicated to St. Anthony, St. Francis, and St. Katherine. The site of the first is unknown. The second stood between Cock and Hen Hills, and as well as St. Katherine's, which was in St. John's parish, is supposed to have fallen to decay in the reign of Henry VIII.

In this town was anciently a house belonging to the Knight's Templars,

Templars, and afterwards to the Hospitallers, endowed with a considerable estate in Dunwich and the contiguous hamlets of Westleton and Dingle. To this establishment belonged a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St. John Baptist, built for the use of the tenants of the manor, whose houses were all distinguished by crosses, the badge of the Knights.

Here were also two monastic institutions, belonging to the Franciscans and Dominicans, or Grey and Black Friars. The first was founded by Richard Fitz-John, and Alice his wife, and its revenues were afterwards augmented by Henry III. The area encompassed by the walls of this house, which yet remain, is upwards of seven acres. They had three gates; one of these, the eastern, is demolished; but the arches of the other two, standing close together to the westward, continue nearly entire. They have nothing remarkable in their construction, but being covered with ivy, form a picturesque object. The largest of these gates served for the principal entrance to the house, and the other led to the church. A barn is the only building now standing in this enclosure.

The monastery of the Black Friars was founded by Sir Roger de Bolsh. In the eighth year of Richard II. the sea having washed away the shore almost up to this house, some attempts were made to remove the friars to Blithburgh. They nevertheless continued here till the dissolution, when the site of this house, as well as that of the Grey Friars, was granted among other possessions to John Eyre. Both of these monastic establishments had handsome churches belonging to them.

Besides these religious edifices, Dunwich contained two hospitals. St. James's hospital, to which belonged a large, handsome church or chapel, was founded for a master, and several leprous brethren and sisters, in the reign of Richard I. by Walter de Ribof. By the generosity of the founder and other benefactors, this establishment enjoyed ample revenues, till several sordid masters, for their private interest, alienated lands and other donations, to the great detriment of the fraternity, who being thus defrauded

defrauded of their subsistence gradually decreased, and their edifices fell into irreparable decay. Thus the large income of this once celebrated hospital is now dwindled to a trifling sum, which is applied to the maintenance of a few indigent people, who reside in a wretched house, being all that is left of their original habitation, except some remains of the church and chapel.

The other hospital, denominated *Maison Dieu*, or God's House, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, was, as early as the time of Henry III. abundantly endowed with houses and lands, for a master, six brethren, and several sisters. The revenues, reduced through the same mismanagement as those of the hospital of St. James, to a mere trifle, are divided among a few poor people, who with the master, reside in two old decayed houses, which, with a small part of the church, are all that remains of this institution.

In former times a wood, called East Wood, or the King's Forest, extended several miles south-east of the town, but it has been for many ages destroyed by the sea. The land must consequently have stretched far out, and have formed the southern boundary of the bay of Southwold, as Easton-ness did the northern. Weever says, that the men of Dunwich, requiring the aid of William the Conqueror against the rage of the sea, affirmed that it had devoured great part of the Forest; and Gardner informs us* that he had seen manuscripts mentioning that this monarch gave permission to the Rouses of Baddingham, and other gentlemen in the neighbourhood, to hunt and hawk in his forest at Dunwich. The same writer also relates, that in the furious irruption of the sea in 1739, its impetuosity exposed the roots of a great number of trees once growing there, which appeared to be the extremity of some wood, and was in all probability the ancient forest. Contiguous to the latter was another wood, from its relative situation denominated Westwood.

HALESWORTH is a well built town, situated near the river Blith, which has been made navigable up to this place. It contains 258 houses, and 1676 inhabitants, many of whom are employed

ployed in spinning linen yarn, great quantities of hemp being grown in the neighbourhood. Its market is on Thursday, and it has a yearly fair on the 29th of October. Though a place of considerable antiquity, it contains nothing worthy of notice, except a handsome Gothic church, and a charity-school. Sir Robert Bedingfield, who was lord-mayor of London, in 1707, was a native of Halesworth.

SOUTHWOLD, anciently *Sudwold*, or *Southwood*, was probably thus named from a wood near it, as the western confines still retain the appellation of Wood's-end marshes, and Woods-end creek. It is pleasantly situated on an eminence overlooking the German Ocean, but nearly surrounded on every other side by the river Blith, which here discharges itself into the sea. This town was made corporate in 1489, by Henry VII. according to whose charter, confirmed by several succeeding sovereigns, it is governed by two bailiffs, a recorder, and twelve aldermen. In 1801 it contained 266 houses, and 1054 inhabitants. The market on Thursday is well attended, and there are two fairs, on Trinity Monday, and the 24th of August.

Though Southwold is not of such high antiquity as Dunwich, Blithburgh, and some other neighbouring places, yet the inhabitants were enabled, not only to enter into competition with those towns, but in time to surpass them in navigation and traffic.

Alfric, Bishop of the East Angles, who possessed this lordship, gave it, among other donations, to the abbey of Bury St. Edmund's, by which it was held as one manor for the victualling of the monks. It had half, and a quarter of the other half of the sea belonging to the manor, before the Conqueror's time paying 30,000 herrings; but after the conquest, 25,000. From the dimensions of this manor given in Domesday survey, Gardner calculates that the sea has since gained upon this coast one mile, one furlong, and nineteen perches.* In the 43d Henry III. the manor of Southwold was exchanged, by Simon, abbot of Bury, for other possessions, with Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, who,

* Hist. of Dunwich, &c. p. 189, 190.

who, in the year following, obtained permission to convert his house in this town into a castle.* By his son's wife, Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward I. it was carried, on her second marriage, into the family of Mounthermer, which had been invested with the earldom of Gloucester and Hertford; but in 12th Edward III. some part of the manor was annexed to the priory at Wangford, and is now held by the corporation of Southwold, of Lord Rous, to whom the priory belongs.

In the 10th Henry IV. Southwold was exempted from the payment of any customs or tolls, for their small boats, passing in or out of the river, or port of Dunwich. King Henry VII. in consideration of the industry and good services of the men of Southwold, made the town a free burgh, or corporation, to be governed by two bailiffs, a recorder, and other inferior officers, to whom, and the commonalty, he gave his lordship of the same, called Queen's demesne revenues, and also the privilege of admiralty, for the annual payment of 14l. He moreover granted them exemption from all dues and customs payable to Dunwich, and conferred on the town the rights of a haven, which probably caused the denomination of the port of Dunwich to be changed to that of Southwold. Henry VIII. not only confirmed all his father's grants, but added to them many gifts, franchises, and immunities. These royal favors gave great encouragement to the trade and navigation of the town, of which the fishery constituted no small part; being carried on by merchants, who annually fitted out numerous vessels, tradition says upwards of fifty, for taking cod and other fish in the North Sea. The herring fishery off their own coast was also highly conducive to the prosperity of the town. Though Southwold was sensibly affected by the emancipation of the country from the papal supremacy, still it retained an extensive trade, and exceeded all the neighbouring towns in shipping and

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* This structure is supposed by Gardner, to have occupied the spot, where in the sequel *Gueman's*, or *Stellman's* stood; many stones, some of them hewn for arches, and other architectural remains, having of late years, says that writer, been dug up in a garden there.

and commerce. But the greatest calamity that ever befel this place, was on the 25th of April 1659, when a fire, whose destructive fury was heightened by a violent wind, consumed, in the space of four hours, the town-hall, market-house, market-place, prison, granaries, shops, warehouses, and 238 dwelling houses, and other buildings. The greatest part of the moveable goods, nets and tackling of the inhabitants for their fishery, and all their corn, malt, barley, fish, coals, and other merchandize, were destroyed in this conflagration, the total loss by which exceeded 40,000*l.* to the ruin of more than 300 families. By this disaster, many substantial persons were obliged to seek habitations elsewhere, so that the town never recovered its former importance either in trade or buildings. All the court-baron rolls were destroyed on this occasion, in consequence of which, all the copyholders of the corporation are become freeholders.*

About the middle of the last century, the commerce of this place received a fresh impulse. The entrance to the haven, which is on the south side of the town, was subject to be choked up, till an act of parliament was obtained for repairing and improving it. Accordingly, one pier was erected on the north side of the port in 1749, and another on the south in 1752. The establishment of the Free British Fishery, in 1750, also contributed greatly to the prosperity of the town, where two docks were constructed, and various buildings erected for the making and tanning of nets, and for the depositing of stores. As the beach at Southwold partakes of the advantages enjoyed by other towns on this coast for sea-bathing, it has of late years derived some benefit from the strangers who resort thither during the summer season for that purpose, and for whose accommodation two convenient machines are kept in the town.

The first chapel here was probably built in the reign of King John, by the prior and monks of Thetford, who, in right of their cell at Wangford, were patrons of the church of Rissemere, or Reydon, to which Southwold was only a hamlet, and to which the inhabitants of this town were still obliged to resort in order to receive

receive the sacraments, as also for the performance of the marriage and funeral ceremonies, and divine service on particular festivals. This chapel was destroyed by fire about 220 years after its erection. The present edifice dedicated to St. Edmund is supposed to have been commenced soon after the destruction of the old one. The exterior was apparently finished about 1460, as the legacies after that time are chiefly for the inside work. This second chapel was made parochial, and in 1751, being endowed with 400*l.* given by the governors of Queen Anne's bounty, and the like sum raised by public contributions, it was separated from Reydon, and made a distinct curacy, to which Lord Rous, as patron of Reydon, has the nomination.

The total length of this fine fabric is 143 feet 6 inches, and the width 56 feet 2 inches. It has two aisles, which are separated from the nave by seven arches, and six pillars of elegant workmanship. The tower steeple, about 100 feet in height, is a fine piece of architecture, beautified with freestone intermixed with flint of various colours. The porch, erected about thirty years after the church, is highly ornamented; over the entrance is a vacant niche, which probably contained the statue of the patron saint, and it is decorated in various parts with Gothic letters, similar to those of the inscription upon the arch over the great west window of the tower: *SAT EDMUND. ORA. P. NOBIS,* signifying *Sancte Edmundé, ora pro nobis.* Every letter is adorned with a crown placed over it, and the whole is considered an excellent performance. The north door has a niche on either side, with a figure in each, resembling an angel with prodigious wings, in a kind of pulpit, and his hands joined as if in the attitude of prayer. The pillars supporting these niches rise from grotesque heads. The mouldings between the receding arches of all the doors, are ornamented with foliage, flowers, grotesque heads, and figures; as is also the fillet that runs round the body of the church, above the windows. At each corner of the east end of the chancel, is a low hexagonal tower, with battlements,

battlements, some of which are still decorated with ornamental crosses.

The interior of this edifice still indicates that it was yet more highly ornamented than the exterior. It contained several images; and the carved work of the rood-loft, and seats of the magistrates, now somewhat defaced, originally bore a great resemblance to those in Henry the Seventh's chapel, at Westminster. Every pew in the church was likewise decorated with representations of birds, beasts, satyrs, or human figures, which have partaken of the same usage, except a few on the north side of the north aisle, and others concealed by the folding doors opening into the chancel. The ceiling of the latter is handsomely painted, as is likewise that over the screen in the nave. "On one side," says Gardner, "angels seemingly express much joy, with part of the song of St. Nicetas, *Te Deum Laudamus*, &c. On the other, answering thereto, is the historical representation of Zacharias's prophecy, *Benedictus D'ns*, &c. The fronts of the magistrates' seats are adorned with gildings and paintings. The screen has in the north aisle, the emblematical figures of the blessed Trinity in a Triangle; next *Gabriel*; after that the hierarchy, *Arkangelus Potestates*, *Dominationes*, *Cherubyn*, *Seraphyn*, *Thrones*, *Principatus*, *Virtutes*, *Angelus*: in the south aisle, *Barush Pha*, *Ose Pha*, *Nann Pha*, *Jeremias Pha*, *Helyas Pha*, *Moyes Pha*, *Daniel Pha*, *Amos Pha*, *Isaias Pha*, *Jonas Pha*, *Ezekias Pha*. In the middle are the twelve apostles, on the north side six, and as many on the south. Under them are four impressions of the angel, lion, ox, and eagle, representing Ezeiel's vision of the four cherubim and evangelists. Here blind zeal, ignorant superstition, and obstinate bigotry, with united force wrought their spite, by defacing, not only angels, apostles, and prophets, but likewise extending their malice, by breaking all the historical faces in the painted windows, and in committing sacrilege by robbing the grave-stones of the brass-plates, which bore monumental inscriptions to the memory of the dead,

†

dead, and erasing others; whence we may conclude, that the paintings on the ceilings would have had no more favour shewn them, if they had been as easily come at.*

Though Southwold contains many good houses, it has no other building, except perhaps the *Guildhall*, worthy of being particularized. On the cliffs are two batteries, one of which is a regular fortification, with a good parapet, and six guns; the other has but two. On a hill called Eye-cliff, and several others situated near it, are to be seen the vestiges of an ancient encampment, and where the ground has not been broken up, are tokens of circular tents, vulgarly denominated fairy-hills. Gardner conjectures that this may have been a camp of the Danes, when they invaded the country in 1010.†

It has been remarked, that at this town in particular, as at all the places on this coast, the swallows commonly first land, on their arrival in England, and hence also they take their departure, on their return to warmer climates. "I was at this place about the beginning of October," says the author of a tour through Great Britain,‡ "and lodging in a house that looked into the church-yard, I observed in the evening an unusual multitude of swallows, sitting on the leads of the church, and covering the tops of several houses round about. This led me to enquire what was the meaning of such a prodigious number of swallows sitting there. I was answered, that this was the season when the swallows, their food failing here, begin to leave us, and return to the country, wherever it be, from whence they came; and that this being the nearest land to the opposite coast, and the wind contrary, they were waiting for a gale, and might be said to be wind-bound. This was more evident to me, when in the morning I found the wind had come about to the north-west in the night, and there was not one swallow to be seen. This passing and repassing of swallows is observed no where so much as on this eastern coast, namely from above Harwich to Winterton-ness in Norfolk. We know nothing of them any farther north; the passage

of

* Gardner's *Dunwich*, p. 203, & 204. † *Ibid.* p. 189. ‡ *Vol. I.* p. 189.

of the sea being, as I suppose, too broad from Flamborough Head, and the shore of Holderness in Yorkshire."

Southwold Bay, commonly called *Sole Bay*, is celebrated as the theatre of a most obstinate and sanguinary naval engagement, which took place in 1672, between the combined fleet of England and France, on one side, and that of the Dutch on the other. The former consisted of 101 sail, thirty-five of which were French, carrying 6018 guns, and 34,530 men. In this bay they were lying on the 28th of May, when the Dutch fleet, composed of ninety-one men of war, fifty-four fire ships, and twenty-three tenders, commanded by the famous De Ruyter, bore down upon them so unexpectedly, that many of the ships were obliged to cut their cables, that they might get out more expeditiously, and range themselves in order of battle. Bankert, who commanded the van of the Dutch, commenced the attack on the white squadron, under the French Admiral Count d'Étrées. The latter received them with some appearance of courage, but soon sheered off, in consequence, as it is generally believed, of secret orders from his master not to expose his ships too much, but to leave the English and Dutch to effect their mutual destruction. In the mean time De Ruyter made a furious attack on the Duke of York and the centre squadron, while Van Ghent engaged the blue, under the Earl of Sandwich. The duke, after an obstinate conflict of several hours with the Dutch commander, was obliged to shift his flag from the disabled state of his ship. The Earl of Sandwich, in the Royal James, of 100 guns, maintained a most unequal conflict with Van Ghent's division. He was first attacked by the Great Holland, commanded by Captain Braakel, and a fire-ship. Braakel, though of inferior force, yet depending on the assistance of his countrymen, who had the advantage of the wind, grappled the Royal James, and the earl being ill supported by the rest of his squadron, was almost entirely surrounded by the enemy. Van Ghent was soon killed, and his ship, being much disabled, sheered off. Another Dutch man of war, and three fire-ships were sunk, and at length the earl succeeded in dis-

disengaging himself from Braakel's ship, after being grappled with her an hour and a half, and reducing her to a mere wreck; the captain himself being wounded, and two-thirds of his men killed. †

The earl had now with unexampled intrepidity defended himself for five hours, but disdaining to retreat, another Dutch fire ship approached under cover of the enemy's smoke, and boarded the Royal James on the quarter. The greater part of her crew had already fallen, and her hull was so pierced with shot, that it was impossible to carry her off. In this condition, the earl begged his Captain Sir Richard Haddock, and all his servants to get into the boat, and save themselves, which they did: but some of the sailors resolutely refusing to quit their commander, remained on board, and endeavoured, but in vain, to extinguish the flames. The ship blew up about noon, off Easton Ness, and they thus perished together.

Van Ghent's division, thrown into confusion by the death of their admiral, and the furious attack of part of the earl's squadron, which arrived, but too late, to his assistance, was obliged to retreat, and withdrew for some time from the engagement. This afforded Sir Joseph Jordan, who had now succeeded to the command of the blue squadron, an opportunity of uniting with the red, in order to assist the Duke of York, who, being deserted by the French, had suffered considerably from the powerful attacks of the enemy's two divisions under De Ruyter and Bankert. In this conflict Cornelius Evertzen, Admiral of Zealand, was killed, and De Ruyter himself was wounded, and narrowly escaped being burned by the English fire-ships. His ship was at length so completely disabled, that she was obliged to be towed out of the line; and it was with great difficulty that she afterwards reached home. Van Ghent's squadron having by this time rallied, bore down to the relief of their commanders, and thus saved them from destruction. Towards night great havoc was made among the Dutch fire-ships, five or six of which were destroyed by one English man of war. The battle continued till nine at night, when the

the Dutch vessels being dreadfully shattered, were obliged to retreat, and the English having suffered in an equal degree, were in no condition to pursue them.

In this sanguinary contest the Dutch lost only three ships of war, one of which was burned, another sunk, and a third taken. Their loss in men is supposed to have been very great, as the publication of it was forbidden by the States. Considering the disparity of force after the defection of the French, it cannot appear surprising, that our fleet should have suffered still more severely. Two English ships were burned, three sunk, and one taken; and about 2000 men were killed and wounded. Among the former were rear-admiral Sir Fretcheville Hollis, in the Cambridge; Captain Digby, of the Henry; Captain Percy, of the St. George; Captain Waterworth, of the Anne; Sir John Fox, of the Prince; Captain Harman, of the Triumph; Lord Maidstone, Sir Philip Cartwright, Sir Charles Harbord, and many other persons of distinction. But the fate of the gallant Earl of Sandwich was particularly regretted. The day before the engagement, while the fleet was riding in the Bay, the earl, apprehensive of being surprised by the Dutch, had advised that it should weigh anchor, and get out to sea. The Duke of York, however, not only rejected this advice, but even told the earl that it was the result of fear, which is supposed by some to have made so deep an impression on the mind of the noble admiral, as to render him careless of life. Agreeably to this idea, it is related, that when his ship was on fire, the earl retired to his cabin, whither he was followed by his captain, Sir Richard Haddock, who, finding him with a handkerchief before his eyes, informed him of his danger, to which he replied, "he saw how things went, and was resolved to perish with the ship." This is evidently a different account of the circumstance related by Campbell, who observes, that "he might have been relieved in his distress by Vice-Admiral Sir Joseph Jordan, if that gentleman had not been more solicitous about assisting the duke. When, therefore, he saw him sail by, heedless of the condition in which

he lay, he said to those about him; 'There is nothing left for us now but to defend the ship to the last man;' and those that knew him readily understood, that, by the last man, he meant himself." This representation certainly places the matter in a very different light; and though it is evident, that the earl might have escaped with the captain and others, yet the character which he uniformly exhibited, does not justify the idea, that he would wantonly sacrifice a life so useful to his country. The certificate of his funeral preserved among the archives of the Herald's College, has been adduced to corroborate a contrary opinion. It is there stated, that "he staid in his ship till the last, when he was forced to put himself to the mercy of the sea, in which he perished." His body was taken up a few days afterwards, by one of the king's ketches, and being known by the George which he had on, was carried to Harwich, whence it was removed, and solemnly interred in Westminster Abbey.

The French, notwithstanding the little share they had in the engagement, lost two ships, one of which was burned, and the other sunk; and among the killed was their rear-admiral, M. de la Rabinière.

BENACRE was, in the 15th and 16th century, the lordship and demesne of the noble family of Dacres. It is now the property of Sir Thomas Gooch, Bart. who resides in the spacious mansion, called *Benacre Hall*.

In 1786, one of the workmen employed in making a new turnpike-road at this place, struck his pick-axe against a stone bottle, containing upwards of nine hundred pieces of silver coin, in general in good preservation; but none older than the time of Vespasian. They were all about the size of a sixpence, nine of them weighing an ounce. Near seven hundred were purchased by Sir Thomas Gooch; others were bought by different persons, and the remainder sold to a Jew, who retailed them at a low price in the neighbourhood.

BLITHBURGH, situated on the river Blith, gives name to this hundred, and though now a mean village, was formerly a flourishing

ing place. Its origin is uncertain, but it is very plausibly conjectured to be of high antiquity, several urns and Roman coins having been discovered here. It was once the residence of merchants, and much frequented on account of its trade, especially the fishery, which it possessed before the river was choked up. Here was the jail for the division of Beccles; and in this town the sessions for that division were formerly held. It had also a weekly market, and two annual fairs, one of which it still retains, on the 5th of April, but the market had been disused an accident to the birth of the oldest inhabitants living in 1754. After the suppression of the priory of Blithburgh, the town fell to decay, and continued gradually to decline till 1679, when it sustained a loss by fire, to the computed amount of 1803l. on which some of the inhabitants being unable, and others through the failure of trade, not thinking it worth while to rebuild their houses, settled elsewhere; and thus the place was reduced to poverty. In 1801, it contained 54 houses, inhabited by 310 persons.

The church, a curious building, and of considerable antiquity, is 127 feet in length, and fifty-four feet two inches wide. The windows are very numerous, and were once extremely beautiful, as the remains of the painted glass which adorned them seem to indicate. This edifice now presents a spectacle that cannot fail to excite the indignation of every admirer of antiquities. It has been highly ornamented both within and without. Externally the beautiful tracery of the windows has been removed, or perhaps destroyed, by the hand of time, and its place has been supplied with unsightly masses of brick, in one or two instances entirely surrounded with glass. The chasms in the painted glass of these windows have in like manner been supplied with brick and mortar. Internally the fine carved work has been covered with a coat of white-wash, and the carvings on the roof, consisting of angels bearing shields, on which are painted the arms of various benefactors to the church, are in such a decayed condition as to be continually falling. Upon the ceiling of the church was formerly

merly the sculptured figure of a man, in a sitting attitude, of which both Kirby* and Gardner† have given a representation; and round it a label, with this inscription: *Orate pro aiabz Johne Masin et Katerine uxoris etu*. This figure, as also that upon the chancel, mentioned by the same writers, and conjectured by Gardner to be intended for King Henry VI. † has been removed, and together with the fragments of the tracery taken from the windows, thrown into a promiscuous heap in the church-yard. The porch is still decorated with grotesque heads, and at each corner stands an angel with expanded wings. Upon the chancel, not far from the foundation, are eleven antique letters with a crown above each, resembling in every respect those over one of the windows of Southwold church; and, doubtless, originally forming an inscription of a similar import.

This fabric, from the architecture, does not appear to be so ancient as some have imagined. Several letters and emblematical figures upon it corresponding with others at Southwold, Walberswick, and Covehithe churches, would encourage the inference that it is coeval with those structures whose foundation was not antecedent to the fifteenth century. The chancel was probably built after 1442, when John Greyse, by will, left twenty marks towards rebuilding it, in words which shew that it was not then begun. Several other bequests towards it occur down to the year 1473, at which time, or soon after, it was most likely finished. The similarity of the workmanship of the chancel to that of the church warrants the conclusion, that it cannot have been of much later erection. The tower, which formerly had a spire, is of inferior workmanship to the church and chancel, and

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* *Histor. Acc. of Twelve Prints*, p. 25.

† *Histor. Acc. of Dunwich*, &c. p. 122.

‡ A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September 1808, p. 776, under the signature of D. Davis, says that this figure was intended for a representation of the Trinity.

therefore thought to be much older; but it was probably repaired and covered with lead when the church was rebuilt.

There was a chapel at the east end of the south aisle dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and another at the end of the north aisle dedicated to her mother, St. Anne. By old wills, it also appears, that, prior to the Reformation, this church contained a great number of images, as that of the Holy Trinity on the north side of the high altar, the usual place for the principal image, or that of the saint to whom the church was dedicated; the images of St. Mary and St. Anne, in their chapels, where they probably had altars likewise; the images of St. Sigismund, St. Erasmus, and St. Katherine; and perhaps others, at least in the painted glass of the windows; for Robert Pinne, in his will dated 1457, ordered his executors to glaze a window on the north side of the church, and to paint it with the history of St. Andrew.

By letters patent, dated in the 30th year of Henry VI. licence was given to John Hopton, Esq. to found and endow a chantry at Blithburgh, to the honour of St. Margaret the Virgin, by the application of Hopton's Chantry, for one chaplain to celebrate mass for the welfare of the founders and benefactors while living, and after their decease for the health of their souls; but it is uncertain whether it was actually founded or not, as no mention is made of it at the dissolution.

At the east end of the north aisle, is shewn a tomb, said to be that of Anna, King of the East Angles, and in the chancel another for his son Firminus, who both fell in battle with Penda, King of Mercia, in 654, and were first interred in this place, whence their remains were afterwards removed to St. Edmund's Bury. Gardner conjectures, that the latter monument may be the tomb of Sir John Hopton, and that the former might have been erected before the rebuilding of the church, for one of the Swillington's, lords of Blithburgh. He farther observes, that near the south porch is a black marble stone, narrower at one end than at the other, that seems to have been carved on the side with a moulding,

a moulding, and raised in the middle, and which might perhaps have been the covering of King Anna.

The upper stone of the tomb, which common report assigns to that monarch, has been broken into three pieces, the middle one of which is lost, and the interior now serves as a receptacle for filth and dirt. Upon the altar monument, in the chancel, have been raised two or three clumsy square columns of brick, which has occasioned the remark, that the person whom it covers, whatever he might have been in his life-time, is now unquestionably a firm supporter of the church.

In the front of two pews, near the latter tomb, are small figures, eighteen in number, representing the Apostles and other characters of Scripture; and at the west end of the middle aisle is the figure of a man, which used to strike time on a bell, now cracked, in the same manner as those at St. Dunstan's, in London.

Stow gives, in his annals, an account of a terrible thunder-storm, which happened here on Sunday, the 4th of August, 1577, during divine service, when the lightning did great damage to the church, struck down upwards of twenty people, "who were found grovelling half an hour after." Of these a man and a boy were dead, and the others scorched. Blithburgh Register farther mentions, that the spire part of the steeple was thrown down, and the standing remains greatly rent and torn by the tempest, which took its course to Bungay, where it did much mischief.

Not far from the church are some remains overgrown with ivy, of a small priory of Black Canons, or Præmonstrantenses. The revenues of the church of Blithburgh being given by King Henry I. to the abbot and convent of St. Osith, in Essex, they probably founded this priory soon afterwards, as a daughter-house, but not as a cell to that abbey, according to the assertion of most writers. The revenues of this priory were not only valued separately from those of the abbey, but the prior and convent of Blithburgh presented to their own livings, and seemed in all other respects an independent body, except that the abbot and convent of St. Osith

nominated the prior. Weever makes Henry I. the founder of this house, and Richard Beauveys, Bishop of London, so great a benefactor, as to be esteemed a co-founder. In this, however, he seems to be mistaken, for if it had been founded by the king, the patronage of the priory would have been in the crown, which it manifestly was not; and if the bishop had been so great a benefactor, some notice would have been taken of the circumstance, either by Godwyn, Wharton, or Newcourt, who wrote his life; and who all mention his founding the Abbey of St. Osith. The lords of the hundred of Blithing seem much more likely to have been its principal benefactors, for upon every vacancy they presented the person nominated by the abbot and convent of St. Osith as prior of Blithburgh, to the Bishop of Norwich, to be instituted into that office.

In 1528, Cardinal Wolsey obtained a bull for suppressing this, among other small religious houses, and applying its revenues towards the endowment of his college at Ipswich, provided the king should grant his consent; but by some means or other his design was frustrated as to this house, which continued till the general suppression, 26 Henry VIII. when it contained no more than five religious, and its annual revenues were valued at 48*l*. 8*s*. 10*d*. In the 30th year of the same reign, the site of it, with other possessions of the priory, was granted to Sir Arthur Hopton, Lord of the Manor. Tanner* says, that Sir Richard Gips, in his Suffolk Collections, speaks of a register of this priory in Gresham College Library.

On the north side of the main street also stood another religious edifice, called Holy Rood chapel, some remains of which were standing, when Gardner wrote †.

To the south-east of Blithburgh formerly grew West Wood, which, in process of time, was converted into a park, and received the name of the Grove. Here stood the mansion-house of the lords

* Note to Blithburgh, in his *Notit. Monast.*

† *Hist. of Danw.* p. 130.

lords of the manor. The ancient hall having, as is conjectured, from various relics found on the spot, been destroyed by fire, the present edifice, called *Westwood Lodge*, commanding a pleasant sea view, was erected about the middle of the 17th century, by John Brooke, Esq. From the Brookes it descended to the family of Blois, and is now the property of Sir Charles Blois, Bart. but in the occupation of Mr. Howlett, whose farm here, consisting of 3000 acres, is pronounced by Mr. Young, to be without exception the finest in the county.*

The manor of BRAMFIELD formerly constituted part of the endowment of the college of Mettingham, built by order of John de Norwich, who lived in the reign of Edward III. At the dissolution it was granted to Thomas Denney, but has long been vested in the recently ennobled family of Rous, of Henham.

In the chancel of the parish church is an elegant monument erected to the memory of Arthur, third son of the celebrated lawyer Sir Edward Coke; and on the pavement are many black marble stones, for the two ancient families of Rabbet and Nelson. The estate of the former is now vested in Reginald Rabbet, who resides in *Bramfield Hall*, a fine old mansion, situated near the church. About a mile distant was another old seat, which formerly belonged to Thomas Neale, Esq. but was afterwards converted into a farm-house. That gentleman, by his will, directed an alms-house to be built and endowed here, for four single persons, who have each a room, and about a rood of land; and one of them receives an additional allowance of three pounds per annum, for teaching six poor children to read. The widow of Mr. Neale, who after his death married John Fowle, Esq. left an estate at Metfield, of the yearly value of about ten pounds, to keep these alms-houses in repair, and for the instruction of six more children.

BULL-CAMP, originally *Bald-camp*, which signifies a bold fighting hand to hand, is thought to have received its appellation from the obstinate engagement in 654, between the Mercians and East Angles,

Angles, in which the latter were totally defeated, with the loss of their king Anna, and his eldest son Firmicus. This conjuncture is strengthened by a tradition current in the neighborhood, that the unfortunate monarch was killed in Bullcamp forest, or Wood, as well as by the proximity of Bliithburgh, the place of his first interment to the field of battle.

On a rising ground in this parish, stands the house of industry for the hundred of Bliithing, incorporated in 1764. The sum borrowed for the erection of this edifice was 12,000*l.* half of which was paid off in 1780, and the remainder in 1791. At the first incorporation of the hundred, containing forty-six parishes, the annual average of the poor's-rates was not above one shilling in the pound, and this rate was diminished on the payment of half the debt in 1780. The number of poor in the house amounts to about 250 in summer, and 300 in winter. They are employed in manufactures of woollen and linen for the use of the house, as also in making all their own shoes, stockings, and clothes. Linnen is made here up to the value of three shillings and six-pence a yard.

COVEHITHE was anciently the estate of a family named Cove. In 1308, John de Cove, and Eve his wife, had a charter of free warren in their lands here, and in 1328 obtained the grant of a fair at this place. It was once a considerable fishing town, and had a noble church which has been suffered to fall to ruin, the south aisle only being preserved and inclosed for divine service.

Covehithe was the birth place of JOHN BALE, a writer of the 16th century, author of a work of considerable labour and erudition, intitled *De Scriptoribus Britannicis*. He was born in 1495, and after having been educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, became a Carmelite friar at Norwich. Having embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, he was exposed to the persecution of the Catholic clergy, against whom he was protected by Cromwell, Earl of Essex. On the death of that statesman he was obliged to take refuge in the Netherlands, where he remained till the accession of Edward VI. by whom he was advanced to the bishopric

bishopric of Ossory in Ireland. This preferment he enjoyed but a short time: on the king's death he was again obliged to leave his country, and resided in Switzerland during Queen Mary's reign. Returning to England, soon after Elizabeth ascended the throne, he obtained a prebend in the cathedral of Canterbury, but could never recover his bishopric. He died in November 1563.

At DARSHAM is *Darsham Hall*, a seat of Lord Rous.

EASTON BAVENT, though now almost entirely washed away by the ocean, seems formerly to have been a place of some consequence. In the reign of Edward I. it was the lordship of Thomas de Bavent, one of whose descendants, in the 4th Edward III. obtained a grant for a weekly market here, and a yearly fair, on the eve, day, and morrow of the feast of St. Nicholas. Besides the parish church, which was standing in 1638, it had a chapel dedicated to St. Margaret.

In this parish was the promontory known by the name of Easton-ness, the *extensio*, or *Ezzyon* of the ancient geographers, and which, before it was overwhelmed by the ocean, was the easternmost point of the English coast.

FORDLEY. The church of this village has long been in ruins. It stood in the same church-yard with Middleton church, and so near to the latter, that in 1630 complaint was made to the bishop of Norwich, that when service did not begin and end at both churches exactly at the same time, the bells and steeple of one disturbed the congregation of the other. To remedy this inconvenience, the bishop directed that the same minister should serve both, and officiate in them alternately. It was probably for this reason that Fordley church, which was but a small building, was suffered to go to decay.

At HENHAM is the elegant mansion, and extensive park, of Lord Rous, whose family has resided at this place near three hundred years. In 1660, John Rous, Esq. was created a baronet; and in 1796 the present proprietor of Henham was elevated to the peerage by the title of Baron Rous of Dennington. The house is of modern erection, having been built after the destruction

and from the channel, over which he erected a bridge that afterwards bore the name of the founder.*

RUMBURGH is a place of no note except for a Benedictine monastery, founded soon after the Norman Conquest by Stephen, Earl of Brittany, and given as a cell to the abbey of St. Mary at York. At the general suppression it was granted to Cardinal Wolsey.† The remains of this edifice have been converted into a farm-house, which belongs to Mr. Jessop of Leiston Abbey.

At SIBTON was also a monastic establishment of the Cistercian order, founded about the year 1150, by William de Casineto, or Coney, and dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. This house was so amply endowed that its revenues were valued at 250*l.* 15*s.* 7*d.* per annum, and were granted by the abbot and convent themselves to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, Anthony Rouse, Esq. and Nicholas Hare, Gent. in 1536.

THORINGTON was formerly the lordship and demesne of Walter de Norwich, and afterwards of the Uffords and the Cokes. Alexander Bence, Esq. to whose family it for sometime belonged, fixed his residence at the *Hall*, which is now the seat of George Gadding, Esq.

WALBERSWICK, commonly called *Walderswick*, now a hamlet of Bithburgh, a place of great antiquity, was once a considerable and populous town. It carried on an extensive commerce both by land and sea, especially in fish; having, in 1451, thirteen barks trading to Iceland, Ferro, and the North Seas, and twenty-two fishing boats employed off this coast. The alteration of the port which ruined the town of Dunwich, proved a source of increased prosperity to Walberswick, which continued to thrive till the middle of the sixteenth century, when the alteration made in the established religion, proved highly detrimental to this, as well as to many other towns on the coast, whose principal support was derived from the fishery. From that time this village began gradually to decline, and repeated and destructive conflagrations hastened

* Gardner's *Dunwich*, &c. p. 257.

† Dugdale has erroneously placed this convent in Cambridgeshire.

hastened its ruin. Before the year 1583, Walberswick suffered severely by fire; in 1633, great part of the town was burned; in 1683 it was again visited by a like scourge, and in 1749 about one third of the small remains of the place was consumed. This last accident was occasioned by the chimney taking fire at the farthest house, south-west of the village. The wind being high at west, carried the blazing thatch to the alms-house, ninety yards distant. The burning flakes from the latter flew above 130 yards to another cottage, from which it communicated to several dwelling-houses, barns, and other buildings, consuming in its passage two standing green ash-trees. But what was very surprising, a fence made with furze, staked and exceeding dry, was burned by the flames running from end to end, only to the stakes, or middle of the hedge having one side consumed, and the other remaining entire, from the violence of the wind, which carried some of the burning matter miles off to the sea.

The old church of Walberswick, though thatched, was adorned with several images, and possessed an organ. This edifice was taken down in 1473, when the inhabitants at their sole cost, raised in its stead, a handsome structure with two aisles, dedicated to St. Andrew; which is a striking demonstration of the opulence of the place at the time of its erection. It was finished in 1493. It contained a chapel of our lady; and the images of the Holy Trinity, the Rood, St. Andrew, and several other saints. A few years afterwards, it received the addition of a north aisle, which rendered it a beautiful structure, well built with flint and free-stone, with many curious devices on the exterior walls. Each aisle was parted from the nave by seven arches, and six pillars neatly wrought. The whole length was 124 feet exclusive of the steeple, and the width sixty feet. The steeple, still pretty entire, was upwards of ninety feet high, crowned with eight pinnacles, and a wooden spire. This beautiful edifice, though it suffered severely from the fanatical visitors, by whom most of the religious edifices in this county were despoiled in the middle of the 17th century, nevertheless continued pretty entire till 1696, when the

the inhabitants unable to support the charge of repairs, took down the greatest part of it, reserving only the south-west angle for the performance of religious worship.

At WANGFORD was formerly a priory, or cell of Cluniac monks, subordinate to Thetford, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. At its suppression in the 32d Henry VIII. it was valued at 30l. 9s. 5d. per annum, and was soon afterwards granted with the monastery of Thetford, to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk. His son sold it in 1612, to Sir John Rous, in whose family it has ever since continued.

The church at this place is built partly of flints, and partly of brick, and has a newly erected spire steeple, to defray the expense of which, a peal of bells was sold by the parish.

WESTHALL, anciently the manor of Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, has belonged since the time of Henry VIII. to the family of Bohun, of which Edmund Bohun, Esq. who resided in this village was a voluminous writer of the 17th century. The most noted of his works were "a *Geographical Dictionary*, and a *History of King James the Second's Desertion*, in answer to a publication entitled *The Desertion Discussed*, by Jeremiah Collier.

The manor of WRENTHAM was held at the period of the Domesday Survey, of the famous William, Earl of Warren, by Robert de Pierpoint, and afterwards belonged to the Poinings, the last of which family fell at the siege of Orleans, in 1446. In the time of Edward VI. it was purchased by the family of Brewster, who built Wrentham Hall, and whose seat it still continues.

YOXFORD, is a remarkably pleasant village about four miles to the north of Saxmundham. On the north side of it is Cockfield Hall, formerly the seat of the family of Brook, but now the residence of Sir Charles Blois, Bart. Here is also the neat mansion of D. E. Davy, Esq. receiver of the land-tax for the eastern division of the county. This gentleman in conjunction with a Mr. Jermyn, is engaged in the compilation of a *History of Suffolk*, which will be a voluminous work, and is not likely to make its appearance till a distant period.

HUNDRED OF WANGFORD.

The hundred of Wangford is divided from Norfolk by the Waveney on the north: on the east it is bounded by the hundreds of Mutford and Blything; on the south, by Blything; and on the west, by Hoxne. It contains two market-towns, Beccles and Bungay.

BECCLES, a large well built town, situated on the river Waveney, which is navigable from Yarmouth, contains 601 houses, and 2788 inhabitants. It is a corporation consisting of a portreeve, and thirty-six burgesses, distinguished by the appellations of *the twelvees*, and *the twenty-fours*; the office of portreeve, or chief magistrate, being held in rotation by the former. The market is on Saturday, and the town has three annual fairs, on Holy Thursday, June 29th, and October 2d.

Beccles consists of several streets, which terminate in a spacious area where the market is kept. The *Church* is an elegant Gothic structure with a steeple, which stands at some distance from the south-east corner of the chancel, and contains a peal of ten bells. The porch is a fine specimen of what is termed the florid Gothic. The church-yard from its elevated situation, commands a remarkably beautiful prospect. In the south part of the town, are still to be seen the ruins of another parish church, called Endgate, demolished by order of Queen Elizabeth, "for that the parishes of Beccles and Endgate had been for so many years blended together, that the bounds and limits of them could not be known in 1419; when a legal agreement was made by the bishop, patron, and rectors, of both parishes, that the rector of Beccles should take the whole tithes of both parishes, and pay the rector of Endgate 6l. 13s. 4d. yearly in the parish church of Endgate: so that the inhabitants of Endgate have time out of mind been esteemed parishioners of Beccles." At this place was also formerly a chapel of St. Peter, near the old market; a chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, belonging to a small hospital on a hill near