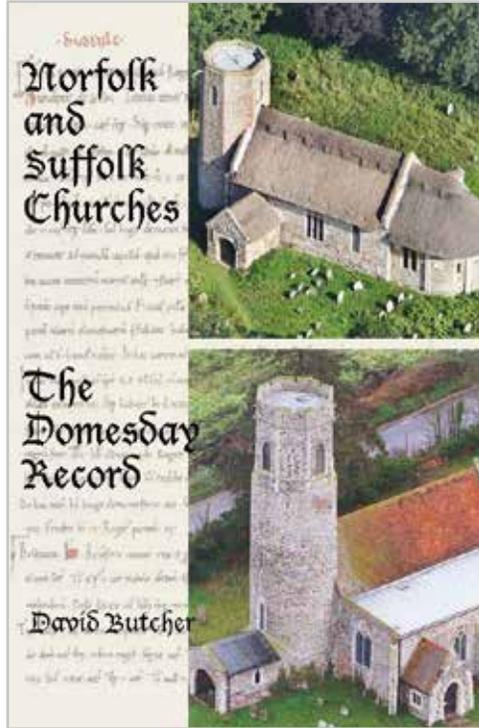


# Available now



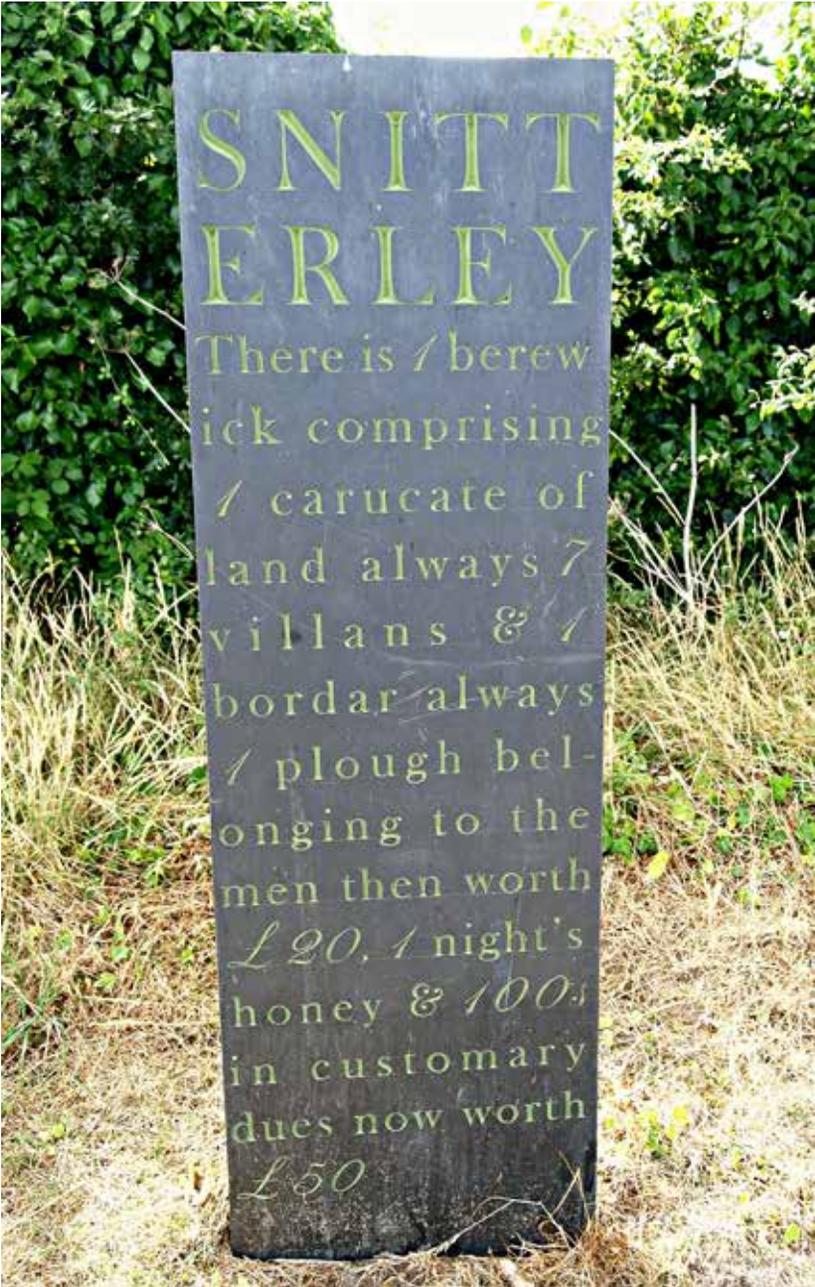
ISBN 978 1 909796 61 4

Paperback 369pp

RRP £14.95



POPPYLAND  
PUBLISHING



*The Snitterley Stone is one of three Welsh slate stones (the Holt slate and the Cley stone being the other two) erected in north Norfolk with words from the Domesday book. Snitterley was the name for Blakeney in 1086. (Note: the valuations of £20 and £50 refer to the whole of the Holt estate not the 'berwick' as suggested by the inscription.)*

Poppyland Publishing is pleased to announce *Norfolk and Suffolk Churches: The Domesday Record – A Handbook for Reference and Use*. by David Butcher.

Norfolk and Suffolk have far more places of Christian worship than any other English county with the exception of Lincolnshire. Their pre-conquest origin and location can often be revealed by careful examination of William I's great survey. However, when confronted with the mass of data presented, the Domesday text can appear ambiguous or contradictory to the historian. In this book the author has painstakingly arranged the data into tables to provide a unique research tool for those interested in the existence of a place of worship during the Anglo-Saxon period. It is meant as a handbook to assist investigation into the location and distribution of the churches recorded within the document.

The data presented is derived from the double-volume set for each county, published by Phillimore in 1984 and 1986. What is lacking, in the very nature of these texts, is any focus on individual churches recorded in Domesday or on their various associated endowments of land, something this book aims to address. The work centres on each and every foundation mentioned, hundred by hundred, and on the different land-holders on whose estates the buildings stood – both pre-1066 and in 1086. Following each table, explanations of the conventions adopted are given, together with statistical analysis of the data.

In addition to presenting data for each church, the author further encourages the reader to engage in his/her own research into a locality by providing a model study of one particular area of Suffolk: the half-hundreds of Lothingland and Mutford. He also investigates the valuation of church land-endowments, parishes with round-tower buildings and the presence of freewomen as land-holders, examining their potential role as founders of churches or as encouragers of other people to establish them. He proposes that, in contrast with Norfolk, Suffolk had certain high-born women who



*St. Mary, Blundeston, stands as a reminder today of the major boundary changes which took place in Lotbidingland during the post-Conquest period – having at one time served as the church of neighbouring Somerleyton. The round tower, with its much later castellated top, is a notable local landmark and the church itself is perhaps best known for the literary character, David Copperfield.*



*St. Michael, Rushmere is one of a number of the smaller rural structures throughout East Anglia which has the main body of the building run through in an unbroken line without any external distinction between nave and chancel. It stands quietly at a cross-ways, its presence a reminder of how churches define an earlier landscape and way of life.*

were influential in the communities they controlled and a greater number of lower-status ones who were nevertheless a significant social feature.

### **About the author**

David Butcher grew up in Bungay, graduated in General Arts at Durham University and was awarded a M.Phil from the University of East Anglia. A well known local historian, his books include *The Driftermen*, *The Trawlermen*, *Living from the Sea*, *The Ocean's Gift*, *Lowestoft 1550-1750 – Development and Change in a Suffolk Coastal Town*, *Medieval Lowestoft – The Origins and Growth of a Suffolk Coastal Community* and *Fishing Talk*. He is an Associate member of the Centre for East Anglian Studies at the University of East Anglia and a member of the Suffolk Local History Council.



# Contents

Illustrations	vi
Acknowledgements	8
Introduction	9
Norfolk Churches	17
Suffolk Churches	111
Post-Domesday Developments in Lothingland and Mutford	239
Appendix 1	269
Appendix 2	289
Appendix 3	293
Appendix 4	301
Appendix 5	323
Appendix 6	343
Select Bibliography	353
Index	358

Excerpt from *Norfolk and Suffolk Churches: The Domesday Record – A Handbook for Reference and Use.*

---

---

## **Post-Domesday Developments in Lothingland and Mutford**

The primary aim of this chapter is to take the furthest north-eastern part of Suffolk and show how its Domesday communities underwent notable boundary changes in the century following the Survey – thereby demonstrating that it may be unsafe to regard parish boundaries as being in fixed and final form by the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. Accompanying this will be an account of an extensive programme of church-building which seems to have taken place at the same time, leading to the least churched area of the county having all of its parishes endowed with places of worship by about the year 1200. It is also hoped that the evidence presented may serve to act as a model for similar work to be attempted in other parts of Norfolk and Suffolk where the opportunity exists. The eastern sector of Suffolk particularly has many examples of communities either not able to be immediately or easily identifiable from the name recorded in Domesday or which did not survive as independent entities in the decades following the survey. Norfolk has far fewer, but it would be good to have a wider and clearer understanding of the process of change wherever it is possible to identify and describe it.

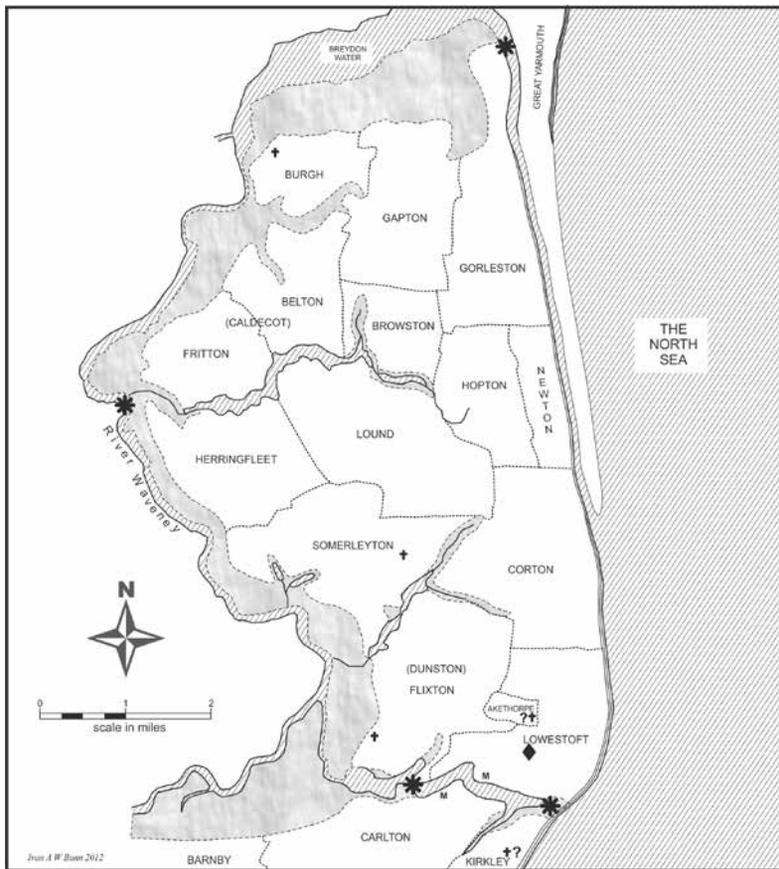
*Lothingland (Ludingalanda)*

Gorleston was the hub of the hundredal manor with 600 acres of arable land and a further associated holding of ninety acres. Three outliers were located in Belton (120 acres), Lound (240 acres) and Lowestoft (450 acres), their north-north-west/south-south-east diagonal alignment creating an element of control beyond the hub itself, and there was a final estate of ninety acres in Somerleyton. This added up to 1,590 acres in all, but the biggest individual community in terms of cultivated land (and population) was Flixton, with 1,085 acres and c. 300 inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Immediately prior to 1066, the half-hundred had been under the overlordship of the Earl of East Anglia, Gyrrh Godwineson, with the thegn Wulfsi as his local supervisor, but after the Conquest the area was very largely part of William I's vast royal estate and therefore under the scrutiny of Roger Bigot, Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk – or, rather, under that of a bailiff appointed by him.

Two significant departures from this pattern of control were the manor of Burgh [Castle], together with its church, and that of Caldecot (both held by Ralph the Crossbowman) and the church-estate of Flixton (part of the Bishop of Thetford's holdings). The only other place of worship recorded for the jurisdiction was to be found in Somerleyton, possibly attached to the forty-acre manor held by Wihtried the Priest. It had an endowment of twenty acres of arable land, which was larger than Burgh's eleven acres but much smaller than Flixton's 120. Neither Burgh nor Flixton had the presence of a priest recorded, but each must presumably have had one to exercise cure of souls.

Æthelmær (or Ælmer) the Priest, on his eighty-acre manor of Akethorpe, must also have carried out a Christian ministry of some kind, but no building is recorded in connection with him. Akethorpe was an outlier to Lowestoft, both in topographical and place-name terms, becoming integrated with its larger neighbour in the years following the Domesday Survey and remaining part of its parochial structure thereafter – though with the status of a separate estate within the manorial set-up. Eventually, of course, Lowestoft became the dominant community in Lothingland, but that is another story and no part of the narrative here.<sup>2</sup>

*Map 5. Lothingland Half-hundred at Domesday*



### Map details

- Crosses at Burgh, Flixton and Somerleyton mark the location of churches referred to in 1086. Akethorpe, in having a priest, must have had some kind of Christian practice being exercised, though no building is referred to. A likely site for such observation is that of the later parish church of St. Margaret, Lowestoft (hence, the cross). Kirkley was located in Mutford Half-hundred and will be discussed in due course.
- All three Domesday churches had early dedications: Burgh (St. Peter & St. Paul), Flixton (St. Michael) and Somerleyton (St. Mary).
- Thickened asterisks show the four fording-places or crossing-points providing access to, and egress from, the Island of Lothingland (for such it was). The bridges eventually built across them were a much later feature.
- An upper-case M, either side of Lake Lothing, marks the location of two former, lost burial-mounds.
- The areas represented in light grey shading are the tidal mudflats alongside the River Waveney and the main inland stretches of marsh. Lakes, rivers and the sea are shown in diagonal lining.
- Approximate boundaries for the communities are defined by dotted lines. Caldecot and Dunston are shown in their respective locations, but are bracketed because of insufficient information regarding their limits.
- The sandbar on which Great Yarmouth was founded (the result of the fall in sea-levels during late Anglo-Saxon times and of longshore drift bringing eroded material from much further up the Norfolk coast) grew progressively southwards in spit form until well into the fourteenth century. During the Anglo-Saxon era, it gradually closed off the mouth of the estuary of Roman times and, by impeding the outflow of the rivers Yare, Bure and Waveney to the sea, made possible the gradual reclamation of the area known today as Halvergate Marshes. Its extent shown on the map is approximate only.

Focus must first be given to the boundary changes which occurred in the half-hundred during the twelfth century and which can be seen illustrated in Maps 5 and 6 (the evidence-base for these alterations consisting largely of Ordnance Survey and earlier maps, hundred roll and manorial records, and

existing landscape features). Five of the Domesday villas (Akethorpe, Browston, Caldecot, Dunston and Gapton) ceased to exist in their own right, either becoming absorbed by neighbouring settlements or forming part of new ones which developed. Thus, Akethorpe was integrated with Lowestoft; Browston became part of Belton, of the newly created Bradwell and of Hopton; Caldecot was absorbed by Belton and Fritton, and Dunston by Oulton; and Gapton formed part of Bradwell. In the place of these five Domesday villas, six new parishes appeared. Two of them (Bradwell and Oulton) have been referred to with regard to their absorption of earlier settlements; the other four (Ashby, Blundeston, Gunton and Southtown) were formed by boundary changes and land-deals. Thus, Ashby was created from Herringfleet and Lound, Blundeston from Corton, Lound and Somerleyton, Gunton from Corton and Lowestoft, and Southtown from Gorleston. Significantly, perhaps, all six of these names appear in documentary sources at the end of the twelfth-beginning of the thirteenth century: Ashby and Gunton in 1198 (*Feet of Fines* material), Blundeston and Oulton in 1203 (*Curia Regis Rolls*), Bradwell in 1211 (*Feet of Fines*) and Southtown, under its alias *Little Yarmouth*, in 1219 (*Book of Fees*).<sup>3</sup> All of which suggests that they had established themselves in their own right as independent communities.

The five “lost” settlements are still remembered today by use of their ancient names in their localities, but in greatly changed circumstances. Browston is now a named area of the parish of Belton and the venue of a country hotel, restaurant and golf course (*Browston Hall*, after a one-time manor); Caldecot is also perpetuated as another country hotel and golf course (*Caldecot Hall*, the name of its sole manor); Gapton is the location of a large industrial and retail park (*Gapton Hall*, after one of its three medieval manors); and Akethorpe and Dunston bear the names of roads in modern housing developments of the 1980s (*Akethorpe Way* and *Dunston Drive*), where mercifully the developers felt able to use historical references rather than opt for the inane “themed” names which so often identify contemporary housing schemes! The six “replacement” communities, if they may be so termed, have four of their number deriving their titles from personal names (Scandinavian in three cases and Anglo-Saxon in one) and the other two are based on topographical associations. The three Scandinavian villas are Ashby (*Aski's býr*), Gunton (*Gunni's tun*) and Oulton (*Ali's tun*), and they speak of Danish connections at some point in the past, while the sole Anglo-Saxon example is Blundeston (*Blunt's tun*).<sup>4</sup> Presumably, all four families (or the patriarchs thereof) had built up sufficiently large estates in their respective areas of habitation for their patronyms to become used as a means of recognition in both parochial and occupancy contexts. Bradwell and Southtown – the latter having already been discussed in fn. 3 –

Order this title from your nearest East Anglian bookshop.

trade distribution:

Bittern Books  
24 Wroxham Road  
Coltishall  
Norwich NR12 7EA  
tel: 01603 739635  
email: [office@bitternbooks.co.uk](mailto:office@bitternbooks.co.uk)

published by:

Poppyland Publishing  
38 Oulton Street  
Oulton  
Lowestoft NR32 3BB  
tel: 01502 370515  
email: [publisher@poppyland.co.uk](mailto:publisher@poppyland.co.uk)