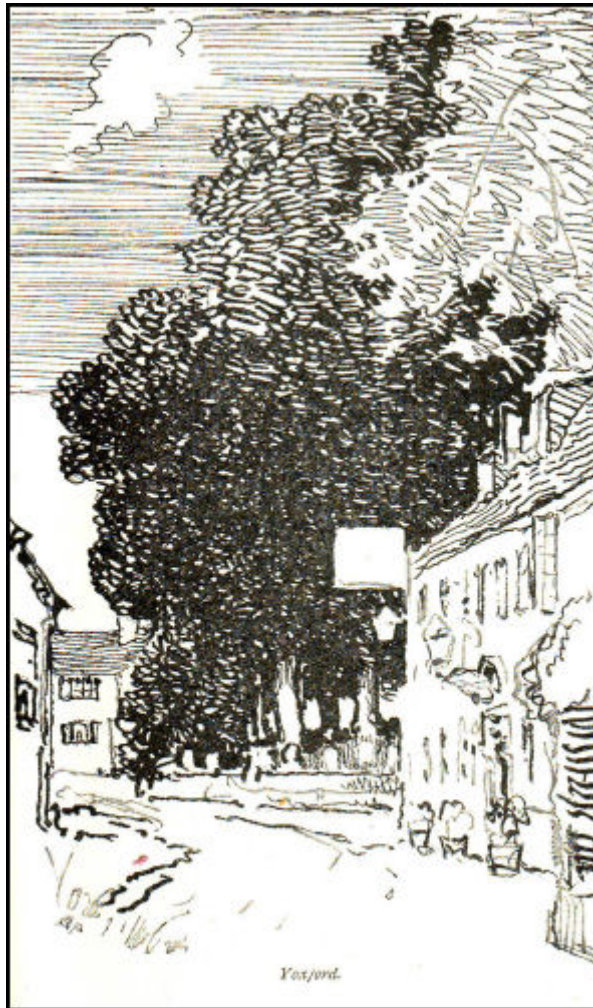


## Yoxford



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## 1 Community Perspective

White

YOXFORD is a large and remarkably neat and pleasant village, seated in a fertile vale, sometimes called "The Garden of Suffolk," on the banks of the small river Yox, or Minsmere, and on the Ipswich and Yarmouth road, 4 miles N by E. of Saxmundham, six and a half miles S. of Halesworth, and 94 miles N.E. of London. Its parish increased its population from 851 souls, in 1801, to 1251, in 1841, and comprises about 2670 acres of land, and several large and handsome mansions.

Petty Sessions are held every fourth Wednesday, at the Three Tuns Inn, which is a large Posting-house. Besides the manor of Darsham-with-Yoxford, which belonged to the monks of Thetford, here is also another manor, which belonged to Sibton Abbey. The Earl of Stradbroke is lord of the former, and Sir Charles Blois of the latter; but a great part of the parish belongs to other proprietors, the largest of whom are R. Sayer, Esq., D. E. Davy, Esq., the Misses Colmer, F. Clayton, Esq., and Mr. Robert Barker. Cockfield Hall, on the north side of the village, is the seat of Sir Charles Blois, Bart., and is a large handsome mansion, in the Tudor style, on a gentle elevation, in a beautiful park, skirted on the south by the river Yox, or Minsmere. It was formerly the seat of the Brooke family, and passed from them to Sir Charles Blois of Grundisburgh, who was created a baronet in 1668, and soon afterwards made Cockfield Hall his chief residence. Grove House, a handsome mansion in a small park on the south side of the village, is the property of D. E. Davy Esq. but has been unoccupied since the death of its late occupant, the Right Hon. Thomas Manners Sutton, the first Baron Manners of Foston, who died in 1842, and had been Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and was raised to the peerage in 1807. He was the sixth son of George, the third son of John, third Duke of Rutland and his son and successor purchased Fornham Park, in 1843. The Rookery, another seat near Yoxford, was much improved by its late owner, Robert Colmer, Esq., and is now the residence of his daughters. The church (St. Peter) is a neat structure, with a tower, containing six bells, and surmounted by a leaded spire. It was enlarged in 1837, at the cost of £1,200, a great part of which was contributed by the Society for Building and Enlarging Churches, who stipulated that about 400 of 935 sittings should be free. The benefice is a vicarage, valued in K.B. at £5 14s 2d., and in 1835 at £161. the Rev. Samuel Thomas Roberts, LL.D., is the incumbent, and the Earl of Stradbroke is patron and impropriator. The tithes were commuted in 1839 for yearly moduses of £284 to the impropriator, and £171 to the vicar, who has also 5A of glebe, five cottages, and a small parsonage, but does not reside in the parish. Here is a small Wesleyan Chapel, built in 1834, and a National School, erected in 1837, at the cost of £400, and having two large rooms for boys and girls. The Town Land, about one and a half Acres, let for £2 1s a year, is by ancient usage appropriated to the service of the church. In 1651, Robert Sillett left a yearly rent-charge of £5. out of 10A of land (now belonging to D. E. Davey Esq.,) for providing clothing for the most needy poor of Yoxford. A legacy of £50, left for the poor by Anthony Bedingfield, was laid out in 1716, in the purchase of a rent-charge of £2 10s. a year, out of two closes in Darsham. Now belonging to the Purvis family. Mr. Robert Hughman is secretary to Yoxford farmer's Club.

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Kelly

YOXFORD is a parish and village, 1 mile south-west from Darsham station on the Ipswich and Lowestoft line of the London and North Eastern railway and 4 north from Saxmundham, in the Eye division of the county Blything hundred, petty sessional division and union Halesworth county court district, rural deanery of South Dunwich, archdeaconry of Suffolk and diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich. The village, which is lighted with gas, stands on the old road from Ipswich to Lowestoft and Yarmouth, and on the river Yox, or Minsmere, and is surrounded by a beautiful country interspersed with many gentlemen's seats. The church of St. Peter is an ancient structure of flint, with stone dressings, in the Perpendicular style, consisting of chancel, nave, aisles and embattled western tower with small spire containing 6 bells: it was enlarged in 1837 at a cost of £1,200, and thoroughly restored and re-seated with open benches in 1868: there are several ancient brasses and monuments to the Blois, Brooke and other families: the east window was filled with stained glass in the south side,

as a memorial to those who fell in the Great War, 14-18: there is also a stained glass window in the south aisle, erected by Miss Alice Lomax in memory of her parents: a new altar, reredos, cross, ornaments and altar rails were given by Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Lomax. In 1927 the south aisle was underpinned and the bells restored and rehung; in 1929 two oak vestry screens were given, one by C.H.Lomax esq. M.A., J.P., and the other by the parishioners; a tablet was also put in to the memory of the late Lt.Gen. H. S. G. Miles G.C.B., G.C.M.G. G.B.E., C.V.O., J.P., there are 550 sittings. The register dates from the year 1559. The living is a vicarage, net yearly value £375, and residence, in the gift of the Bishop of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and held since 1918 by the Rev. Colin Harris Raven M.A. of Trinity College, Dublin, and rural dean of South Dunwich. The Wesleyan chapel here was built in 1889 at a cost of £1,150, and affords 200 sittings; there is also a primitive Methodist chapel. There is a local Horticultural Society, which holds a show every July. Cockfield Hall, the seat of Sir. Ralph Barrett, Macnaughten Blois bart., D.L., J.P., is a mansion in the Tudor style, standing in a well-wooded park, through which flows the small river Yox, or Minsmere. Grove Park, the seat of Charles Henry Lomax esq. M. A. J.P., is an ancient brick mansion surrounded by pleasure gardens and a well-wooded park. Rookery Park is the residence of Sir Herbert Hambling bart. D.L. J.P. Commandr. Egerton Bagot Byrd Levett-Scrivener R.N.(ret, J.P. is lord of the manor of Sibton with its members; the Earl of Stradbroke K.C.M.G., C.B., C.V.O., C.B.E., V.D., T.D., D.L., J.P., is lord of the manor of Darsham with Yoxford with its members. The principal landowners are Sir R. B. M. Blois bart. D.L. J.P. and John Kendall Brooke esq. J.P. The soil is sandy; subsoil clay. The chief crops are wheat, barley, peas and beans. The area is 2,730 acres; the population in 1921 was 978.

Sexton, Charles Smith.

Post, M.O., T.E.D. Office. Letters through Saxmundham.

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Dutt

Yoxford ( 1 m. S.W. of Darsham) is a pretty village' in a well-wooded district known as the "Garden of Suffolk." Its church has a Dec. nave, but the rest, consisting of chancel, whole length aisles, and tower, is Perp., with the exception of the N. aisle, which is modern. At the E. end of the S. aisle is the Cockfield chapel, containing a brass to Dame Joanna Brooke (1618). Other brasses are to John Norwiche (1428), Tomesina Tendryng (1485), a small one to her two sons, and Elizabeth Knyvet (1471. Among the monuments are those of five baronets of the Blois family; and there is a tablet to David Elisha Davv, antiquary, whose MSS. are in the British Museum. Lady Katharine Grey, daughter of Henry Grev, Duke of Suffolk, was buried here in 1567, but there is no monument to her. She died in the Tower of London. Cockfield Hall (Sir Ralph B. M. Blois, Bart) is a modernised house, dating from the reign of Henry VIII.

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## 2 Yeoman

As it appears impossible to avoid writing of Yoxford as "The Garden of Suffolk for this appellation has been so long popular that to suppress its significance would suggest a certain ignorance of local affairs, besides probably hurting the feelings of many worthy folk- I make no apologies for so doing. Not that any are really necessary, for even now Yoxford of to-day merits the remarks of a writer in the beginning of the last century, who described it "as remarkably pleasant village". Yet on the other hand the Yoxford of to-day is scarcely so attractive as it may have been in times of the past when the rambling old "three Tuns" – unfortunately, destroyed by fire some years ago- was the scene of bustle and activity, its rooms crowded with travellers making the then adventurous journey between London and Great Yarmouth, and its ostlers busy over the steaming horses.

However, the country in the district has suffered little through the changing decades, and it this pleasant expanse of parkland and woods which undoubtedly still gives Yoxford a right to its popular name, even although the village street itself with its various shops, contrasts so strangely with the surrounding rural loveliness that there seems a queer atmosphere of the town buried amidst nodding foliage and sylvan glades.

In a fine and expansive churchyard is the place of worship dedicated to St. Peter, and possessing chancel and nave, aisles, which extend the whole length of the church- the North being added less than a century ago-and embattled Western tower with a small spire and weathercock and containing six bells. Unfortunately, the interior of the building has been so restored that much of its original style has been lost, but whilst stressing the point, it is advisable to state that quite a number of its treasures have been carefully preserved, and one of the renovations brought to light a splendid piscine.

Perhaps some of the most interesting objects in the church are the brasses, of which quite a number remain, and probably the one which exercises a maximum amount appeal to the casual visitor is on the north wall, with its quaint epitaph in memory of Anthony Cooke, a lawyer, whose death occurred on Easter Monday, 1613, and whose effigy is also shown:

"At the due sacrifice of the paschal lambe  
Aprill had eayghte dayes wept in showers then came  
Leane hungry deathe who never pittie tooke  
And cause ye feaste was ended slewe this Cooke  
On Easter Monday he lyves then no daye more  
But syncke to ryse with Him that Rose before  
Hees here intombed a man of virtues line  
Outrechte his yeares yet they were seaventy nyne  
He left on earthe the tenn Children of eleaven  
To keepe his name whilst he wente to heaven"

-somewhat uncommon this, Keith its punning and therefore worth the quoting. Amongst the other brasses are the effigies of Tomesine Tendryng who died in 1485, and her two sons and three daughters, all in shrouds, whilst two more daughters, and an inscription are also shown, but several of the shields have disappeared so that only one now remains. Yet another group of fifteenth century brasses shows the amour-clad figure of John do Norwich, and his wife Maud but although in this case there are four shields, the inscription has gone.

And this brings us to the Cockfield Chapel, for the window of this contains the de Norwich arms, whilst there is also a brass here in memory of Dame Jane Brooke who died in 1618, besides a large mural monument to Sir Robert Brooke and Elizabeth his wife, whose deaths occurred in 1646 and 1683.

Cockfield Chapel was so called through belonging to the hall of that name, which is even now perpetuated in the village, and whose manor was owned by the Cokefields in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. After this it passed into the hands of John de Norwich, later going with Yoxford manor itself, to John Hopton- whose arms are also in the chapel- and about 1597 was purchased by Sir Robert Brooke, whilst some hundred years after it again changed ownership, this time becoming the property of Sir Charles Blois. Other manors were known as Strickland and Murrills, and these practically followed the same course.

In connection with the building of Cockfield Hall there is an interesting story. According to this account an old residence- Yoxford hall itself- was destroyed by fire some three centuries ago, a fate which might have been avoided had plenty of water been available, and because of this, Cockfield Hall, its successor was erected much nearer the stream known as the Yox or Minsmere. This narrative, however, feasible enough though it seems, has been disputed, for others aver that both mansions were in existence at the same time, which if true, disproves the more picturesque tale.

But Cockfield Hall can certainly boast a past of note, for here died a close relative of one of the most pathetic feminine figures in England's history. To tell the full story of Lady Katherine- younger sister of Lady Jane Grey, who was forced by the intrigues of others to the throne and thence to the block- is unnecessary, but suffice it that Katherine's love affairs aroused the disapproval of Queen Mary, whose lady-in-waiting she was, with the natural result of those times that she was committed to the Tower of London. Here however, she was fortunate in one respect, for her gaoler was Sir Owen Hopton, of Cockfield Hall, and to this latter place, with its pleasant park, she was afterwards conducted, and here she remained till death removed her in 1567. She was buried in the chancel, but no memorial of this lady, unfortunate enough, it is true, and yet happier-fated than her ill-starred sister, exists. A tradition has been handed down that her little dog pined away on her grave and died.

The Cockfield Chapel also contains a memorial to the Rev. Sir Ralph Blois, Baronet, with the date 1762, and many monuments to the same family are in other parts of the church. A tablet of considerable interest to those who possess any regard for Suffolk and its story refers to David Elisha Davy, whose death occurred in 1851, and whose unique collection of material dealing with the history of the county has found its rightful place in the British Museum. The residence of this gentleman was the Grove, an ancient mansion of brick, surrounded by a large park and pleasure grounds.

Although St. Peter's - and, incidentally there was a church here at the time the Domesday survey was undertaken- is exceptionally modern looking in its general appearance. With its open benches of New Zealand pine and other new additions, the pulpit is of the Jacobean period, and contains excellent carving, but in contrast to this, the altar rails and reredos are new, and are part of a private war memorial. The village war memorial, however, takes the form of a stained East window, and in this connection the organ is of some interest, for this was improved and dedicated by the wives, mothers and sisters of the men "of this parish who served overseas in the Great War, as an offering of thanksgiving for their preservation and safe return." The font dates from the middle of the fifteenth century, and has a panelled octagonal bowl and pedestal, with a good carving, but has obviously suffered from mutilation.

That Yoxford with its appealing rural atmosphere, its verdant parks- and besides those mentioned, there is another known as the Rookery - and its quiet air of simplicity and restfulness should raise poetical feelings in the heart of one at least of its inhabitants, is surely a natural enough thing, and it is

therefore no surprise to discover that the writer of many works was born in this happy village. This was Ann Candler, whose "Suffok Cottager" is comparatively well-known even to-day, when people have little time for this particular style of literature, and yet there is a simple homeliness about this unaffected poem of rural life which gives it a certain appeal. Despite her rustic environment, however, Ann Candler, who first saw the light here in 1740, led far from the Arcadian existence one would like to imagine, for she was unfortunate enough to take for her husband a man who was a ne'er-do-well of the worst type, a wastrel and a drunkard, with the result that both poor Ann, to whom a cottage in a country village should have been paradise, and her useless spouse at one time were compelled to seek refuge in the workhouse.

Another resident of Yoxford, who was born here in 1820, was John Goodwyn Barmby, and in this case we find a connection with a political section whose activities have been so pronounced in recent years. For Barmby, a writer of tracts and other literary efforts, a Christian Socialist, and a preacher, was an enthusiastic radical, and later journeyed to the extreme and became an uncompromising revolutionary. And whilst he was in Paris, he claims to have invented the word "Communist," but that his interpretation of the expression was different from that of many at the present time there can be no doubt. This native of Suffolk in fact, for all his beliefs, was peaceable in his ideas, and at one time was numbered amongst the most well-known preachers in the West Riding of Yorkshire, for the revolution he desired was one which could be obtained by measures other than the sword. The brotherhood of man was his ideal- a creed which despite its impossibility of fulfilment, at any rate held no brief for bloodshed or martial measures.

Thus it will be seen that several interesting figures have moved across the pleasant pages of Yoxford's quiet story. Many an item has, of course, been omitted; several episodes would be of small interest to the general reader; others are relatively unimportant. Of its church a lot more might well be written, despite the way that renovations have affected the interior appearance of an ancient fabric. But in this village, set in the heart of one of the most beautiful districts of Suffolk, in this parish of poet and peasant, of noble and preacher, probably the strangest story is that of Lady Katherine Grey, sister to one who flung the reins of power to hold for a fleeting hour or so, only to have them ruthlessly torn from her nerveless fingers- Lady Katherine, whose love affairs raised the unreasoned ire of a queen, and who for years was held, a virtual captive at Cockfield Hall, till she eventually found her rest in the village church, where to-day nothing remains to preserve her memory, and only the few know her centuries-old sleeping place.

Yeoman. January 24th 1930

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### 3 Gallery

[http://www.suffolkkemps.info/oxford\\_gallery/](http://www.suffolkkemps.info/oxford_gallery/)

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## 5 Things of the Spirit











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