

# Linstead Magna

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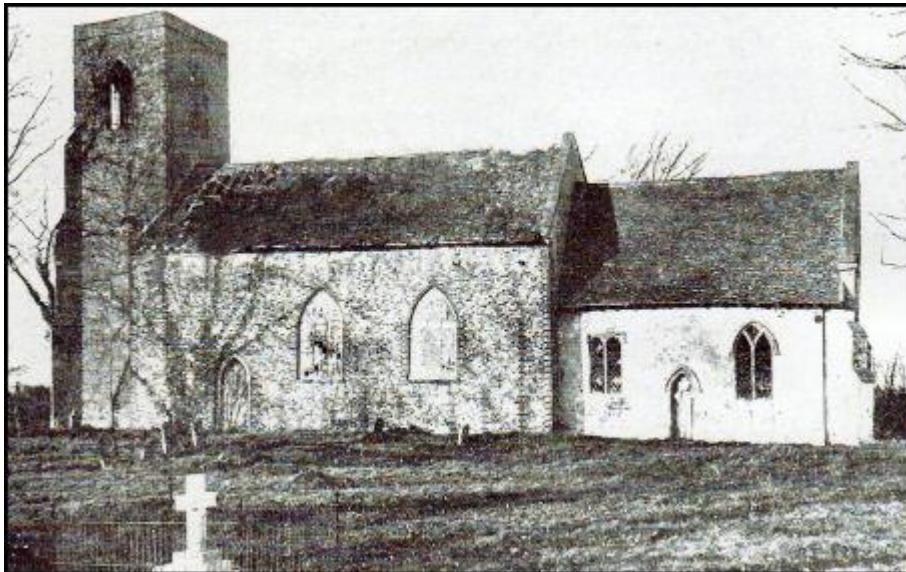
[13 A Tale of Two Linsteads](#)

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## 1 Beginnings

In the following Domesday survey the entry refers simply to Linstead, which indicates that the division of the community into 'Magna' and 'Parva' came later. The entry is interesting because it describes a substantial estate of Linstead manor that was situated in Huntingfield. It may be that the block of Huntingfield's land, surrounding Newall Hall, which now projects into the Linsteads, was originally part of Linstead's pre-Conquest demesne. The entry also points to direct administrative links between Linstead and the headquarters of Blything Hundred at Blythburgh. A comparison of the Saxon agricultural enterprises of the two communities indicates the greater wealth of Huntingfield. Linstead was probably a late settlement of the Hundred at the head of the Little Blyth, on the route from The Waveney Valley at Harleston to the havens of the Blyth estuary.

*[...] Eadric of Laxfield held [...] Huntingfield TRE and now Walter fitzAubrey holds it under Robert Malet. Then as now 6 carucates of land. Then and afterwards 18 villans, now 12. Then as now 28 bordars. Then 1 slave. Then as now 4 ploughs in demesne. Then as now 18 ploughs belonging to the men. Then woodland for 150 pigs, now for 100; 15 acres of meadow. Then as now 2 horses, 10 non-working cattle, 30 pigs and 100 sheep. 60 goats and 6 beehives. Then it was worth £8, now £7. 1 church with 14 acres, worth 2s.*



When first settled, the

*In Linstead [Magna and Parva] Wulfric, a free man, held 1 manor TRE; now Walter holds it under Robert Malet with 60 acres of land, 6 bordars, 2 ploughs in demesne and 1 plough belonging to the men. Then woodland for 30 pigs, now for 20; 2 acres of meadow. 1 horse, 4 head of cattle and 20 pigs. 30 sheep and 20 goats. TRE it was worth 20s., now 30s. And there also belong to this manor in Huntingfield 200 acres of land which 21 free men held TRE. Then as now 10 ploughs. Under them 2 bordars. Woodland for 20 pigs. 2 acres of meadow. Then as now worth 40s. And this land is 1 league long and 9 furlongs broad. It renders 71d. to the king's geld. And there also belong to this manor in Huntingfield 40 acres of land which 4 free men held. Then 2 ploughs, now . They have 1 bordar. It is worth 8s. The soke and sake over all this land of the free men belongs in Blythburgh for the use of the king and earl. And over all these men Eadric, Robert Malet's predecessor, had the commendation.*

The community was probably at a 'dead end' of the Hundred in terms of east-west communications. Linstead Magna is situated high on the edge of the clay plateau between the 50 and 55 metre contours. The main drainage is through the beck which runs by Abbey Farm, Valley Farm and Bush Farm to the Cookley Blyth. The plateau was a major topographic feature which proved an obstacle to folk who colonised the Blyth valleys from the east.

#### *Church and churchyard (1902)*

Occupation of the lands of Linstead were probably a last major effort of the people of the Blyth because their church, dedicated to St Peter, was built away from the valleys on the windswept clay uplands, where isolation and climate have always been a challenge to human settlement. It was probably a combination of these two factors, together with an increase in early medieval commercial traffic between the markets of Harleston, Halesworth and the coastal ports that led to the gathering of people in the valley of the Chediston Blyth and the eventual creation of Linstead Parva. The uplanders clung on, and even as late as the beginning of the 19th century money was spent on substantial repairs to the church. This was the time when the population of around 120 began to decline. Eventually, the church as the focus of the population and its Christian heritage was deserted for worship at Linstead Parva and Cratfield. The end came in the 1920s when the fabric was sold for local demolition.



Now, isolated communities like Linstead Magna have taken on a new value because many feel that modern life is too close for comfort. Our diaries are overloaded; our commuter trains are packed; our heads are fit to burst with media-delivered trivia. Once taken for granted, space in all its forms, physical mental, and spiritual have become a precious commodity. There is widespread desire to escape from the over-crowded spaces produced by urbanism, and the term 'emptiness' has been used as a rural equivalent to the lodestone of wilderness. An 'emptiness' is the end point of extreme rurality, where it is possible to walk all day through arable fields as fertile as modern industrial agriculture can get, yet, as in a desert, we never make social contact with another person, and the skylark is a rarity.

The field paths, bridleways and minor roads of the vacant uplands along the old boundary of Blything Hundred are such an emptiness. The flat claylands of Linstead Magna stand for an emptiness that is vibrant with the secret life of surging monocultures, but the inward looking walker is alone with the big skies in surroundings from which all traces of its past navigators have been obliterated.

*"Now far out in the yawning emptiness we stopped to watch the sun go down and saw the earth's shadow flung out against the eastern sky. Then the moon rose, floating into view like a second sun and flooding the land with an unearthly glow. This must be the quietest place on earth... Even the wind had died and the sharp night air was cold and clean. Standing in that profound silence I cupped my hands behind my ears. But all I could hear was the beating of my heart".*

This could have been an experience in the desertified Nasera Orok, the sacred Black Rock of the Masai overlooking the Serengeti plains. Actually it was an out-of-car experience on the Hundred boundary of Blything at churchless Linstead Magna.

## 2 Community Perspective

**A community perspective from the 1840s to 1920s contains entries for the community from the Suffolk Directories of White (1844) and Kelly (1929) and William Dutt's gazeteer of Suffolk (1927; first prepared in the 1890s)**

### *White*

LINSTEAD MAGNA is a parish of scattered houses, from 4 to 5 miles W.S.W. of Halesworth, comprising only 93 souls, and 1304 A. of land, besides about 6A. of roads. Lord Huntingfield is lord the manor, but part of the soil belongs to G. Parkyns, Esq., J. P. Scrivener, Sir Robt. S. Adair, Mr. G. Bates, and several smaller poprietors. The Church (St. Peter) stands in a field nearly is the centre of the parish. It was partly appropriated to Mendham priory, by Roger de Huntingfield. Lord Huntingfield is now impropriator, and also patron of the perpetual curacy, valued, in 1835, at £97, and now enjoyed by the Rev. S. B. Turner, B.A., together with Linstead Parva. His Lordship has a yearly modus of £315 in lieu of tithes, out of which he pays £82 to the incumbent. The FARMERS are - Geo. Bates, Mary Bedingfield, John Girling, John Holmes, Charles Lee, Joshua Moore, Alfred Read, Geo. Read, James Read, Wm. Read, Linstead Hall ; Robert Smith, and Edward Woods.

### *Kelly*

LINSTEAD MAGNA is a parish, consisting of a few scattered farms, 5 miles west from Halesworth station on the London and North Eastern line to Yarmouth, in the Eye division of the county, Blything hundred, petty sessional division and union, Halesworth and Saxmundham county court district, rural deanery of North Dunwich, archdeaconry of Suffolk and diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich. The church of St. Peter, standing in the centre of the parish in an enclosed piece of ground surrounded by fields, was originally an ancient building of flint in the Early English style, consisting of chancel, nave, south porch and an embattled western tower containing one bell: owing to its dilapidated state, it was partly demolished in 1924, and services are no longer held in the church. The registers date from the year 1654. The living is a vicarage, annexed to that of Linstead Parva. Lord Huntingfield is lord of the manor. The soil is clayey, with a subsoil of clay. The chief crops are wheat, barley, beans, turnips and pasture. The area is 1,325 acres; the population in 1921 was 67 in the civil and 180 in the ecclesiastical parish.

Letters through Halesworth, via Cratfield, which is the nearest M. O. office; Fressingfield & Laxfield are the nearest T. offices

### *Dutt*

Linstead Magna church (5 m. W. of Halesworth).The nave is almost a ruin, and services have for many years been conducted in the chancel (plain Early Dec.)

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### 3 Yeoman

It is in a countryside pleasant and pastoral that Listead Magna is to be discovered, a countryside of green meadows, where solemn eyed cow's browse soberly on the rich grass, with only a casual glance for the stranger on their sweet and verdant, preserves. For in Linstead Magna it is not so much the tilling of the soil which commands attention, as provision for the patient creatures which supply our daily milk, and thus the whole district possesses that fresh and friendly aspect ever suggested by rolling pastures, an aspect quiet and serene, and infinitely soothing to the tired eyes of the jaded city-dweller, whose lot is cast in places much less restful than this.

These green meadows, and the cultivated fields which tell of Linstead Magna's other farming interest-can be said to comprise the whole of the parish, for here is nothing centralised, nothing true to type, in the manner of so many villages where the church and the inn rub shoulders, and the Post Office-cum-general shop is but a stone's throw away. Linstead Magna is a place of stray farmsteads and cottages, many of them set far from the roads amidst the pastures and the tilled soil which explain their existence, whilst narrow cart-tracks and drifts overhung with vagabond hedges provide a flowering pace for a Nature practically undisturbed by the hand of man. And because of this, the hedgerows are gay with cowslips and primroses, whose pale gold beauty contrasts with the haunting blue of the modest violet, the whole presenting a graceful little picture of England in the smiling and tearful month of April - a month essentially feminine and sweetly gracious, despite her varying moods.

Even the church of St. Peter at Linstead Magna is to be found some distance from the highway-or, perhaps, it is advisable to say, the remains of the house of worship in which the good folk of the parish found spiritual consolation over well-nigh countless years. For actually, as a church, St.Peter's has ceased to exist. True enough, a tower stands mournfully and forlornly in a banal-ground where feckless rabbits play amidst the Spring flowers which decorate the long green grass, whilst odd heaps of bricks and rubble show something of the building's original plan. But the majority of St. Peters Church was demolished nearly fourteen years ago, so that today the churchyard seems literally a place of the dead, with the wind blowing across the countryside through the branches of the surrounding tall trees like a requiem - a requiem for the soul of a struture which has been destroyed with its mangled body.



Fortunately, however, a description of this broken relic is available, and from the wellknown works of Mr.T.H.Bryant and Mr.H.R.Barker on Suffolk churches we find that it consisted of chancel, nave, South porch and Western tower. Apparently, the body of the building came into being during the end of the thirteenth century, but the South side of the nave was rebuilt in brick after its sudden collapse about 1825. And that this rebuilding was certainly bad is suggested by the fact that eventually the nave became in such a ruinous condition that services were held in the chancel, which latter was separated from the nave by a screen, although the date of this screen is not given.

There was an attractive font of the Perpendicular period crowned by a seventeenth century cover. Its octagonal bowl bore the well-known depictions of angels holding shields and lions alternately, whilst four lions supported the shaft. And in this connection, it is gratifying to find that the font has not suffered the fate of the building which once sheltered it, but has been removed to the modern Ipswich church of St. Augustine.

A small trefoil-headed piscina and a recess once used for the Holy Sepulchre are also mentioned, whilst the good three-light East window dated from the fifteenth century. As we have seen, however, practically all that now remains of Great Linstead Church is the red brick tower which came into being over four hundred years ago, and which even today retains much of its original beauty, especially in the West window, although the glass, of course, has disappeared. Moreover, the sturdy diagonal buttresses and the projecting stair turret emphasise the stalwart aspect, so that even now, standing as it does like a bulwark of the past whose glory has departed the tower of St. Peter's Church at Linstead Magna still seems imposing, almost as if it defies the efforts of those who tumbled to the dust the building to which it belonged.

And what has happened to the material from which St.Peter's Church was constructed? The story is a sad one, but let those who visit the vicinity watch the roadways there, and in these they will find the answer!

Amongst the several farmhouses in Linstead Magna one of the most interesting is certainly the residence known as Lower Hall, which stands but a short distance across the meadows from the derelict house of worship. Here is one of those expansive buildings which are to be found in almost every village of Suffolk -buildings weatherworn and attractive in consequence, which seem in some subtle manner to symbolise the very essence of the fragrant soil to whose heritage they belong and on which they exert such a gracious influence. In close proximity to Lower Hall Farm is a pleasant stretch of water, and, judging from this and from other signs, a moat at one time existed, and quite possibly surrounded a house even older than the spacious and dignified structure one sees to-day.

So far as can be ascertained Lower Hall was never a manor house, for actually only one manor seems to have existed in Linstead Magna, and the residence connected with this is far from the church. At some time during its story, however, the manor of Linstead magna was known as Pond Hall, and as no house of this name is in evidence at the present day it is possible that it was the old name of one of the several farms in the parish - perhaps even that of Lower Hall itself.

In any case, when seeking information about the manor one discovers that link with Linstead Magna manor was in possession of William de Huntingfield, who, of course, was so-called after the near-by village of that name, and it remained in the hands of the same line for several generations. During the time that the great Elizabeth wore the crown of England, however, it was held by John Everard, member of an ancient family, indeed, for John Everard could trace his descent from the Everards who settled near Wisbech in Cambridgeshire at about the same time that William de Huntingfield became associated with Linstead Magna.

The Everards remained in possession of the estate for a great number of years, as it was not until 1676 that it passed into other hands. Incidentally, this occurred after the death of Agnes Everard, who had chosen for husband the second son of Sir Edward Paston, member of the line long seated at the Norfolk village after which they were called, and here again, of course, we find a link with another great and well-known family, for the name of Paston is ever remembered in connection with the famous "Letters" which still provide a fascinating study for those interested in the social life of our country during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Following certain changes the manor of Linstead Magna passed into the possession of Sir Joshua Vanneck, and thus this little village of Suffolk has associations of a foreign nature, for Sir Joshua was the second son of Cornelius Vanneck, paymaster of the land forces of the United Provinces. Sir Joshua Vanneck, who became a baronet in 1751, had prospered exceedingly as a merchant in the City of London, and purchased several estates in the Linstead district. At his death. Sir Joshua was succeeded by his eldest son Gerrard but as the latter died unmarried, the title and property passed to his brother Joshua, and it was this Sir Joshua who, in 1796, was created an Irish peer with the title of Baron Huntingfield of Heveningham Hall, which, of course, is still the family home, the present owner being the fifth bearer of the title.

To tell the full story of this particular family and its various members is unnecessary here, for, more properly, it belongs to the village at which they have been seated for so many years. Enough has been said, however, to show that Linstead Magna, despite its somewhat out-of-the-way position and its lack of the more usual amenities to be discovered in the majority of our Suffolk villages, possesses an interest of sorts, an interest emphasised in some strange fashion by that pitiable wreck of a house of worship whose tower still gazes forlornly and brokenly across a countryside over which the sweet music of its bell once called the faithful to prayer and praise.

SUFFOLK PARISHES: LINSTEAD MAGNA by [Yeoman](#) (Suffolk Chronicle & Mercury, April, 29, 1938)

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## 4 Cultural Cleansing



In 1889 an application was made to Queen Victoria in Council at the Court of Windsor that the two benefices of Great and Little Linstead be united into one benefice at Little Linstead by reason of the decline in the population of the two parishes. The church at Linstead Magna continued to be used for until 1922 when owing to the dilapidated state of its nave a meeting of the committee representing the community recommended the whole building be demolished. The site of the church and the churchyard were to be vested in the Vicar and Churchwardens of Linstead Parva. The recommendation was placed before the Lord Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich and the request was acceded to. A contract was drawn up the following year for demolition of the church between Isaac Taylor, Vicar of Linseed Parva, and Robert Sillett, the Cratfield wheelwright.

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How did it come about that a cultural icon, marking a gathering point for the emotions released by tens of generations, has been replaced by a few acres of oilseed rape? (DB \* RD, December, 2006).

On reflection, this traumatic obliteration of God's acre actually has a positive side for those who are cynical about the claims of farmers to be stewards of the countryside. The slightly greener crop fertilized by the bones of Linstead Magna's former parishioners is an icon for all the bad things associated with agricultural mass production. Who can say why the first tractor driven plough sliced through this churchyard. Putting St Peter's 1 rood and 35 perches under the plough could not have been a matter of economic survival. Who can say why it happened? Was it greed for land; the inconvenience of having to make two extra turns of the plough; a desire to remove a feature that attracted unwanted visitors, or simply a quick fix to tidy up the countryside? Whatever the reason there can be no doubt that there

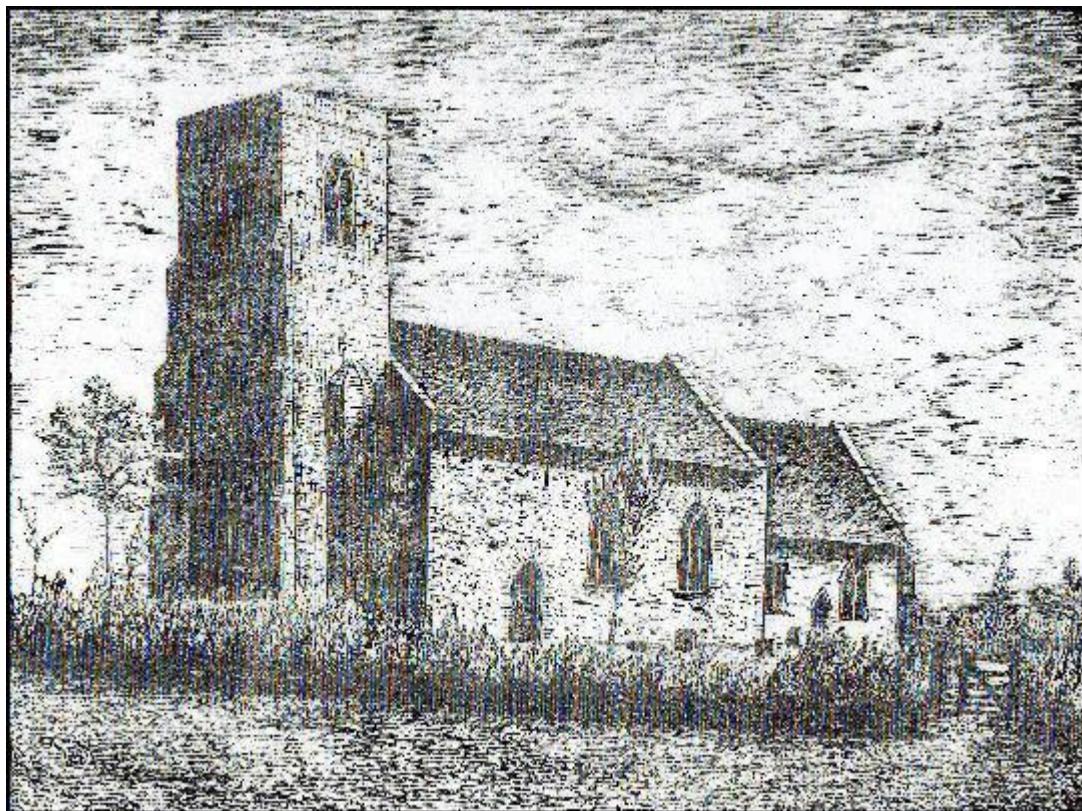
was insensitivity to universal values of history and sanctity. In this sense the effort to obliterate the churchyard has failed because this small patch of Suffolk will always be recognised as a space set aside for exercising the distinctive character of being human; the veneration and commemoration of the dead. Thus it is that we hallow the ground by imparting human life to the soil.

In its own small way, the fate of St Peter's stands as testimony to the ever present forces of iconoclasm that recently brought worldwide condemnation upon the Taliban in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, people will continue to visit this spot to reflect upon their mortality through the lives of past Christian communicants who, thankfully, live on in the old parish books. The churchyard of Linstead Magna now has numinous power far above your average churchyard. It has gained a super-capacity to stimulate the poetic imagination because the meditations of visitors will have to dwell on thoughts about 'countryside as factory'. This is epitomised in the gigantic powered implements that, with the steady march of the farmer's year, thunder rhythmically over the remains of Selina Keable, only 2hrs old, Ellen Keable age 15 years, Ernest Albert King, age 1 year, and Annie Corona Maud King, also age 1 year, who were the last of a long line of parishioners to be buried here in the sunset years of their ancient church.

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The rape of St Peter's





Drawing of Linseed Magna Church, by J. Stagell (Ipswich Record Office; date unknown)

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Why do people visit hallowed ground?

*If you came this way,  
Taking any route, starting from anywhere,  
At any time or at any season,  
It would always be the same: you would have to put off  
Sense and notion. You are not here to verify,  
Instruct yourself, or inform curiosity  
Or carry report. You are here to kneel  
Where prayer has been valid. And prayer is more  
Than an order of words, the conscious occupation  
Of the praying mind, or the sound of the voice praying.  
And what the dead had no speech for, when living,  
They can tell you, being dead: the communication  
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language of the living.  
Here, the intersection of the timeless moment  
Is England and nowhere. Never and always.*

Extract from a poem in remembrance of a visit to the church at Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire by T.S.Elliott.

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## 5 Industrial Redundancy

The large clay fields, deep-ditched and drained, are now farmed as part of a neighbouring estate. Linstead Magna Hall is occupied by two parents, and a son, and his grandmother. Father and son motor in to work in the new factory at Halesworth. Granny looks after a very pretty old-fashioned front garden. The countryside has changed. Even at Linstead, whose name implies that flax was grown here by its first cultivators before the coming of the Normans, and whose heavy fields would anyway turn over only for a very tough plough-team (however mechanised), the land is still fully productive. In 1971, when so much industrial redundancy was causing so much anxiety all over Britain, it is some consolation that the severities endured by our Victorian forebears meant that in the Suffolk countryside automation and the attendant unpeopling of the landscape can hardly go much further. How far the separate planning policies of the two county authorities are modifying the main economic effects, and whether any of those policies have a hope of surviving the impending reorganisation of local government, are controversial matters. They may one day warrant a book entitled *The Twentieth-Century Remaking of the Suffolk Landscape*.

*The Suffolk Landscape*,  
Norman Scarfe, Hodder & Staughton (1972)

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## 6 Families of Linsted Hall

The Symonds family in White's and Kelly's Directories.

1844 Sweffling Robert Symonds farmer  
1874 Huntingfield Robert Symonds farmer  
1892 Linstead Magna Robert Symonds Hall Farm



*The Symonds Family 1890*

1896 Cratfield Robert Symonds Hall Farm  
1912 Cratfield Robert Symonds Hall Farm  
1916 Cratfield Robert Symonds Hall Farm  
1925 Weybread Robert Symonds St. Andrews

The family were in Walnut Tree Farm, Walpole in the 1891 census.

<http://www.communitywalk.com/map/28342/>

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Other families in the censuses

Linstead Magna Census 1841

Linstead Hall  
William Read 35  
Mary Ann Read 30  
Louisa Read 5  
James Read 2

Matilda Read 6 mths  
Robert Oakley 20 manservant  
Emma Taylor 17 female servant  
Harriet Howlett 20 female servant

#### Linstead Magna Census 1851

Linstead Hall  
William Read 44 farmer 137 acres empl. 8 men; born Linstead Magna  
Mary Anne Read 42  
Ellen Matilda Read 10  
Herbert William Read 8  
Samuel Harper 20 farm servant  
Mary Walker 19 house servant  
Delilah Blandle 16 house servant

#### Linstead Magna Census 1861

Linstead Hall  
William Read 56 farmer 480 acres empl. 16 men 5 boys; born Linstead Magna  
Mary Anne Read 52; born Peasenhall  
Louisa Read 24; born Linstead Magna  
Frederick J. Read 22; born Linstead Magna  
Ellen M. Read 20; born Linstead Magna  
Herbert W. Read 18; born Linstead Magna  
Mary Goddard 18 dairy maid; born Huntingfield  
Caroline Mouser 17 house servant; born Huntingfield  
Peter Mouser 16; born Huntingfield

#### Linstead Magna Census 1871

Linstead Hall  
William Read 64 farmer 450 acres empl. 12 men; born Linstead Magna  
Mary Anne Read 62; born Peasenhall  
Mary Ann Read 3 granddaughter; born Yoxford  
Emma Clements 10 domestic servant

#### Linstead Magna Census 1881

Linstead Hall  
William Thirkettle 35 farmer; born Cratfield  
Rebecca Thirkettle 32; born Brockdish  
Jane Elizabeth Thirkettle 6 scholar; born Cratfield  
Noah William Thirkettle 4; born Cratfield  
Emily Mary Thirkettle 3; born Cratfield  
Catherine Riches; born Metfield

## Linstead Magna Census 1891

### Linstead Hall

Rebecca Thirkettle 42 widow farmer; born Brockdish  
Noah W. Thirkettle 14; born Cratfield  
Emily M. Thirkettle 13; born Cratfield  
George E. Thirkettle 4; born Linstead Magna  
John W. Freeman 16 farm servant; born Dunwich

## Linstead Magna Census 1901

### Linstead Hall

John Aldous 68 farmer; born Stradbroke  
Alice Aldous 64; born Brettenham  
Henry Aldous 31; born Heveningham  
Mary Aldous 33; born Heveningham  
Edith Cook 4 granddaughter; born Lowestoft  
Henry Keable 16 cattle stockman; born Cratfield

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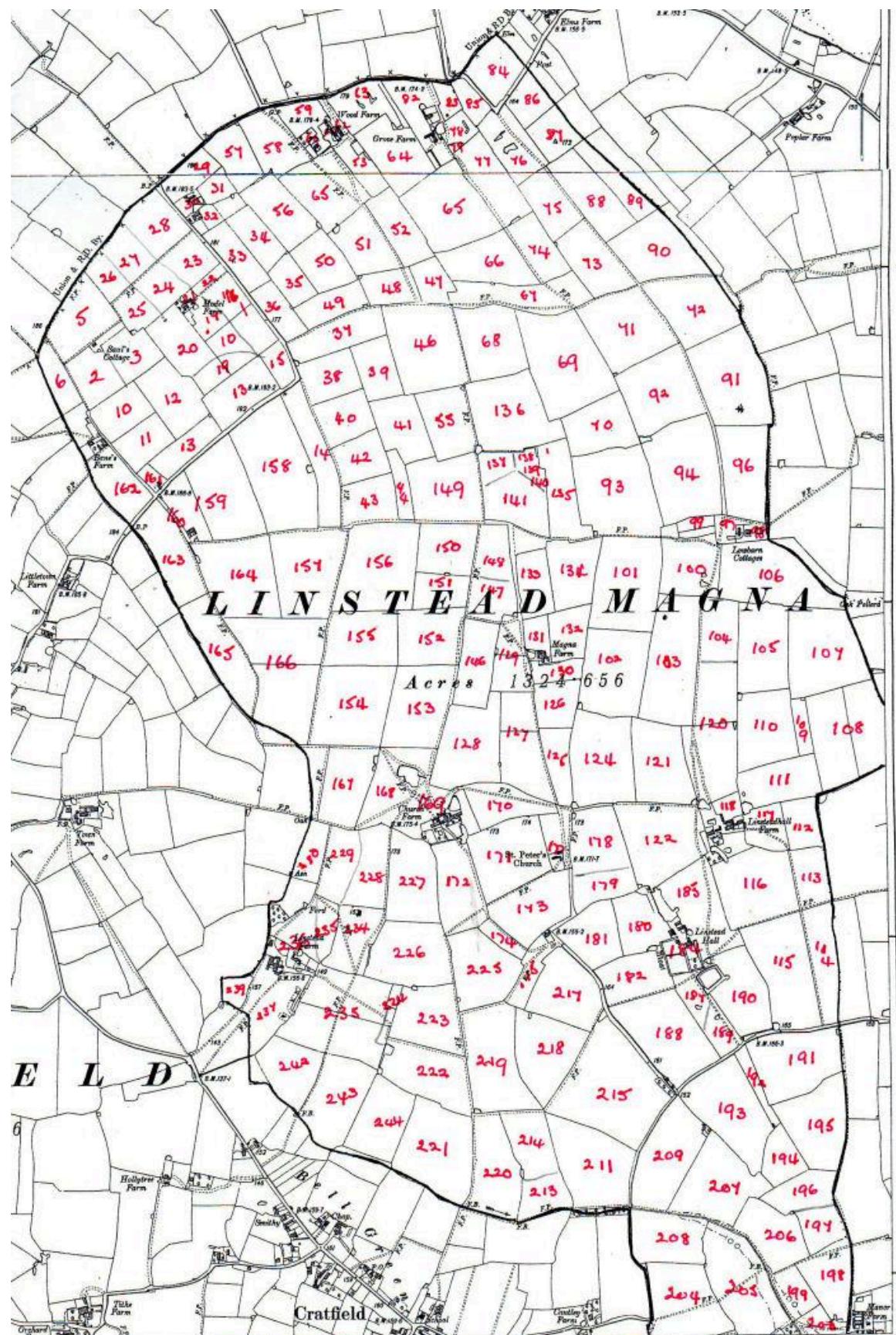
## 7 Old Maps

Enhanced O.S. Map (1899)



The footpaths of the time have been marked in blue. The parish boundary with Huntingfield is marked in orange. The footpaths are not necessarily modern rights of way. Compare with a modern map to see how many fields have been obliterated along with St Peter's church.

Fields mapped from the Tithe Apportionment 1841



## 8 1851 Census

There were 19 households in the village. A third of these were headed by farmers and the remainder were occupied by the families of labourers. The farmers owned a total of 1,167 acres, and employed 43 labourers ( a ratio of 1 man per 27 acres).

Acres	Men
48	1
70	2
127	2
137	8
200	6
275	11
310	13

The biggest employer was young George Read. Age 27 and unmarried he farmed just over 300 acres with 13 men. The smallest farm was that of Robert Smith, with 48 acres and 1 man.

### Summary of census data

(Person:status:age:occupation:birthplace)

Robert Lee: head:26: farmer 275 acres empl. 11 men: Linstead

Louisa Lee: wife: 25: Gt. Yarmouth

Jane Lee: sister: 29: annuitant: Heveningham

Stephen Read: visitor: 28: farmer: Linstead

Harriett Thurlow: 25 general servant: Darsham

William Harper: 24: farm servant: Linstead

John Read: 17: farm servant: Heveningham

### *Linstead Hall*

William Read: head: 44: farmer 137 acres empl. 8 labourers: Suffolk

Mary Anne Read: 42: Suffolk

Ellen Matilda Read: 10: Suffolk

Herbert William Read: 8: Suffolk

Samuel Harper: 20: farm servant: Suffolk

Lucy Walker: 19: house servant: Suffolk

Delilah Blandle: 76: house servant: Suffolk

James Bryenton: head: 27: farm labourer: Cratfield

Mary Bryenton: 26: Monk Soham

William Bryenton: 7: Monk Soham

George Bryenton: 4: Cratfield

Mary Anne Bryenton: 2: Linstead  
Frederick Bryenton: 7mths: Linstead

William Parker: head: 26: farm labourer: Linstead  
Susan Parker: 26: Huntingfield  
Alice Parker: 1: Linstead

James Flatt: head: 32: farm labourer: Huntingfield  
Harriett Flatt: 30: Chediston  
William Flatt: 7: scholar: Linstead Magna  
Charles Flatt: 4: Linstead Magna  
James Flatt: 3: Linstead Magna  
Thomas Flatt: 10mths: Linstead Magna

*Saul's Cottage*

John English: head: 25: farm labourer: Cratfield  
Lucy English: 25: Darsham  
Sarah English: 2: Linstead  
John English: 1: Linstead

Samuel Chandler: head: 60: farm labourer: Cratfield  
Elizabeth Chandler: 50: Metfield  
Robert Chandler: 27: farm labourer: Linstead Magna

William Flatt: head: 60: farm labourer: Huntingfield  
Charlotte Bryenton: 27: housekeeper: Cratfield

Samuel Balls: head: 36: farm labourer: Linstead  
Margaret Balls: 29: Suffolk  
Mary Balls: 8: Suffolk  
William Balls: 6: Suffolk  
Emma Balls: 4: Suffolk  
Elizabeth Beder: 2: Suffolk  
?: son: 4 mths: Suffolk

Edward Woods: head: 65 farmer 127 acres empl. 2men: Shottisham Nfk  
Anne Woods: 62: Swardeston Nfk  
John Woods: 25: Linstead Parva  
Hannah Woods: 20: Chediston  
Francis Newson: 23: farm servant: Fressingfield  
Samuel Keable: 16: farm servant: Metfield

Robert Smith: head: 55 farmer 48 acres empl. 1 labourer: Mendlesham ?  
Elizabeth Smith: 41: Kelsale  
Anne Smith: 6: Linstead Magna  
Elizabeth Anne Smith: 4: Linstead Magna  
Ann Matilda Smith: 1: Linstead Magna  
Sarah Watson: 17: house servant: Wissett

Sarah Read: head: 38 farmer 200 acres empl. 6 labourers: Wangford  
Caroline Read: 6: Linstead Magna

James Read: 5: Linstead Magna  
William Read: 27: visitor farm steward: Syleham  
Louise Read: 37: Bessingham Nfk ?  
Anne Farrow: 30: house servant: Holton  
Jane Rose: 17: house servant: Huntingfield  
Samuel Morris: 30: farm servant: Linstead ?  
James Harper: 16: farm servant: Linstead ?

Charles Bales: head: 30 farmer 70 acres empl.2 men: Brampton  
Emma Bales: 26: Gillingham  
Mary Anne Bales: 5: Gillingham  
Harriett Bales: 2: Linstead  
Stephen Bales: 3 mths: Linstead  
Mary Berkett: 76: widow visitor: Gillingham  
James Pigney 19 servant Fressingfield  
Louisa Snowling: 15: servant: Fressingfield

Thomas Pulford: 35: farm labourer: Fressingfield  
Hannah Pulford: 32: Fressingfield  
Thomas Pulford: 9: Fressingfield  
Maria Pulford: 8: Fressingfield  
Betsey Pulford: 6: Fressingfield  
Mary Ann Pulford: 5: Linstead Magna  
Caroline Pulford: 3: Linstead Magna

John Baxter: head: 46: farm labourer: Heveningham  
Mary Baxter: 50: Heveningham  
Hannah Baxter: 20: Cratfield  
John Baxter: 11: bullock boy: Linstead Magna  
Jabey Baxter: 7: Linstead Magna

George Read: head: 27: farmer 310 acres empl. 13 men: Heveningham  
Mary Punchard: 30: house keeper: Cransford  
Rose Punchard: 35: widow visitor: Cransford  
Sarah Kerridge: 25: house servant: Cratfield  
William English: 32: shepherd Cratfield

Ben Aldous: head: 58: widower farm labourer: Badingham  
Ben Philpot: 35: lodger farm labourer: Walpole  
Hannah Philpot: 37: Yoxford  
Betsey Philpot: 2: Linstead Magna

Isaac English: 50: horse driver: Fritton Nfk  
Sarah English: 59: Cratfield  
Maria Betts: 24: lodger: Huntingfield

Joseph Barrett: head: 25: farm labourer: Cransford  
Mary Barrett: 26: Linstead Magna

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## 9 Final Decades

Compiled from information from the Linstead Parva archive in the Ipswich Record Office

In Kelly's 1896 directory the Church of St. Peter was described as an old flint building standing in the centre of the parish in an enclosed piece of ground surrounded by fields, an ancient building of flint in the Early English style. The last marriages in the parish date from this time, when James Preston, age 27, a shepherd married Mary Crisp age 20, both of Linstead Magna in 1896, and Daniel Cole, age 22, a labourer from Cratfield married Maude Wright, age 19, of Linstead Magna on October 27th 1897.

On June 11th 1913 the gross value of Linstead Magna Church and Churchyard (1 rood and 37 perches) was estimated at £400. This may be compared with the gross value of Linstead Parva Church and Churchyard (3 roods 2 perches) at £1600. Over the next two decades until the church was closed the number of communicants on the roll ranged from 10 to 20, the peak occurring during the height of the Great War. Less than a third of the population (74) were enrolled in the church and from the returns of those who took communion at Easter it seems that most people on the roll did not attend church.

### *Communicants*

Dates	On roll	At Easter
1909-10	10	4
1910-11	13	4
1911-12	13	6
1912-13	15	4
1913-14	17	6
1914-15	20	7
1915-16	20	7
1916-17	20	5
1917-18	15	2
1919	19	9
1920	16	7

The last two baptisms were celebrated on September 9th 1919, when Joseph (farmer) and Ada Elizabeth Daniels christened their son Joseph Frederick, and on April 25th 1920 when Herbert Cecil (farmer of Linstead Hall) and Annie Gertrude Lincoln christened their daughter Winifred Mary.

The last burials in the register were of children and infants: Selina Keable (2hrs old) on July 7th 1904, Ellen Keable age 15 years, on September 22nd 1904, Ernest Albert King, age 1 year, on June 9th 1908 and Annie Corona Maud King, age 1 year 9 mths, on April 4th 1913.

In January 1916 the connection with the diocese of Norwich ended and the returns to the parish were made by Isaac John Taylor, the vicar.

From the entries on parish forms for the sick and poor it is clear that during its last decades the parish continued to support a variety of charities. It is interesting to see that the local needs of the sick and needy, which peaked just before the outbreak of the Great War, disappeared during the war, presumably due to higher wages associated with the shortage of labouring manpower, and support shifted to the national agricultural benevolent fund. After the war farm wages remained relatively high until the church was made redundant.

*Entries for Sick and Poor in parish forms.*

1910-11 For local sick and needy 3s.0d

1911-12 For local sick and needy 11s 6d

1912-13 Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 1s 5d.

Titanic disaster fund 5s.0d.

Local sick and needy £2 3s 2d.

Total £2 9s 7d.

1913-1914 Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 2s 9d.

1914-15 War

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 2s 0d.

National Relief fund 8s 6d.

Belgian Relief fund 9s 8d.

Suffolk Red Cross 1s.8d.

Total £1 1s 10d.

1915-16 War

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 2s. 6d.

Hospital Sunday 2s 4d.

British Red Cross 5s. 6d.

Suffolk Prisoners of War 7s. 0d

Total 17s 4d.

1916-17 Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 5s 3d.

Hospital Sunday 3s 6d.

Total 8s 9d.

Suffolk Red Cross 1s 6d.

1917-18 Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 4s. 3d.

Norwich Hospital Sunday 2s 6d.

Total 6s 9d.

1919-20 For sick and poor - not necessary - no poverty

For general charity

Hospital Sunday 4s 6d.

British Red Cross 8s. 0d.

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Inst. 3s.10d.

Total 16s 4d.

1921 For sick and poor -labourers wages now so good that charitable help not needed

1922 For sick and poor - labourers wages are still so good that charitable help is not needed.

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## 10 Parish Registers

### Burials in Linstead Magna from 1849

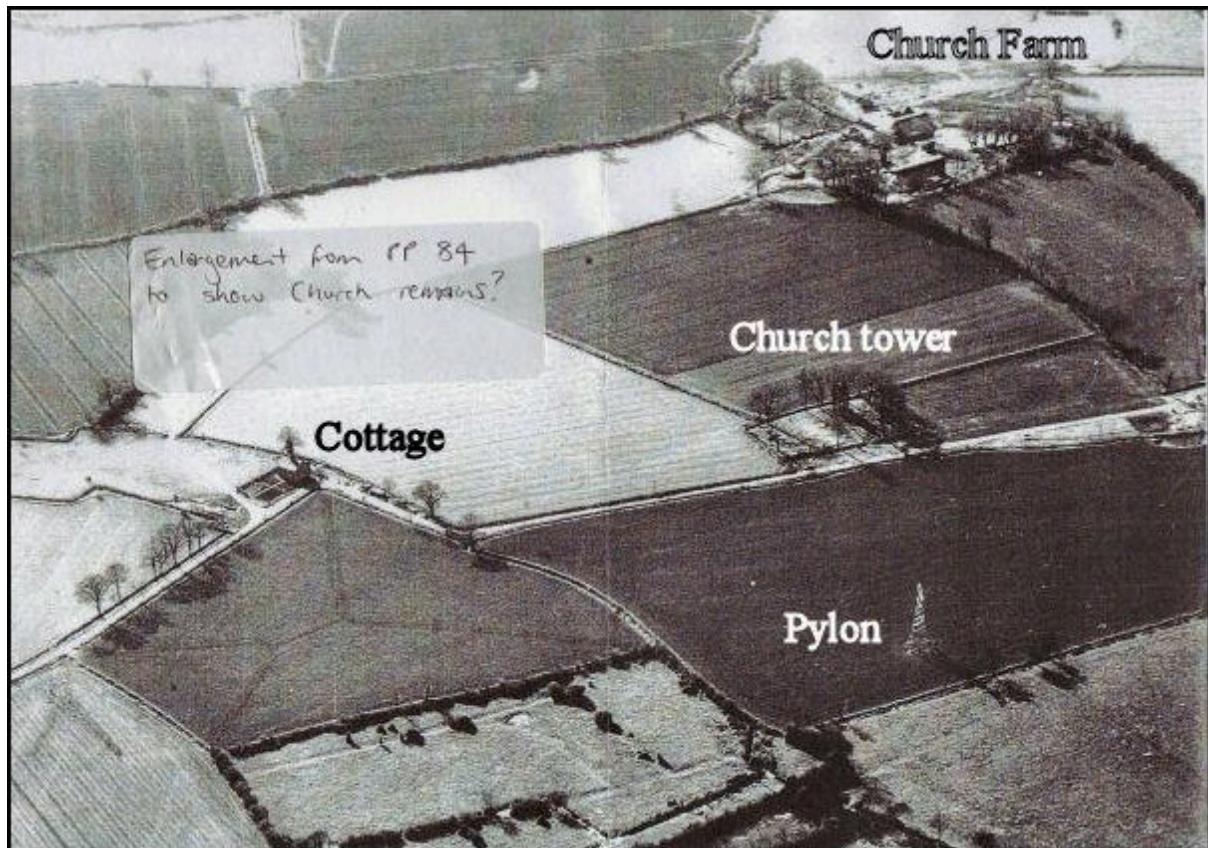
7.04.1849	Flatt	Honour	22 yrs
18.05.1852	Flatt	James	2 yrs 3 mths
16.01.1853	English	Mary	3 wks
4.03.1855	Flatt	Walter	infant
3.05.1857	Chandler	Maria	26 yrs
26.01.1858	Lee	John	5 yrs
14.02.1858	Bedingfield	Lucy	83 yrs
14.03.1858	Chandler	Samuel	70 yrs
7.09.1858	Page	Charles	9 wks
18.11.1858	Flatt	Willilam	78 yrs
29.07.1860	Barney	David	9 mths
10.01.1864	Page	Harriet	38 yrs (from Huntingfield)
12.02.1867	Barnes	Isaac	3 yrs
16.06.1867	Barnes	Isaac	5 wks
10.05.1874	Chandler	Elizabeth	80 yrs (from Cratfield)
22.02.1875	Parker	Thomas	42 yrs
22.03.1879	Girling	Sylvia	2 yrs
23.10.1880	Bather	Henry	1 mnth
14.02.1884	Bagley	F. Neave	1 yr
17.05.1886	Neave	Rebecca	1 yr
28.05.1887	Littlestone	Catherine	1 yr
30.05.1888	Neave	Zilla	18 mnths
25.10.1890	Thirkettle	William P.	6 days

1.07.1892	Littlewoo d	Robert	65 yrs
5.08.1895	Littlewoo d	Eliza	55 yrs
16.06.1897	Keable	Edward	7 days
7.07.1904	Keable	Selina	2 hrs
22.10.1904	Keable	Ellen	15 yrs
9.06.1908	King	Ernest Albert	1 yr
4.04.1913	King	Annie Maud	1 yr 9 mnths

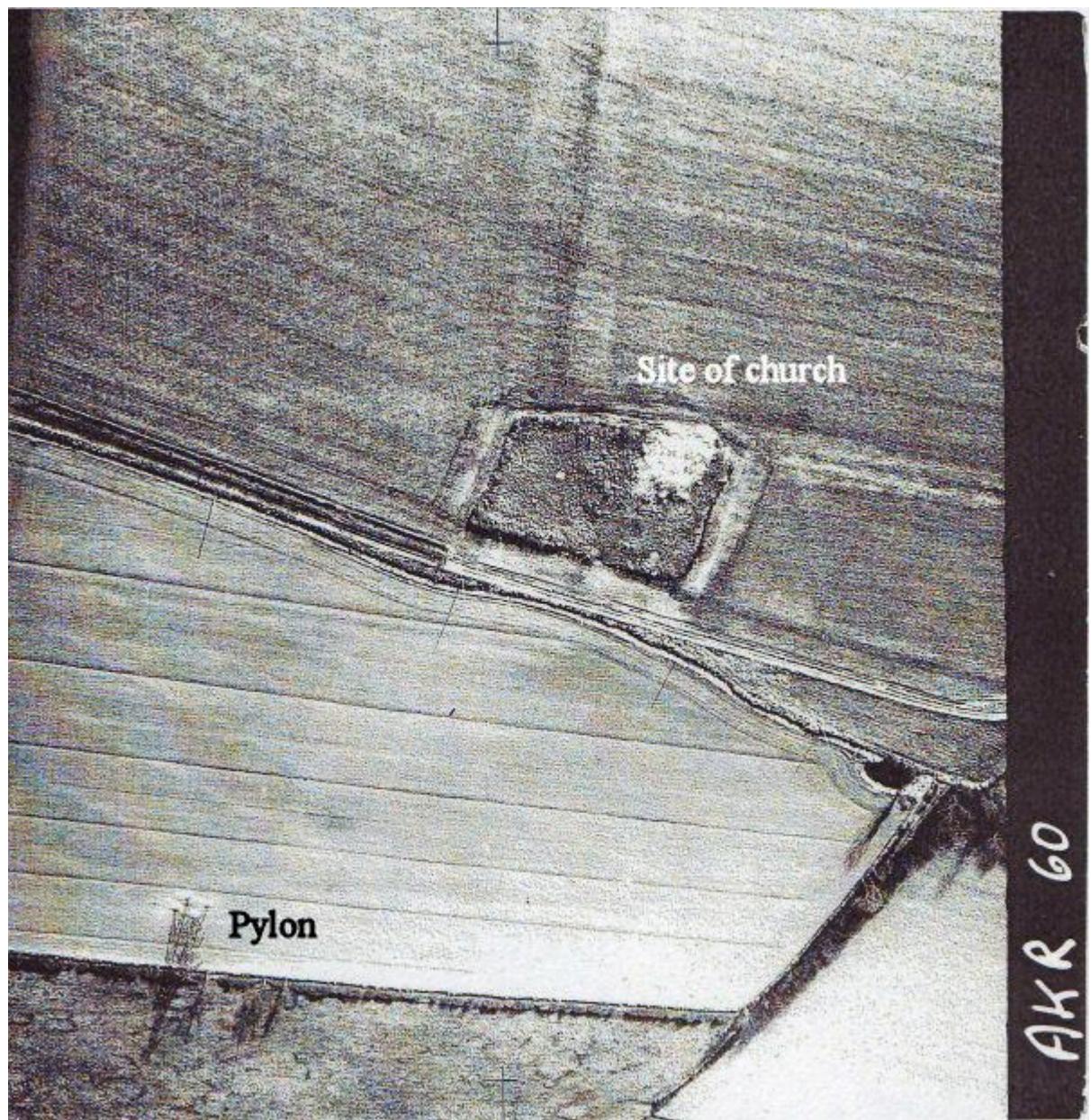
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## 11 Aerial Surveys

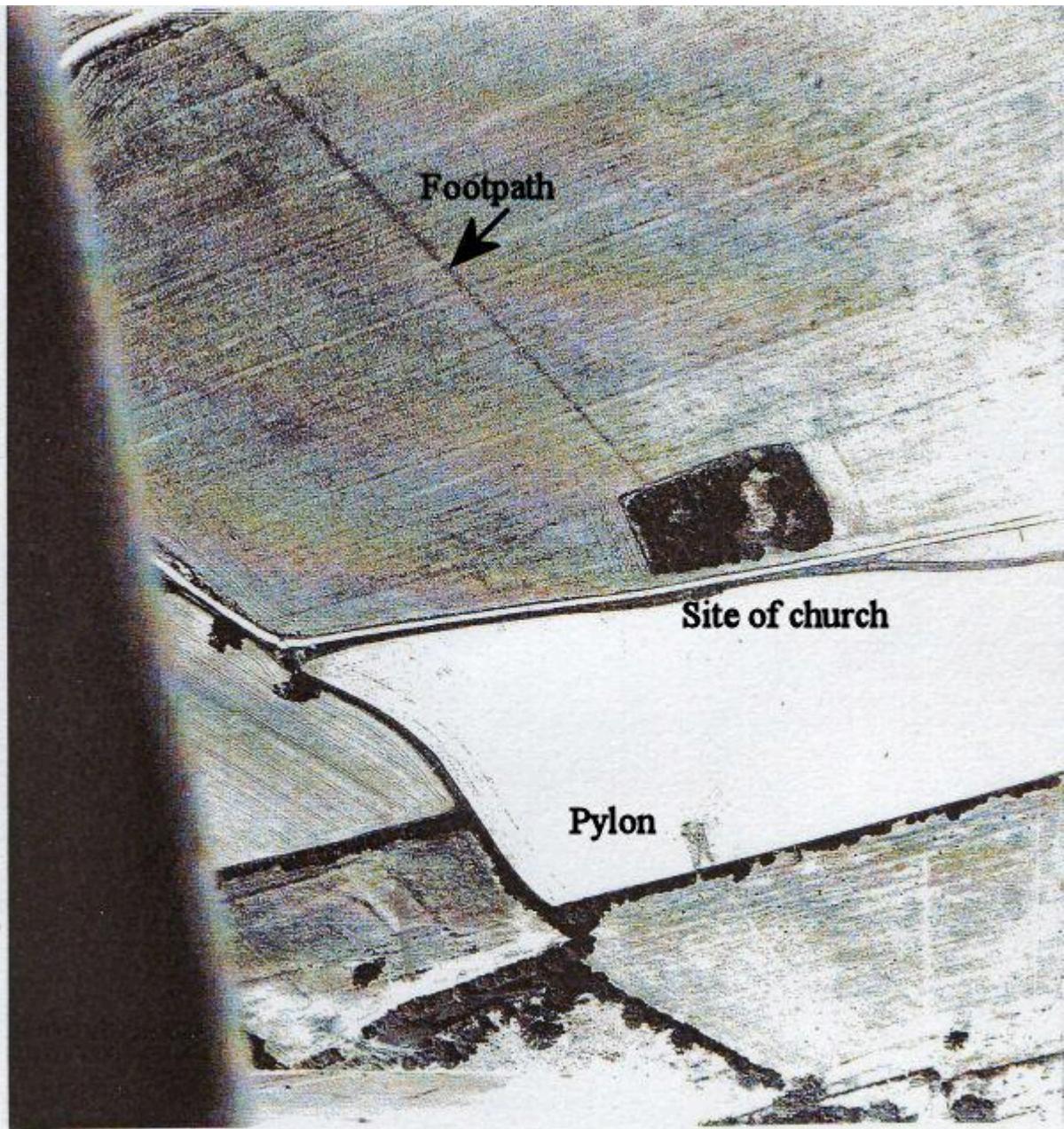
Cambridge University Landscape Unit



Pp84 14 April, 1955



AKR 60 1st April 1965



BZC 48

## 12 The Keable Family

James Keable of Cratfield and Selina Boast of Little Linstead were married in 1887 in Cratfield. Selena was recorded as age 20 and James was 25. Since her birth is recorded for 1870, she was actually married when she was only 17. Their first child Ellen Maria was born in Cratfield two years after their marriage. The couple moved from Cratfield to Great Linstead in 1890 to occupy one of the three Low Farm cottages. This was the year in which their second daughter May was born.

During the 15 years that the Keables are recorded in Great Linstead and from the census information Selina gave birth to the following six children:

Frances born in 1893;  
Edward born in 1897;  
Alberta born in 1896;  
Harry born in 1899;  
Clarence born in 1900;  
and Selina born in 1904.

The couple baptised three children, Ellen (1889), Francis (1894) and May Elizabeth (1895), in Cratfield. During this period, three children died; Edward when he was only a week old, Ellen at the age of 15, and Selina survived only 2 hours. A high rate of infant mortality was a fact of life in this community. Of the last thirty burials recorded in the parish register, two thirds were of children, and most of them were under three years of age.

In the 1901 census James is described as 'an ordinary agricultural labourer. Information from the censuses points to the high mobility of farm labour at this time. For example, the Mowers, the Keable's next door neighbours in 1901, a family of four, had four different birthplaces; Cookey, Westhall, Walpole and Ubbeston.

We should perhaps reflect on the travails of the Keable family in relation to the day to day medical worries of our present long-lifespan culture. Can we match Selina Keable's fear of knowing she had a fifty percent chance of losing her next-born child against today's unquantifiable anxieties about occupational health and safety, the impact of environmental toxins on 'unnatural' urban and rural communities, and fears of GM crops entering the food chain. The Keable's message is that we have been encouraged to adopt too high a standard for what counts as natural.

With regards nature in old time Great Linstead, no doubt there is now less of it in hedgerows and pasture, but then, as now, the 'wildlife experience' was a form of recreation best enjoyed by those with the time and resources to leave their jobs behind. Working the land with one's own hands does not guarantee eyes to see nature that is all around us. It still requires learning to expunge the belief that we are separate from nature, an idea that is likely to reinforce environmentally irresponsible behaviour. This was not a message Ellen and her siblings would have received in school or home. Even today, teachers struggle to develop an attitude in their students that the interests of people are not necessarily identical to those of every other creature or of the earth itself.

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### Epitaph for Ellen Keable of Great Linstead

(buried 22 October, 1904 age 15 years)

This place is special  
In its emptiness,  
Nature's Edenic narrative weakened  
Through its centuries of sameness.  
No trees upon *this* hill,  
No bramble berries,  
No birds among the bowers,  
No sweet disorder of bushes  
Gird a ruined tower.

Letting light  
On the olden shapes  
Of joy and woe,  
A flattened stone,  
And a trampled path through  
Corn and other clusters  
That delight the ploughman,  
Now dress this hill.  
These are cracks and chinks  
Which time has made  
On consecrated ground,  
Like a sick rose that smiling died.  
Forsaking faith and hope,  
A Christian fountain dried.

An unmarked end

To local Christendom.

There was no thirst,  
When, parched without reason,  
God's glory faded  
In the split of nature  
From supernatural grace

Below the combine's dust,  
Ellen's bones hasten to be so,  
With the race of saints she knew.  
Now and again,  
A serious sacrament  
Would add significance  
To her churchless faintness.  
Engaging transient consumers,  
By inserting otherness  
Into their vacant naturedom.

DB 2005

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## 13 A Tale of Two Linsteads

[PDF](#)