



# The Hundred Parishes

An introduction to

## ELSENHAM



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**Location:** 1 mile northeast of Stansted Mountfitchet. **Ordnance Survey grid square:** TL5326.  
**Postcode:** CM22 6LL. **Access:** Elsenham station on London Liverpool Street - Cambridge line. B1051. **Bus:** 7/7A, hourly, Mon-Sat, Bishop's Stortford – Stansted Airport.  
**County:** Essex. **District:** Uttlesford. **Population:** 2,446 in 2011.

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Elsenham is noted for its long and distinguished association with horses. In the early 19th century, much of the parish was owned by George Rush, lord of the manor and a celebrated balloonist and breeder of race horses. His Plenipotentiary won the 1834 Derby. He lived at Elsenham Hall, which was later taken over by Walter Gilbey. Gilbey made his fortune in the family wine and spirits business but devoted much of his life to the advancement of agriculture and the breeding of working horses. He was the author of several books on horse-breeding, founded several horse societies including the Shire Horse Society, and acquired no less than 32 paintings by the equine artist George Stubbs. Golden Miller, an exceptional racehorse that won the Cheltenham Gold Cup five times and the Grand National in 1934, is buried at Elsenham Stud alongside other successful racehorses. In the 2012 London Olympics, Elsenham resident Ben Maher was in the winning British showjumping team. His gold medal success is commemorated by the gold post box outside the village Post Office.



Elsenham was also known all over the world for its jam. Elsenham Jam Company was established by Walter Gilbey in 1891, initially to process the fruit from his estate. It grew into a major export business, but ceased to operate in Elsenham only a few years ago.



A thousand years ago, Elsenham was better known for its pigs, rather than horses or jam. The Domesday Survey of 1086 recorded that Elsenham was part of a densely wooded area of Essex. At that time, woods were the habitat of domestic pigs and Elsenham was home to around a thousand swine. In old records, the name is also written Alsenham, Elsingham, Elsinham and Elsynham. Its origin is unknown.

Elsenham includes the hamlets of Fuller's End, Gaunt's End and Tye Green. Tye Green is one of at least six places with that name in Essex.

Elsenham Church was built early in the 12th century, probably on the site of a Saxon predecessor. Inside the porch, the doorway has tell-tale Norman decoration with its zigzag-carved columns. An item of interest in the church registers is an entry dated February 1795 when John Brand, aged 69, was buried. It was noted that he was "ignorantly reputed to be a wizard".

The church is a short distance from the village, next door to Elsenham Hall. The Hall, a three-storey, red brick mansion, was built in the early 1800s to replace an earlier residence. It was the home of Walter Gilbey from 1878 to 1914, the period when this photo was taken. It was converted into a number of private apartments in the 20th century.



Walter Gilbey, who became Sir Walter when he was awarded a baronetcy in 1893, erected the Pump House, seen here, in memory of his wife who died in 1896. It originally housed the village pump. It stands at the entrance to Park Road which was originally made as a private road so Sir Walter could get directly to the railway station in his horse-drawn carriage. He died in 1914 before it was completed.



Further east along the High Street stands the 17th-century Crown Inn, shown here.

Elsenham station is on the London Liverpool Street – Cambridge line which was opened in 1845. The station was originally located at Fuller's End, but the gradient proved too steep for trains to set off northbound, so it was moved to its present site.

Today, Elsenham's residents have the use of a large playing field, four tennis courts and a bowls green and there are clubs serving many sporting and social interests for all ages.

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#### **Hospitality:**

The Crown – 01279 812827

De Salis Hotel – 0843 289 0686 - [www.desalishotels.com](http://www.desalishotels.com)

#### **Included in Hundred Parishes walks:**

2: Circular route from Stansted Mountfitchet station (7 miles).

5: Between Elsenham and Newport stations (7 miles).

12: Between Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham stations (4 miles).

**Adjacent parishes:** Stansted Mountfitchet, Ugley, Henham, Broxton, Takeley.

#### **Links:**

Parish Council: [www.essexinfo.net/elsenhamparishcouncil](http://www.essexinfo.net/elsenhamparishcouncil)

Elsenham Village History Society: [www.elsenham-history.co.uk](http://www.elsenham-history.co.uk)

Save Elsenham & Henham Villages: <http://saveourvillage.co.uk>

Ben Maher, Olympic showjumper: [www.benmaher.me.uk/index.php](http://www.benmaher.me.uk/index.php)

#### **Further reading:**

*A History of Elsenham: The First 1,000 Years*, published by Elsenham Parish Council.

*A History of the Village of Elsenham*, Gordon Barker & Jack Sayers.

*For the Duration*, a tribute to those who died serving their country, Elsenham Village History Soc.

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