

The Three Saltfleetbys

The village name derives from Old English: *salt* and “*flēot*” (rapidly flowing stream) and the Old Norse “*by*” meaning a farm or settlement.

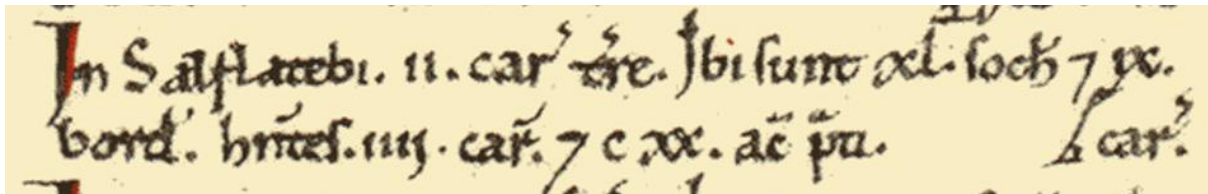
For much of the history of our village, it was three separate parishes: St Clement (East Saltfleetby), All Saints (Middle Saltfleetby) and St Peter (West Saltfleetby).



1891 map of parish boundaries

Saltfleetby in the Domesday Book

The first known record of the village appears in the Domesday Book, William the Conqueror's detailed survey of English land in 1086, that attempted to record ownership, value, people and resources. Originally called the Kings Roll, it was later called “Domesday” as a metaphor for the day of judgement, because its decisions, like those of the last judgement, were unalterable! Here our village was written as **Saltflatebi**, still one village before the three separate parishes were established later. Mentioned six times under the listings of different landowners' estates, Saltflatebi was recorded as having 53 households, making it one of the larger places in Lincolnshire in 1086, and putting it in the largest 20% of settlements in the country.



Extract from the Domesday Book describing King William's land. Translation: “In Saltfleetby 2 caruates of land. There are 40 sokemen and 9 bordars having 4 ploughs and 120 acres of meadow”. Meaning: 2 x 120 acres of land, 40 freemen (a high class of peasant, who could have around 30 acres of land), 9 smallholders (an unfree class of peasant allowed around 5 acres). A Plough meant a whole plough team with 8 oxen and the plough itself. Meadow was considered an indispensable resource for farming communities; it could be more valuable than the arable land itself.

The largest and most populous portion of land in Saltfleetby was owned by King William himself. It was formerly owned by Queen Edith, the wife of the late King Edward the Confessor, and sister of King Harold Godwinson, who was defeated at the Battle of Hastings. Nationally King William directly controlled about 20% of the land. The next largest area of Saltflatebi was owned by the Bishop of Durham, William de St-Calais from Bayeux. The church owned 25% of land in England. Nine bishops and abbots acting as lords in Lincolnshire received 16% of all taxes in the area. Other landowners were Alfred of Lincoln, Rainer of Brimau and William Blunt, who held smaller areas of the village, including some parts described just as wasteland.

Medieval Saltfleetby

The Lindsey survey of 1115 showed that the Count of Brittany had become the major landowner in the parish. The village prospered as an agricultural area, and ideal location for trade, close to coastal ports and centres of salt making, providing a large supply of valuable salt for the preservation of food. The single village of Saltfleetby soon became three parishes, suggesting a rapid growth in

population and wealth in the locality. The area's prosperity led to developments as three new stone churches were built to serve the expanding population.

Church Building

Perhaps the oldest of the three medieval churches that give their names to the three parishes is **All Saints**, parts of which date back to the Norman period, as early as 1100 to 1150. Relics of the original smaller Norman church can still be seen today, such as the scalloped capitals of the chancel arch. It was extended to the west in the early 13th century to become its present size, with the top of the tower added in the 15th century, and other features added over the years.



The decorative capital of a Norman column in All Saints Church.

The construction of **St Peter's** Church on Charlesgate soon followed later in the 12th century and early 13th century. The tower that survives on this site today dates from the 15th century. The main church building was moved to its present site on North End Lane in 1877, where it was reconstructed from the original stones. The font is even older, believed to be Saxon, maybe dating as far back as 700AD.

The latest of our three parish churches was **St Clement's**, believed to have originally been built in around 1225. Our most easterly coastal church was dedicated to the first century bishop credited with miracles concerning water, including a rescue from drowning. Highly revered by the seafaring Norse people who settled in this, then poorly drained, area with a constant risk of inundation. They perhaps chose to honour a saint they believed offered some protection from the dangers of the sea. The original church was a small stone building with three bells, further to the south (where the old graveyard still is). After falling into disrepair, it was moved to its current location in 1885, and rebuilt from the original stones.

Salt making

Salt has been made on the Lincolnshire coast for centuries. In a process locally called "*muldefang*", the fortnightly spring tides were scraped to collect salt-laden sand, which was filtered in trenches before being boiled to form salt crystals that were continuously scooped out. The leftover desalinated silt was left behind in huge waste mounds, many of which are still visible today, including at Saltfleet and Skidbrooke. These indicate the location of the once thriving salterns from the mid Saxon period until the industry came to an end here in the 16th century.

Saltfleetby Market and Fair

By the 13th century Saltfleetby was thriving, with the Galle family as the main lords of the manor. As overseer of a local market, the lord had to acquire a royal charter enabling him to take tolls from the traders and supervise correct trading practices. On 12 July 1268 a charter was granted from King Henry III to John Galle, son of Odo (Otho) Galle of Saltfleetby, allowing a weekly market in the village every Friday, and a fair every September. Saltfleetby's annual fair ran for eight days duration from 20th to the 27th September, consisting of a day of vigil, then a day of feast for St Matthew the Apostle (on his feast day of 21st September), then a further six days of trade and activity. It was thought to be held at a site near All Saints Church.

The local supply of salt meant that goods from the coast and Lindsey marshlands such as fish and meat could be preserved, enabling it to be bought in Saltfleetby and transported unspoilt even as far as London. Salt was also used in other industries like the tanning of leather. People would travel to

fairs to buy goods such as farm tools, homewares, furniture, rugs and ceramics. The fair's date in September, after the harvest, meant fresh produce was available for sale, and it was a time for celebration after people had finished the hard work of harvesting the crops. It wasn't all about trade, but also recreation and entertainments for the enjoyment of all ages and classes, a cornerstone of social life in medieval society.

Sir Peter Galle, took over Saltfleetby's fair charter in 1281, later moving it to Skidbrooke in the early 14th century. The lay subsidy (a tax on property) in 1334 records that Saltfleetby paid £7 6s 6d which was considerably higher than the average for the area, implying that the parish was wealthier than average.

In 1563 the population of Saltfleetby All Saints consisted of 31 households, 13 in St Clement, 31 in St Peter and 3 at Three Bridges hamlet. In 1801 the population of Saltfleetby All Saints was 148, 114 in St Clement and 146 in St Peter.

The Three Saltfleetbys Come Together for Harvest Festival

The Harvest has always been a very important time for our rural community, traditionally celebrated at "Harvest Home", the Sunday nearest to the autumn equinox. In the 1860s the three Saltfleetbys came together to go all out on marking the end of the harvest with a lavish day of celebration, on a Tuesday or Thursday in late September or early October. Many people contributed to help make the day memorable, especially the farmers and their families, as well as the local clergy.

Typically, the day started with the churches, school and farmyard hayricks adorned with flags, bunting, flowers and hand-crafted corn decorations. At around midday a feast was put on at the school, serving food to up to 140 people at a nominal cost of 1 shilling a head, but free to labourers who were treated by the farmers in thanks for their hard work, to a meal of roast beef, potatoes and plum pudding. After the meal the traditional "Harvest Shout" was given, while the diners enjoyed their beer, pipes, tobacco and conversation, before the bells of All Saints rang out calling all the parishes to assemble for the afternoon service at 2.30. All ages from the three villages then paraded down to the beautifully decorated All Saints Church where the rectors of each parish would give the prayers and readings, along with guest clergy from the surrounding area. Often the choir of Louth St James' joined with the village choirs for the choral service led by Louth choirmaster Mr Waite at the harmonium.

The bells would ring out again as the congregation left church in a procession singing as they headed to the largest barn in the village. This was owned by farmer Mr Scorer, and was decorated with wheat, flags and flowers for the occasion. Here over 300 people would enjoy tea and plum-bread at 5pm, with games, races and hammer-throwing in the field.

Then more entertainment was provided: in 1861 Reverend Smythe of Elkington gave a lecture on Egypt and the Holy Land, projecting dissolving views as illustration (using a "magic lantern" to make one picture dissolve into the next). It was so popular that 600 people came to see it, paying one shilling each, but it was only sixpence for Saltfleetby parishioners. Rev. Smythe was welcomed back the following years, when in 1862 he presented dissolving views of the Arctic, with Rev. Wilde of Louth providing the commentary. In 1863 Rev. Smythe gave a lecture on Optical Illusions, with many scientific demonstrations to show that "seeing is not always believing". In 1864 Rev. Alington gave a talk on his recent visit to Africa, with Rev. Wilde speaking about church missions. In other years the local and guest clergy gave speeches and there was a variety of music, singing and readings to end the day.

SALT FLEETBY.

HARVEST FESTIVAL.—The harvest festival of the three Saltfleetbys which has now we may say, become an institution of these parishes, was kept this year on Michaelmas Day, under especially favourable circumstances, and with many outward tokens of happiness and rejoicing. The hand-bills issued in good time, had informed the parishioners and their friends that the proceedings of the day would include divine service in All Saints' (the middle) Parish church, at 2.30 p.m., a public tea in Mr. Scorer's barn, and a lecture on "Optical Illusions," with experiments, tending to illustrate the fact that "seeing is not always believing."—This programme was carried out in such a manner as will we feel sure, render the harvest festival of 1863, a day to be long and happily remembered, both by the people of Saltfleetby, and by the friends and neighbours who came to rejoice with them in their rejoicings. Here, by the way, we would congratulate the Saltfleetbys, that those friends came last Tuesday, in such force, and some of them from so great a distance, for their presence proved that a strong feeling of good-will and interest in each others well-doing subsists among the Marsh parishes; and that like kindly feelings towards Marsh men are entertained by their brethren on the Wolds. The weather was all that could be desired for such a day, bright and sunny, and most surely (if we may judge by the many cheerful faces, and hearty greetings of the holiday-keepers) the world of their hearts and minds was in unison with the world without. Nothing in fact was more noticeable than the general air of geniality and good-will, and all must have felt the contagious desire which it prompted to and shake hands with everyone. Of the particular incidents of the day we will make but brief mention:—Prayers were read by the Rev. H. M. Roberts, Rector of Saltfleetby All Saints'. The first lesson by the Rev. W. J. Williams, Rector of Saltfleetby St. Clement's, the second lesson by the Rev. W. R. Watson, Rector of Saltfleetby St. Peter's. The Rev. R. Garvey, late Rector of Saltfleetby St. Clement's, whose presence among his old friends and parishioners on their annual festival had been gladly anticipated, was the preacher for the day, and delivered an excellent sermon on Psalm cxvi., verse 7. The church was crowded, and we have seldom heard a service in a country church, which so nearly came up to our idea of what congregational worship should be. The responses were well given, and the singing hearty and general. How melodiously the bells of All Saints' church rang out, and how well the ringers did their duty were common subjects of remark, but nothing claimed more general notice and approval than the very beautiful decorations of the church. At least 300 parishioners and friends sat down to tea in the barn, which Mr. Scorer had kindly lent for the occasion. Here, too, the decorators had been busy, and the walls and beams were gay with wreaths and flags, and eloquent with suitable texts and mottoes. The lecture—a most amusing and instructive one—was illustrated by many capital experiments and elicited much applause. The lecturer as part of his subject (and a most useful part as we conclude from the comments we have heard made upon it) exposed the character of the various gambling tricks. Thimble rig, &c., &c., was so perfectly unmasked that we think the man will be fool as well as rogue who ever by such trickery at Saltfleet fair or elsewhere tries to cozen those who heard the lecturer's remarks. Some good chromatropes experiments, illustrating the composition of colours, and a most amusing one illustrative of colour blindness, were also given, but the last and crowning feat of all was the exhibition of some of those singular illusions which optical science has lately learned to produce. The whole lecture we may describe as "Science made easy," its intention being, as the concluding remarks of the rev. lecturer forcibly impressed upon his hearers, to show us how "little we really do know," and how as we advance in knowledge we are ever more ready to join in, and really take to heart that confession. Three hearty cheers for the lecturer, the Rev. J. G. Smyth, Vicar of Elkington, testified the gratitude of the Saltfleetbys to him, for his kindness in having so kindly, so ably, and so often, we may add, (for this is the third year that he has come to Saltfleetby for the purpose), entertained and instructed them. We have only to add that the Saltfleetby people are much indebted to W. Scorer, Esq., for his kindness in giving them the use of his barn; and to Parnell Chapman, Esq., for unwearied diligence in carrying out the arrangements of the day. Their thanks are also due and would, we are sure, be most heartily offered to the many kind friends who interested themselves in the day's proceedings, by their subscriptions made the feast free to so many of the aged and the poor.

SALT FLEETBYS' HARVEST FESTIVAL.

THE feast of harvest was kept by the three Saltfleetby parishes, on Thursday, September 28th, and a very happy and successful day it is pronounced to have been by those who were able to share in its service and festivities. The day was fine, though cloudy. From an early hour flags were flying on the old parish churches, the school, and over the mighty and trim-built ricks in the farm-yards. Brilliant was the display of bunting, thanks to the kindness of friends on the coast, who had lent flags in profusion for the occasion, besides which, many banners, mottoes, and pretty devices to decorate the church, the school-room, and the barn, had been made by the ladies.

Over the school-porch a monster "Welcome" invited masters and men, who had laid by the reaping-hook for this year, to take up knives and forks and do justice to the excellent hot dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, which was served by Mr. Wilson, at 12.30 p.m. Among the items were seven pecks of such steaming hot potatoes as are the joy of an Irishman's heart and we hear the only fault of the dinner was that it was too good, and therefore disappeared too soon, leaving short work for the distributors of the fragments to the aged and infirm, on the day after the feast. The school-room was twice filled, and all the guests (numbering about 140) had plenty; the barrel of beer held out well, and the pipes and tobacco were found good accompaniments to the after-dinner conversation.

Very appropriate and amusing was the scene which followed, when Mr. Cuthbert (the oldest farmer present) proposed the harvest-shout, according to old custom. Calling forth a farmer who had led all his crops, he questioned him as to whether he had "stuck," whether he had "overturned," &c., &c. All answers being satisfactory, Mr. Cuthbert proclaimed in a stentorian voice—

"Mr. Taylor he's a good man;

He's got in his harvest as fast as he can."

After many other couplets, the concluding line,

"So now let us shout for harvest home,"

was followed by such a shout as will not soon be forgotten by those who heard it.

Among the farmers who exerted themselves to arrange the feast, and who treated their labourers were Messrs Taylor, Housham, Erett, Chapman, Scorer, Robinson, North, Wells, Graves, Ashley, Richardson, Gibson, and Borman. Masters and men, women and children, were a goodly sight as they walked down the road and across the meadow, to All Saints' Church, the bells of which rang out a joyous peal and welcome to the throng who came together to "Sing, rejoice, and give thanks." The church had been most beautifully decorated and in excellent taste, with texts, evergreens, wheat, oats, barley, scarlet geraniums, and other flowers, and the crowning decoration was the large and reverent congregation. The service was intoned by the Rector, the Rev. H. M. Roberts, and the lessons read by the Revs. W. J. Williams and W. R. Watson. The choirs of the three Saltfleetbys, conducted by Mr. J. Waite the Louth district choir-master (who most kindly gave his services on the occasion), and assisted by the Rev. A. Scrivenor, did their duty well, and reflected credit on their painstaking instructor. An eloquent and most impressive sermon was preached by the Rev. H. Disbrowe, from Galatians vi. 9—"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," and the three lessons of "Encouragement, patience, and giving," taught by the harvest, were most earnestly illustrated and enforced.

After service the congregation adjourned for tea to Mr. Scorer's barn (kindly lent for the occasion), which was nicely decorated with wheat, flags, and flowers. The tea was well attended, the tables being filled again, and again, while races, games, throwing the hammer, &c., were going on in an adjoining field. The proceedings of the day ended with the annual meeting of the Saltfleetbys' Association in aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The Revs. Wilde, Disbrowe, and Alington addressed a large and attentive audience. The report for the year was read by the Rev. W. R. Watson; the members' subscriptions amounted to £5 16s. 6d., and the collection after the meeting to £5 3s. 1½d. Prayers to "the great Lord of the harvest" were offered by the Rev. W. J. Williams. Besides the harvest lessons of "Encouragement, patience, and giving," it is hoped such harvest feast-days as that of the 28th ult. will help in bringing forth more abundantly the blessed fruits of "Love, joy, and peace" in the Saltfleetbys, and many other English villages.

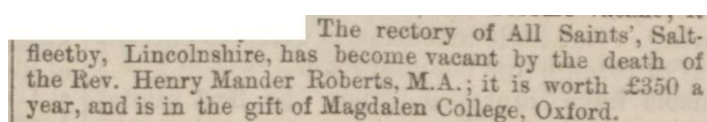
The Clergy of Saltfleetby

Since they were first built in the 12th and 13th centuries the three churches of Saltfleetby had their own parsons. Originally these were members of the families of the local noblemen, such as Philip Galle, (rector of St Clement's in the 13th century). Later All Saints came under the patronage of Magdalen College Oxford; St Peter's of Oriel College Oxford; and St Clement's by local philanthropist Earl Brownlow (John Cust) of Belton House, followed by other members of his family.

The patron had the right to appoint the new rectors, which was a very high-status position in society. The rectors received income from glebe land (church farmland) attached to their parish, and from local taxes such as tithes. This gave a value indicating how much the rector would receive for his position in the parish (but not a salary or wage as such). For example, in 1856 the vacant position for a rector of St Peter's was advertised as having a value of £229. In 1858 the vacancy at St Clement's had a value of £210, which had risen to £300 in 1867, in the same year the position of rector at All Saints was worth £350 a year (equivalent to about £49,100 today).



Bucks Herald, 22nd June 1867



Western Daily Press, 26th January 1867

Often the rector appointed a curate to help with the running of the parish and perform such ceremonies as christenings, weddings and funerals on their behalf. Though the rectors were provided with a rectory as their residence, they may not have lived in it full-time, and may even have had another parish in another region. The last examples of non-resident rectors in Saltfleetby were Rev. Humphrey Cholmeley, who was appointed rector of St Clement's in 1825, and then also of Troston, Suffolk in 1828 and remained in charge of both until his death in 1841. Rev. John Bond who was rector of St Peter's from 1850 until his death in 1856, remained living in his home county of Devon where he was also rector of Romansleigh.

Saltfleetby's longest serving curate was Richard Kilvington, born in Shap, Westmoreland in 1759. He began in 1782 as curate at All Saints and St Clement's, then also at St Peter's in 1808 until he retired in 1843. He died in the village at the age of 93 in 1852.

Victorian Developments

By 1848 Saltfleetby had three Methodist chapels, two in West Saltfleetby and one in Middle Saltfleetby to serve the area's growing number of nonconformists. Two were later rebuilt to make more room to hold their popular Sunday Schools and events.

The National School was originally built in St Peter in around 1851, serving all children from the whole of Saltfleetby. Locals contributed to fund the opening of a library for the three parishes on the site in 1855. In 1894 the school was enlarged, and in 1896 it had an average attendance of 79, but could take up to 100 pupils.

The new Louth and East Coast Railway line was opened on 16th October 1877, to connect Louth with Mablethorpe, via new stations at Grimoldby, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe. As well as taking visitors to enjoy the coast, and enabling villagers to travel more easily, it was a boost to farmers who used the line to convey livestock to Louth Cattle Market, and to quickly transport their produce.

Changing Boundaries Cause Confusion

As a sparse rural area, it wasn't always easy to know which parish of Saltfleetby was which, especially when the boundaries were changed. In August, 1882, St Clements was enlarged by gaining a portion of All Saints and a portion of St. Peter. Boundary changes in March 1887 involved a detached portion of All Saints transferred to Saltfleetby St. Peter, and a part of St. Peter transferred to All Saints, a detached part of St. Clement added to All Saints in exchange for a small part of All Saints, while a part of St Peter was also given to St. Clements, overall reducing the size of St Clement and enlarging St Peter and All Saints. These unclear boundaries caused some confusion, even to the local residents, who have long simply called the whole place "Soloby".

WHERE DOES HE LIVE?
—
A PERPLEXED FARMER.
At the Louth County Police Court, on Wednesday, William Wright Dobbs, of Saltfleetby, near Louth, was summoned for non-payment of poor rates due to the parish of Saltfleetby St. Peter. Mr John Gibson proved that the rate was levied on the 28th Oct., 1885, and defendant refused to pay.—Defendant: I object to pay because part of the land is in Saltfleetby St. Peter, and the other is in All Saints.—The overseer: There was a mistake in the plan when it was made many years ago, but he has been on the books for 25 years, and has always paid before.—Defendant: I have never objected before.—Major Smyth: But you are objecting now.—Defendant: Yes; I want to know where I live. (Laughter.)—Mr Emeris: If you go to have it settled at the Quarter Sessions, it will cost you £50.—Defendant: Well, I am not going there. (Laughter.)—The Chairman: There are cases where tithe is paid in one parish and rates in another.—Defendant: Are there? Why, that is just what I have been wanting to know for years. (Roars of laughter.) I asked two of the oldest lawyers in Louth, and they told me it was not lawful. They said it would cost a lot of money to have it tried, and this is the advice you are giving me. (More laughter.)—Mr Emeris: Yes, it will cost you £50 to put it right at Quarter Sessions.—Defendant: Well I am sure I shall never pay all that, but I should like to know where I live. I have no clergyman to visit me. Mr Watson, of Saltfleetby, he says he dare not come, and Mr Usher, well, he doesn't visit very often. At the election time nobody would own me. (Laughter.) Neither of them would put me on the list, and I want to know very particular where I do live.—Mr Emeris: It will cost a lot of money to know that. You must get your landlord to put it right.—Ultimately the defendant was ordered to pay the rate, with 12s costs.

Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette, 3rd
September 1886

On 1st September 1886, local farmer William Wright Dobbs was up before Louth County Police Court for non-payment of the poor rates for the parish of Saltfleetby St Peter. His defence was to claim that he didn't know where he lived, having land in both St Peter and All Saints. His explanation caused roars of laughter in court.

At this time Reverend Watson was the rector of St Peter's, Rev. Hutchins at All Saints, and Rev. Usher at St Clement's.

Mr Dobbs was finally ordered to pay the rate for St Peter with an extra 12 shillings costs.

William Wright Dobbs was born in 1814 and baptised in St Peter's Church by curate Rev. Richard Kilvington in May 1814. He married Rebecca Daulton from Legbourne in 1847, in St Peter's Church.

They had 8 children. Their two daughters married local men and remained in the area. Four of their sons emigrated to Queensland, Australia, three were already married, the youngest marrying an Australian girl there, where they all remained, some raising large families in Queensland.

As well as a farmer, Mr Dobbs was a shopkeeper with a grocery shop on the Main Road. He died in December 1887 age 73, his wife Rebecca died in 1902.

The Parish Councils

Town and parish councils were established by Act of Parliament in 1894. Saltfleetby St Peter was one of 37 villages in East Lindsey (Louth) Division required to have a parish council, having over 300 residents. Saltfleetby All Saints was one of 77 villages in the region with a population of between 100 and 300, and St Clements one of 33 with a population under 100, so each were therefore allowed to have a parish council by agreement with the County Council.

So, the three villages had their own parish councils from April 1894, with local volunteers elected to serve their local communities.

By 1954 the attendance at the individual village council meetings had been dwindling for some time. The rector of St Clement's, Reverend Carr-Gregg, who had been the chairman of St Clement Parish Council for 30 years, favoured the solution that the three parish councils should be combined into one amalgamated one for the whole of Saltfleetby. This was approved by Lindsey County Council, who were pleased with how a newly amalgamated council was working at Theddlethorpe. The new combined council consisted of seven councillors from St Peter, and two each from All Saints and St Clement. Rev. Francis Kenyon of All Saints acted as the council clerk.

Fewer Village Clergy

It was not until 1898 that one rector had to take on two of our parish churches at once, beginning with Rev. William Horace Hutchins, already rector of All Saints since 1867, who had to step in at St Clement's until the appointment of Rev. Tom Watson in 1908. Rev. Samuel Stamp took over St Peter's after the retirement of Rev. Watson in 1906, and then also All Saints after the death of Rev. Hutchins in 1908.

St Peter's with All Saints remained served by a single parson, with St Clement's having its own, who also had responsibility for St Botolph's Skidbrooke from 1957.

One of the hardest-hit places is Saltfleetby, where the parish of All Saints and St. Peter has been without a rector since a year last Easter when the last incumbent, the Rev. F. Kenyon, left for a church in Suffolk.

Jokingly, the church warden, Mr. M. R. Stubbs, of Three Bridges Farm, Saltfleetby, said: "I have done everything except turn my collar backwards."

Extract from an article on the shortage of country parsons, Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph, 3rd November 1958

11 to rule 3 villages on new combined council

DIFFICULTIES of conducting public business by means of parish meetings, which are not well attended, in Saltfleetby St. Peter, Saltfleetby All Saints, and Saltfleetby St. Clement are expected to be overcome by the creation of one parish council of 11 members for the three villages.

Lindsey County Council has ordered the combining of the meetings, at their request.

Seven of the councillors will be from Saltfleetby St. Peter, with two each from All Saints and St. Clement.

Each village will continue to have its own parish meetings.

MONEY WASTED

Some of the difficulties experienced previously were explained to an Evening Telegraph reporter by the Rev. R. G. C. Carr Gregg, Rector of Saltfleetby St. Clement, and chairman of the parish meeting for 30 years.

"I have posted notices and tried to convene meetings, but people just have not turned up," he says. I have done what I could, but it has just been a waste of time and money.

"Old footpaths have been ploughed over and lost; dykes and drains, and the bridges over them, have needed attention.

"It was our job, but a parish vote was needed and when people do not turn up it has been most difficult to get any action.

NOT WORKED

"The other parishes were in the same difficulty and we came to the conclusion that unity would be strength.

"The old system has not worked. I am hoping that under a common council there will be far more progress and prosperity."

Mr. G. A. Pitt, Clerk to the Louth Rural District Council, said that the same problem arose in the Theddlethorpes about three years ago and the meetings were brought together under one authority.

"In places which are sparsely populated, the assembly of a parish meeting becomes most difficult," he declared.

"There is no real centre of population and they are too small to be able to have a parish council."

HAVE GAINED

"The amalgamation has worked well at Theddlethorpe and it is largely the success there that has set the example for the Saltfleetby district to follow.

"The new arrangement does not mean that the three Saltfleetbys will lose their own parish meetings. These will still continue to function.

"The parishes have not lost anything — they have gained."

"I think the new council will stimulate local interest."

Grimsby Evening
Telegraph. 3rd
August 1954

By the 1950s it had begun to be a problem to fill the positions for country parsons. St Peter's with All Saints remained vacant for over a year from 1957 after Rev. Kenyon moved away. The position was later filled by Rev. Keith Jones in 1959.

After the death of Rev. Carr-Gregg in 1964, Rev. Jones became the first parson to be in charge of all three parish churches.

Closures and Changes

Before Dr Beeching made his infamous cut-backs to branch line railway services in 1963, British Rail had already decided the cost of improvements needed on our local section of track, and the drop in passenger numbers, meant it should be closed. The last train ran on 3rd December 1960, there was a rush for tickets from locals and train enthusiasts to say good-bye to the 83-year-old line. The old stations at Grimoldby, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe, as well as the gate houses which were built at each point where the railway crossed a road, are now private dwellings.

Declining congregations led Saltfleetby Centenary Chapel to close in 1961, the building now houses the Snooker Club. The Wesleyan Methodist Chapel that was at the West End of the village, near where Marshlands Community Centre is now, was sold in 1972 and demolished in 1974. St Clement's Church was declared pastorally redundant in 1973 and is now a private house. All Saints Church was also declared redundant at the same time but is still consecrated and open to the public, maintained by The Churches Conservation Trust. The East Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (opposite Swallowgate) closed in 1997 and is now a private house. Local Methodists now use St Peter's Church for regular Sunday services every other week, alternated with Church of England services.

In 2016 the school was down to only 16 pupils across 7 year groups, but with a potential capacity for 56. It was expected to only have 13 children on roll in September 2016. So, despite local campaigning, the decision was made for it to close as of 31st August 2016, after 165 years. The old school building has now been used as a community hub to host village events, and has recently opened as The Little Village Tea Shop.

One Saltfleetby Again



1963 map of Civil Parishes

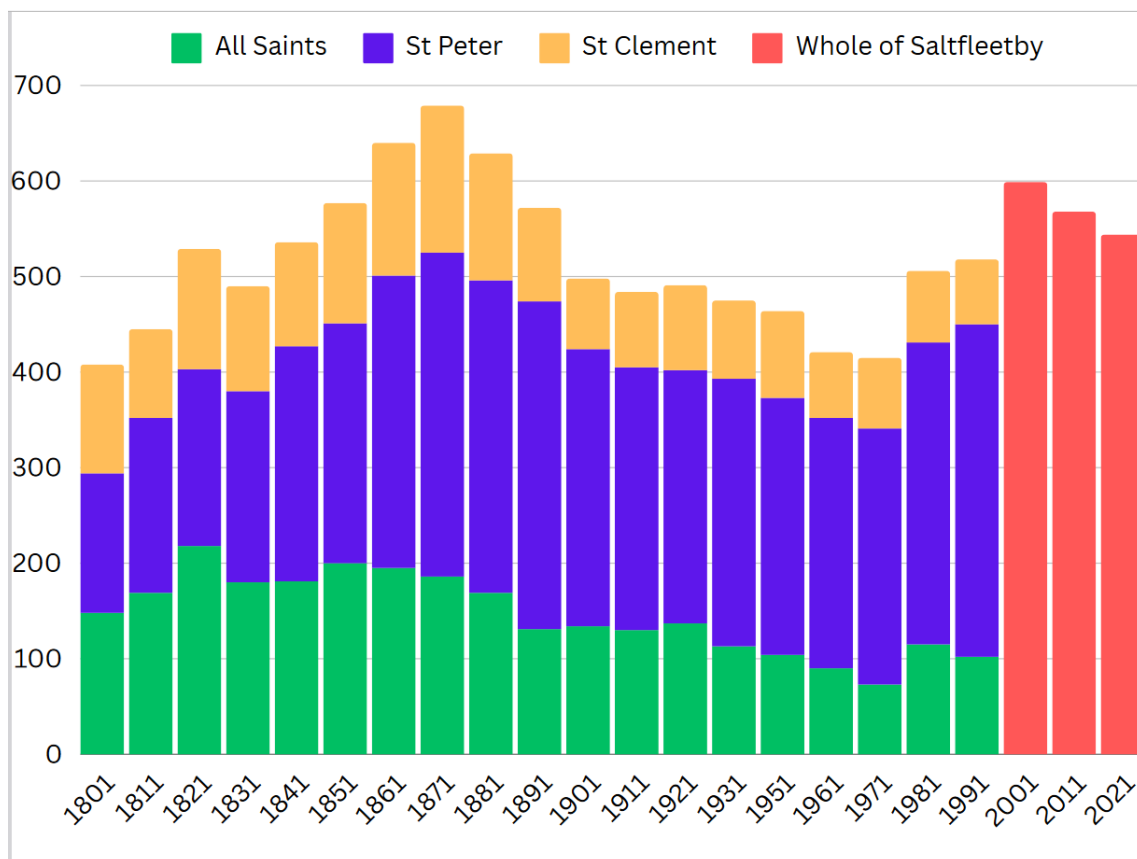
In April 1998 East Lindsey District Council received a proposal that the three Saltfleetby parishes of All Saints, St Peter and St Clement, should be merged into one new parish, to simply be called Saltfleetby.

After having no objections to the idea, the go-ahead for the merger was given by East Lindsey in August 1998. After the proposal had received government approval in 1999, Saltfleetby became one new whole parish, to be served by a single parish council comprising of 11 members.

Now the villages and parish councils operate as one unified village and council.

Our Changing Population

From figures taken from the 1801 to 2021 censuses. The total population of Saltfleetby grew from 408 in 1801 reaching a peak in 1871 with 677 people. Dropping to 415 in 1971, then climbing to 599 in 2001. At the last census in 2021 the village had a population of 544.



Number of Occupied Houses/Households in Saltfleetby

In the early 19th Century, it was common for more than one family to live in one house. In 1821: 529 people lived in 97 houses, a similar sized population in 2021 live in 261 houses. In 1921 homes had an average of 1.46 rooms per person. Today 80.8% of houses in the village are considered under occupied with more rooms than required.

