

Our thanks to Mervyn Russen who found this piece in an old *Fisons Journal* from July 1933. This was a Roneo'd in-house magazine for the fertiliser and compost company.

The writer (A.B.C.) mentions Skeat. This refers to Walter William Skeat (1835-1912), a philologist, whose book entitled *Place-names in Suffolk* was published posthumously in 1913. This was the last of a series of books on the same subject covering various counties.

Suffolk Place Names.

In these days of increased travelling by road a knowledge of the meaning of place names adds a further interest to any journey.

These were first recorded in the Domesday Book by French Priests working from returns received from all parts. As may be imagined many errors crept in when compiling the list and subsequent corruptions and modern spellings have complicated matters still further. Hence there is a difference of opinion in many cases as to the correct meaning and in this brief article we will take Skeat's book as our guide.

Before leaving the Domesday Book reference may be made to the fact that there are to-day a few places called "OTHERTON" - this means "OTHER TON" or "OTHER FARM", Ton meaning a farm, the origin being that the compiler of the Domesday Book, unable to decipher the name on the return he was copying, wrote "OTHER TON", meaning subsequently to elucidate it.

Many places owe their names to local characteristics originating in much the same way as trench names during the War. Suffolk examples under this heading include:-

Copdock	=	Copped or pollarded Oak.
Bramford	=	The Ford by the Bramble.
Bramfield	=	The Bramblefield.
Stradbroke	=	Straddle Brook i.e. the place where one could straddle the brook.
Bentley	=	The bent grass lea or meadow.
Hadleigh	=	The heath lea.
Shelley	=	Shelf-lea i.e. a meadow on a high piece of ground.
Yaxley	=	The Cuckoo's lea.
Brundish	=	Burn-eddish i.e. the meadow near a stream that was mown for aftermath.

(continues)



Broadly speaking the suffix is the chief index and in this article the meanings of the more common suffixes are given with a few examples.

Ton	=	Farm.
Barton	=	Barley Farm.
Easton	=	East Farm.
Weston	=	West Farm.
Sutton	=	South Farm.
Oulton	=	Old Farm.
Stutton	=	Gnat or Midge Farm
Ham	=	Either a home or village or an enclosure. Indicates the first step towards fencing in fields.
Barnham	=	The enclosure with a barn.
Elmham	=	The enclosure near the elm.
Langham	=	Long enclosure.
Parham	=	Parkham - a railed in enclosure.
Rougham	=	Rough enclosure.
Saxmundham	=	Saxmund's home or settlement.
Barsham	=	Baore's home.
Bucklesham	=	Bucle's home.

When in course of time a family grew too big for the existing settlement another one was formed, this being denoted by - ing e.g.

Framsden	=	Fram's valley.
Framlingham	=	Home of the sons of Fram.
Bedfield	=	Beda's field.
Bedingfield	=	Field of the sons of Beda.
Dennington		however does not mean the farm of the sons of Den, but is a corruption of Denegifu's ton or farm.
Gisleham	=	Gisli's home.
Gislengham	=	Home of the sons of Gisli.

By, a suffix denoting Danish occupation only occurs four times:-

Ashby		which as it is of Danish origin is Aski's by or farm.
Barnby	=	Barni's farm.
Risby	=	Hrisi's farm.
Wilby	=	Wili's farm.

Hale or Hall is a suffix very apt to be misinterpreted, as the word hall is comparatively modern. In the Domesday Book most of them are spelt 'hale' meaning a sheltered spot or nook, e.g.

Peasenhall	=	Sheltered spot where peas are grown.
Rickinghall	=	The nook of the sons of Rica.

We have also evidence of the Norman Conquest in Capel from the old Norman word 'Capele' meaning Chapel, and Bures, which in old Norman meant a collection of cottages. William the Conqueror showed his wisdom in allocating lands to his knights as he made it a practice to give small portions widely separated as opposed to a large territory in one area, adopting the principle that if they were kept busy keeping their eye on several scattered places they were less likely to have time to scheme to upset him. In such cases the name of the receiver is attached after the original name and a Suffolk example is Carlton Colville in North East Suffolk and Weston Colville in West Suffolk.

In conclusion Ipswich, spelt Gipeswiz in the Domesday Book, which according to Skeat means Gippi's wic or Gippi's village, being pronounced Yippy's wic. The Normans disliked a Y being an I and so we have Ippy's wic and finally Ipswich.

A.B.C.