

# THE PLACE-NAMES OF SUFFOLK

BY THE

REV. WALTER W. SKEAT

LITT.D., D.C.L., LL.D., PH.D., F.B.A.

SOMETIME ELRINGTON AND BOSWORTH PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON  
AND FELLOW OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



Cambridge :

PRINTED FOR THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

SOLD BY DEIGHTON, BELL & CO. ; AND BOWES & BOWES  
LONDON, G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

1913

## PREFACE .

**T**HE MS. copy of this work was arranged by Professor Skeat but his death occurred before the proof-sheets could be submitted to him.

The Council of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society therefore publish the work as Professor Skeat left it.

The place-names of Suffolk, by the Rev. Walter W. Skeat. Skeat, 1835-1912.

## ABBREVIATIONS.

The following is a list of the more important sources of information, with the abbreviations that denote them.

**D.B.**—Domesday Book (part relating to Suffolk). The page does not refer to the Book as a whole, but to the paging of the

Facsimile of the part relating to Suffolk.

**E.D.D.**—English Dialect Dictionary.

**F.A.**—Feudal Aids (Record Series); vol. i.

**H.R.**—Rotuli Hundredorum, vol. i.

**Ipm.**—Calendarium Inquisitionum post Mortem sive Escaetarum ; ed. J. Caley ; vol. i. (Record Series).

**N.E.D.**—New English Dictionary (Oxford).

**R.B.**—Red Book of the Exchequer; ed. W. D. Selby (Rolls Series).

**T.N.**—Testa de Nevill (temp. Henry III and Edw. I).

**V.E.**—Valor Ecclesiasticus ; temp. Henry V III.

Of course I constantly refer to the well-known editions of the Anglo-Saxon Charters by Kemble and Birch, to Thorpe's *Diplomatarium Ævi Saxonici*, and to Earle's *Select Charters*. Also, to the *Crawford Charters*, ed. Napier and Stevenson; and to Searle's *Onomasticon*, from which I quote Anglo-Saxon personal names, verifying them in many instances by a reference to the Charters. Amongst numerous books of reference which I have consulted, I may particularise the following :

**BARDSLEY**, Rev. C. W. *A Dictionary of English and Welsh Surnames*. London, 1891.

**BJÖRKMAN**, E. *Nordische Personennamen in England*. Halle a. S., 1910.

**BOSWORTH**, Rev. J. and **TOLLER**, Prof. T. N. *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary*. Oxford, 1882.

**COPINGER**, W. A. *The County of Suffolk: its History as disclosed by Existing Records*. London. 5 vols. 1904-5.

**DUIGNAN**, W. H. *Notes on Staffordshire Place-names*. London, 1902 *Worcestershire Place-names*. London, 1905.

## HAM.

This is an extremely common suffix, and arises from two distinct sources, which cannot in many cases be separated; so that all the names in -ham must be considered together. The modern *-ham* represents either (1) A.S. *ham*, a home, or village, or village community, shortened to ham in an unstressed position; or (2) the A.S. *hamm*, also *ham*, meaning an 'enclosure' or 'a place fenced in,' connected with the modern English to *hem in*. In the few cases in which the ultimate origin can be ascertained, the fact will be noted.

**SAXMUNDHAM.** Spelt *Saxmundeham*, H.R.; *Saxmondeham*, D.B., p. 116. An s has been dropped; the original form must have been Saxmundesbam, where Saxmundes is the gen. case of Saxmund, an O. Merc. form. Though Saxmund is not in Searle's list, it is perfectly regular; since Sax- is a common prefix, and -mund a common suffix. The sense is "Saxmund's home" or "enclosure."

## HALE, HALL.

The suffix *hale* is of much importance, as it is in common use in many counties, and frequently appears in disguised spelling, usually assuming the form of *hall*.

It has become *-all* in Aspall, and *-ale* in Kelsale; and has been changed into *-hall* in Benhall, Blaxhall, Buxhall, Ilketshall, Knettishall, Knodishall, Mildenhall, Peasenhall, Rickinghall, Ringshall, Spexhall, Uggeshall, and Westhall. The suffix in Foxhall was originally *-hole*, while that in Lawshall and Stradishall was *-sele*. But all the words that now end in *-hall*, *-all*, or *-ate*, will be taken together, for convenience. Not one of them originally ended in *-hall*; whereas fifteen of them once ended in *-hale*.

The O. Merc. *hale*, A.S. *heale*, only appears in the dative case; the nom. ended in *h*, the O. Merc. form being *ha,lā*, and the A.S. *heath*. *Hath* has given us the modern *haugh*, which is explained in the E.D.D. as meaning 'low-lying, level ground by the side of a river'; while the prov. E. *hate* (from the above dative case) is similarly defined as 'a piece of flat alluvial land by the side of a river.' The old sense of *halh* or *healh* seems to have been a corner, nook, or sheltered place; it seems safe to define it as 'a sheltered spot, beside a river'; perhaps we may call it 'a nook' for the sake of brevity.

**BENHALL.** Spelt *Benhall*, Ipm., p. 161; but *Benhale* earlier, Ipm., p. 121. D.B. has *Benhala*, pp. 57, 128; *Benehala*, pp. 57, 130; *Benenhala*, pp. 56, 130; *Benehalla*, p. 34. The right form, amongst these, is *Benenhala*; where *Benen* represents A.S. *Beonan*, gen. of *Beona*; a personal name occurring in *Beonanfeld*, in Kemble's index. The sense is Beona's nook.'

**KELSALE.** spelt *Keleshulle*, ROB. (wrongly); but *Keleshale*, H.R.; Ipm.; and *Keleshala*, D.B., p. 59. Copinger has many other forms, giving the prefix as *Cheles* (in Norman spelling, with che for ke), *Kales*, *Kelis*, *Keils*, *Kels* (very rarely with ll); so that the vowel was long. Perhaps the prefix was Céoles, gen. of Céol, a known name; for though Céol would normally be palatalised to *Chele*, this process was sometimes arrested by Danish influence, as in the case of Kellington in the West Riding, which is from Céolinga-tün; see Prof. Moorman's explanation of this name. The very same thing seems to have occurred again in the case of Kelshall (Herts.), which has the same prefix, though the suffix *-hall* has there been substituted for 'hill'; see my Place-names of Herts., p. 34. Thus the name probably means 'Céol's nook.'

## FIELD.

This is a well-known suffix in place-names, and appears in Ashfield, Bedfield, Bedingfield, Bradfield, Bramfield, Bredfield, Charsfield, Cockfield, Cratfield, Crowfield, Fressingfield, Homersfield, Huntingfield, Laxfield, Metfield, Mickfield, Pakefield, Redlingfield, Ringsfield, Shadingfield, Stanningfield, Stansfield, Sternfield, Waldingfield, Waldringfield, Wattisfield, Westerfield, Whatfield, Wingfield, and Withersfield.

STERNFIELD. Near Saxmundham. Spelt *Sternfeld*, Ipm. ; *Sternefella*, D.B., p. 72. But an *es* has been lost, in a difficult position between *m* and *f*; hence we also find *Sternesfella*, D.B., p. 71 ; *Sternesfelda*, D.B., pp. 33, 128. The apparent meaning is "Stern's field." This personal name is not otherwise recorded; but cf. AS. *styrne*, E. *stern*, adj. 'severe.'

NOTE: Carlton is not specifically mention in the book but might be like the following text.

TON, unstressed form of TOWN.

CARLTON. Carlton Colville is to the S.W. of Lowestoft ; and Colville is the name of a norman family connected with it. Spelt Carleton, T.N., H.R.; Carletuna, D.B., p. 254; Karletuna, D.B., p. 43. For A.S. *Carla tūn*, ' farm of the churls' or husbandmen. Carlo is the gen. pl. of cart, a churl, a husbandman; where cart is not the true native word, but borrowed from the O. Norse *kart*, a man, rustic, carle ; the A.S. related word is *ceorl*, mod. E. churl ; as in CHELSWORTH.