

Have you noticed the name's the same in several places?

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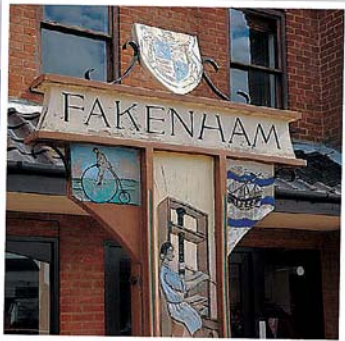
The Kingdom of East Anglia probably formed a single, separate ethnic and linguistic area from very early on during the Anglo-Saxon settlement of England.

Dr OK Schram, an expert on East Anglian place names, suggested it isn't a coincidence that Norfolk and Suffolk share a number of place names that are not found anywhere else in the country.

There are only three places in England called Tuddenham, but two of them are in Suffolk and the other one is in Norfolk. The name would originally have been Tudda's ham. Ham, meaning homestead, is typically found in place names which were given to the very earliest settlements in the Anglian colonisation of eastern England. So Tudda could have been a rather common man's name in fifth-century East Anglian culture.

Similarly, there are just three English places called Walsham, but two of them are in Norfolk and one in Suffolk. Walsham was probably based on the man's name Wæl, as also found in Walsingham, which we can perhaps assume was rather common in the early Anglian society of our region.

There are also two places in England called Barsham; again one is in Norfolk,



■ Same name... but different places and in different counties.

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the other in Suffolk. The Bar part probably came from the Old English word for boar, so we can suppose that the East Angles, maybe unlike other Anglo-Saxons, were in the habit of using "boar" as a nickname for a man.

There are several other place names which occur only twice in England, with one in each of the two original East Anglian counties. These include Brettenham, Elmham, Fakenham, Helmingham, Rougham, and Shimpling. We also have Barninghams in Norfolk and Suffolk, although there's another one in Yorkshire. We have one Ingham each, though there's another in Lincolnshire; we have two Needhams (there's another in

Derby); and two Thornhams, with a couple elsewhere in the country.

Some of our shared local names are not spelt exactly the same today, but do have the same origin. Norfolk's Ludham seems to be identical to Loudham in Suffolk; and Saham in Norfolk is certainly the same as the two Sohams, the one in Suffolk and the other just over the border in Cambridgeshire.

The north and south folk of the land of the eastern Angles were separated from one another by the rivers Waveney and Little Ouse. But it seems they were united by a common culture which we can still detect, fifteen hundred years later, in modern place names.